



Syllabus
MCOM 3205 International Development
Communication
Winter 2009

Mon./Weds. 2 – 3:50 p.m.
Mass Communications Building, Rm. 119

Instructor: Christof Demont-Heinrich

Office: Mass Communications and Journalism Studies Building, Room 103

Office Hours: Mon. & Weds. 12:45 p.m.-1:45 p.m. and by appointment

Office Phone: 303-871-4699

E-mail: cdemonth@du.edu

Class Web Site: We will be using Blackboard

- *E-copies of essays and articles are available on Blackboard under the “readings” link. There may also be in-class handouts. Additionally, you will be asked to read articles on web sites, bulletin boards, and other WWW sources.*

Course Objectives

Virtually everywhere we look, whether we are watching a speech by President-elect Barack Obama, surfing to NBA.com (which has a prominent “Global NBA” button), or trying to find a toy for someone made anywhere but China there is much talk and evidence these days that we are living in an increasingly inter-connected and “globalizing” world. What does this mean for us as individuals? As Coloradans? As Americans? What does it mean for “them” – meaning other individuals, in, and outside of the U.S.? For Bavarians (in Germany)? For Germans, or for the Japanese, or for Australians, etc.? More broadly, what does this mean for global humanity? Are we, for instance, moving toward forms a so-called “transnational” social order and a “global” culture? And, if so, what and/or who is (and is not) driving this process? Why? How? And, with what potential implications for whom?

These are some of the broader questions we will be addressing in this class, with a special eye toward the ways in which media, culture, and communication might be understood as fitting into the larger network of questions that swirl around “globalization.”

Overall, the primary aim of this course will be a simple but important one: To inspire all of us to knowledgeably and critically reflect on how we are both affecting, and being affected by, processes of globalization, especially as these relate to media, communication *and* culture.

Course Methods & Approach

The course will use a variety of methods and approaches to inspire critical reflection on your part about the complex relationship between communication, cultural, media and globalization and (trans)national identity(ies). Assigned readings will draw from the work of international scholars and writers from a variety of disciplines.

The course will begin by providing the larger theoretical grounding you will need in order to reflect upon the ways in which particular modes of production, consumption and distribution of cultural goods as well as specific cultural practices are linked to questions of cultural, identity, and, most significantly, power in a globalizing world. In the first third of the course, we will enter into the sometimes contentious debates about “cultural imperialism,” “Americanization,” and the unequal global cultural flows. Next, we will examine seminal literature on the intersection between “communication” and “development,” and apply what we learn from this literature to a hands-on analysis of media representations of War and “development” in the so-called “developing world.”

We will begin the final third of the course by critically interrogating dominant paradigms about global cultural and political organization, most notably Samuel Huntington’s controversial “Clash of Civilizations” thesis. We will then zero in on the cultural relations between “the West” and Islam, with special attention paid to the ways in which media representations of the so-called “Other” can be seen to (mis)inform people in various cultural and national contexts. We will conclude by reflecting on what the future might look like in terms of global/national/local and so-called “cosmopolitan” identities.

Broadly, in this course we will enter into ongoing debates about what “globalization” is, what “culture” and “identity” are, what “development” is, and what different and sometimes competing representations of these terms potentially mean to us, to so-called foreign “others”, and to global humanity as a whole.

In addition to short class lecture and considerable class discussion and debate, the course will bring in guest speakers and use audio-visual materials in order to expose you to different ideas and perspectives, increase awareness and understanding, and, most fundamentally, to stimulate critical reflection and thought.

Current Events

You will be expected to keep abreast of contemporary international events by way of television, radio, print and, especially, web-based news sources. Be aware that current international events will be considered “fair game” for questions on the four pop quizzes that will be administered during the quarter. You may read and watch as many different sources of news as you wish. The more the better. However, in order that we can have informed discussion and debate based on the same basic informational foundation, you **must** regularly consume at least **two** of the following news sources:

- ✓ The NYT.com (<http://www.nyt.com>)
- ✓ The World Press Review (<http://www.worldpress.org>)
- ✓ BBC online (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/?ok>)
- ✓ Deutsche Welle (English -- or German, if you know it) (<http://www.dw-world.de/>)
- ✓ Al Jazeera (English -- or Arabic, if you know Arabic) (<http://english.aljazeera.net/HomePage>)
- ✓ Watchingamerica.com

Assignments & Grading

Overview:

- Four formal individual writing assignments = 40% (400 points)
 - response paper 10% (100 points)
 - position paper 12.5% (125 points)
 - issues & country brief 2.5% (25 points)
 - media analysis paper 15% (150 points)
- Group project (in-class presentation & 10-12 page paper) = 20% (200 points)
- Lead class discussion assignment = 7.5% (75 points)
- International discussion board posts = 7.5% (75 points)
- Class blog assignment = 7.5% (75 points)
- Pop quizzes (best 3 of 4) = 7.5% (75 points)
- Participation = 10% (100 points)

Formal Individual Writing Assignments (4): There are five formal writing assignments; this includes a written group project (all are listed above). Assignment sheets for the writing assignments will be posted to Blackboard.

Deadlines: Barring extreme circumstances, you will be expected to turn in papers by deadline, or you will receive a zero (F) for that assignment.

Revision. If you wish, you may revise all four of your individual formal writing assignments. You are strongly urged to come in and talk to me before revising. *I will average the first grade you with the second grade you earned for your final grade. If you received an 75 on the first story and a 90 on the second, your final story grade would be a an 83.*

Group Project & Regional Experts: You will build a regional expertise on a specific world region through four interlocking assignments: 1) An assignment that asks you to lead class discussion (7.5% of quarter grade) 2) an issues and country experts brief (2.5% of quarter grade); 3) an individual writing assignment (the media analysis paper = 15% of quarter grade); 4) a formal group project (20% of quarter grade). The group project will include a collectively authored paper (10-12 pages) and a 30-minute, in-class group presentation (each group will have approximately three members).

I will circulate a sign-up sheet early in the quarter on which you will sign up to work with two other students in becoming an expert on views about a specific issue from that region for one of five class-designated world regions -- **Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East**. Ideally, those of you with fluency in, for example, Spanish will gravitate toward investigating views of a given issue from Latin America, etc.

Class Blog: Blogging affords a good opportunity to practice and hone your writing and thinking skills informally. For this assignment, you will use Blackboard's "blog tool" to blog as a class. This means you won't have your own blog. Instead, you will each post individual entries to a class blog that everyone can post to, read, and post responses to. you will need to track down one online photo, video, news story, blog entry, advertisement, political cartoon, etc. from an

online source that you found interesting, thought-provoking, troubling, etc. Each of the total of three pictures, cartoons, etc. you respond to during the quarter must come from and/or have something to do with the world region for which you have signed up to be an expert (for the *Lead Class Discussion* and *Group Project* assignments). The five regions are: Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, and The Middle East.

International discussion board posts: We will be exchanging ideas online about globalization and international communication and culture with students in Slovenia (at the University of Maribor). Either I, or instructors in Slovenia (Marko Ivanisin) and/or students in Slovenia will be creating discussion threads on contemporary globalization, culture and communication issues.

I will require that you respond to a total of 4 threads established by me *and* that you post thoughtful, intelligent and respectful responses to 4 responses and/or new discussion threads posted by Slovenian students. You also have the opportunity to chat online with students in Slovenia.

You are strongly encouraged to go beyond the minimum posting requirements to create new discussion threads and exchanges of your own, as well as set up times to chat online with students Slovenia. You will receive **extra credit** (how much will be determined later) if you go beyond the minimum requirements in participating in this international online forum. Going beyond the minimum requirements might include creating new discussion threads, responding to more than 4 online replies, setting up chat sessions with students in Slovenia.

Please read the bios posted by the students from the University of Maribor and your fellow DU students. This will humanize the electronic exchanges, make these exchanges more interesting, and, it is hoped, ensure that they are reasonable, civil exchanges. You are encouraged to return to the bios to (re)familiarize yourself with some of your international interlocutors when you read and/or respond to some of their discussion board posts.

Pop Quizzes: There will be four pop quizzes. Your best three quiz grades will count. Quizzes will be given at the beginning of class. I will not re-administer quizzes for those who arrive to class late! The questions on these quizzes will relate to the readings, lecture, current international events, and the readings that your fellow classmates select the class to read as part of the lead-class discussion assignment!

Participation & Attendance: In-class participation and discussion are vital to a healthy and effective learning environment. This is especially crucial in a small class such as this one. Therefore, I will take attendance regularly. Additionally, you may be periodically called upon to ask/answer questions. You will also be called upon to participate in short in-class group activities and subsequent group presentations. Student names must be affixed to any group work (overheads, etc.) and will be used as a partial basis upon which to determine individual participation grades. More than two unexcused absences will result in a substantial reduction in your participation grade!

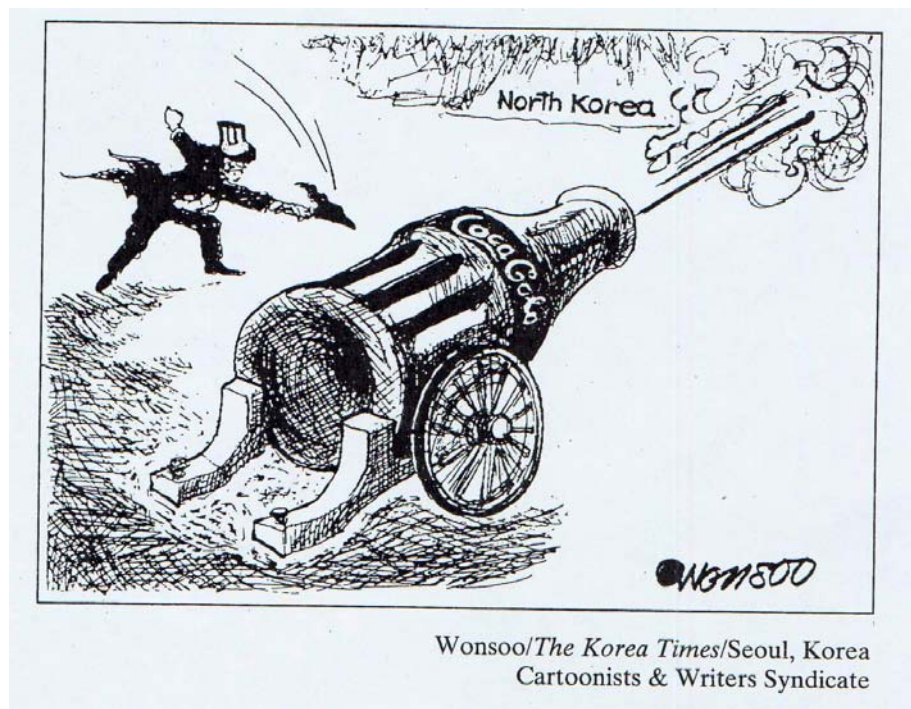
Grading Scale:

93%+	A
90%-92%	A-
87%-89%	B+
83%-86%	B

80%-82%	B-
77%-79%	C+
73-76%	C
70-72%	C-
67%-69%	D+
63%-66%	D
60%-62%	D-
59% -	F

If you attend class, do the required work and have a reasonable grasp of the information, you should have no trouble earning at least a "C," which indicates satisfactory work.

With the exception of documented absences [official doctor's note, etc.] you will NOT be allowed to make up an exam, paper, presentation, etc. if you miss class. If you have a legitimate, documented reason for missing an upcoming class [official DU athletic/extracurricular event, etc.], it is your responsibility to inform the instructor beforehand. Lecture notes will be posted to the class web site. However, It is your responsibility to contact other class members for in-class notes, assignment sheets, etc. if you miss class.



Gradebook:

I will be using the Gradebook program in Blackboard. This will allow you to generally keep track of how you're doing. Be aware that a large percentage of your grade will still be in the balance until after the last day of class. In short, just because you're carrying a 90% average into the last day of class doesn't mean that you will end up with a 90% for the quarter. Basically, use Gradebook as a rough estimate of how you're doing during the quarter -- and to make sure I am entering the correct grades on your assignments.

Policies

1. Rude or abusive behavior such as talking excessively while the instructor or fellow students are addressing the class and/or personal verbal attacks on another student, groups of students, or the instructor will not be tolerated. This type of behavior will have an extremely negative impact on your participation grade!

2. TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES/PAGERS etc. before coming to class. I will **NOT** tolerate text messaging/IM'ing, Internet surfing etc. in class. Students who violate this policy will immediately be asked to leave class that day. Additionally, they will receive a 0% on their participation grade (worth 10% of the total quarter grade!).
3. NO LAPTOPS except for specific in-class exercises in which I ask you to use your laptops! For the rationale behind this policy, please see No. 2 above!
4. Sleeping during class is rude and disrespectful to me, and to other students who are contributing to class. If you are too tired to come to class, don't come at all. I will mark you absent if you sleep during class.
5. Cheating or plagiarizing the work of another will result in an automatic "F" for that assignment. Additionally, university policy permits harsher actions. If you have any questions about what constitutes (or does not constitute) plagiarism, ask me before you turn something in.
6. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please let me know as soon as possible.
7. If you are involved in DU athletics or some other form of extra-curricular activity that will interfere with your attendance, you are required to let me know far ahead of time so that we can make any accommodations that are allowed according to official DU policies.
8. If you have any questions or concerns during the course of the quarter about anything, please feel free to contact me. E-mail (cdemonth@du.edu) is far and away the best way to reach me!