

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF SOCIETY, CULTURE, MEDIA AND PHILOSOPHY
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNICATION

ICOM 817
Transnational Communication

STUDY GUIDE, SEMESTER 2, 2008

Unit Overview

This unit provides an extensive and comparative outline of transnational communication perspectives in the modern world. Beginning with an investigation of the socio-cultural, economic, political and scientific/technical conditions that shape the global spread of media, the unit will utilise a range of theoretical perspectives drawn from the fields of communications and cultural studies to assist understanding of such transnational phenomenon. It will also attempt to examine the structures and activities of global media, including film, television, advertising and new media and their significant impacts on the transnational communication. A range of case studies will be presented to illustrate how the form and nature of transnational communication has become critical and controversial framework for contemporary debates in consideration of issues such as globalisation and cultural imperialism. Students will be able to apply insights gained through theoretical and practical analysis to develop their own interests into the relevant field.

Unit Value: 4 Credit Points

Contact Details

Unit Convener and Lecturer: Dr Shih-Chi Kao
Office: Room 605, W3A
Email: skao@scmp.mq.edu.au
Telephone: 9850 4276
Lecture/Tutorial Time /Place: Wednesday 3pm – 6pm

Course Theory, Research Skills and Other Skills Content (Rated out of five)

Theory review skills	5
Independent research skills	4
Media skills	1
Writing skills	4
Oral presentations skills	4
Group work skills	4

Unit Outcomes

In this unit, students will learn the following discipline based skills and knowledge:

1. Understanding of the progression of transnational communication in the context of socio-cultural, economic, political and scientific/technical development;
2. Understanding of the different perspectives of the development of transnational communication;
3. Knowledge of various point of view of the practice of transnational communication (including television, film and internet);
4. Insight to and skills of development of strategies for the effective implementation of transnational communication projects;
5. Individual and group presentation experience.

Generic Skills

University study does not only aim to provide you with knowledge and skills in a particular academic discipline, but also in research, work and expression skills that will help you in later employment. These are known as generic skills.

1. Group-based work and presentation collaboration;
2. Cross-cultural empathy;
3. Independent library and online research skills;
4. Report writing;
5. Oral presentation.

Topic Schedule

Week 1 – Introduction

Week 2 – Globalisation and its Critiques

Week 3 – Information Flow: Technology and Society

Week 4 – Transnational (Media) Corporations

Week 5 – Theories of Global Media

Week 6 – Transnational Television: News and Advertising

Week 7 – Transnational Cinema: *Eat Drink Man Woman*

Week 8 – Transnational New Media: Internet

Week 9 – Culture: the Concept of Identity

Week 10 – People: Diaspora Mediascapes

Week 11 – Places: World Cities and (Post) Modernism

Week 12 – Group Presentations

Week 13 – Group Presentations

Assessment

Assessment of this unit is composed of four components:

1) Class Participation: Value 10%

Students are expected to participate in discussions and activities around the readings allocated for tutorials and to attend and be punctual for at least 75%

of the lectures and tutorials. To be awarded with a grade of Distinction or High Distinction, an attendance of 90% or higher is required.

2) Weekly Reading Notes: Value 10%

Students are expected to complete each week's readings and prepare for a brief summary of individual thoughts on the readings and questions for class discussion in the tutorial. This weekly reading notes should be 1-2 pages long and handed in personally on **Wednesday tutorial class each week (from week 2 to week 11).**

3) Assignment One (Individual Presentation + 2000 Words Critical Report): Value 40% (Individual Presentation 50%/ Group Report 50%)

Students are expected to choose a transnational corporation (from your country or region) and **critically** analyse on how it tries to maximise its influence, profits and impact in the society of their choice.

a) Individual Presentation

Students are simply required to present the background of the corporation, as well as its approach to exploit revenues, the prospective impact in different sectors and a brief personal thought about the corporation. It should take **10-15 minutes** (followed by class discussion) and will be scheduled from **week 4 to week 10** (depends on the number of students).

b) Critical Report

It should contain introduction, a short status report, literature review, critical analysis/discussion and recommendation. Students should utilise theories and literatures discussed in this unit to support their arguments; however, they are also strongly encouraged to exercise individual materials to demonstrate their own creativity, knowledge and ability. This critical report is **due a week after the presentation in the tutorial class.**

4) Assignment Two (Group Presentation + 3000 Words Group Report): Value 40% (Group Presentation 50%/ Group Report 50%)

Students (group of 4-5) are expected to be transnational communication specialists hired by a transnational corporation to work on the project **not as successful as anticipated.** The purpose is to discover existing problems in this project (such as identifying the strengths and weaknesses), improve the strategies adopted previously and propose some recommendations in order to achieve more effective outcomes. Students are required to utilise theories and literatures discussed in this unit as groundwork and put in additional effort from other source to establish their own arguments more comprehensively.

a) Group Presentation

The group will make a presentation to the transnational corporation about its project which failed to succeed on following points:

- 1) background information and critical analysis of the selected project;
- 2) a review of the appropriate literature to support the adoption of proposed strategies;
- 3) recommended strategies for successful implementation.

This group presentation will be **marked individually** for each member of the group and will take place during **week 12 and 13.**

b) Group Report

The group report should be based on the oral presentation and develop into an academic written work to showcase the capability of the team work and relevant theories/literatures applied and learned through this assignment. It will only receive one mark per group and be **due on 12th October, Wednesday, 5pm.**

Please take extra caution on the following details:

1. For assignment submission, please submit a **hardcopy** and an **electronic copy** to lecture by the due date. Assignments should have a completed **MUCIC cover sheet** (dark green), the lecture's name and other details completed.
2. Please make sure it is an **academic written style work** and to provide **detailed references and a bibliography** as usual. In particular, in order to make personal arguments/ideas stronger, it is strongly suggested that students utilise literature support in the section of discussion/recommendation.
3. Please use **Times New Roman, Size 12, Double Space, Justified and Harvard reference style** for the format of your work.

Grades, Scaled Marks and Grade Points

Assignments and presentations will be marked on the following scale:

HD	High Distinction	85-100	4
D	Distinction	75-84	4
CR	Credit	65-74	3
P	Pass	50-64	2
PC	Pass Conceded	45-49	1
F	Fail	0-44	

To achieve a **credit grade** there must be evidence of critical analysis, knowledge and familiarity of key concepts from the course, material drawn from readings and lectures, and appropriate referencing. In addition to the requirements for a credit, to attain a **distinction or better** there must be reference to additional literature sources, demonstrated high level critical thinking, creative presentation and individual field research, and **the attendance must be not lower than 90%**.

PLUS

All students are recommended to participate in the Program for Learning, Understanding and Support (PLUS). One of the objectives of PLUS is to teach students to avoid the pitfalls of plagiarism. All students are expected to attend PLUS sessions about plagiarism. Students who have difficulty in English expression are expected to participate in the PLUS Language Support Program. Please consult the PLUS Coordinator for detailed information of the program.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of other peoples' work or ideas. It is a serious academic offence. It is your responsibility to know what plagiarism is, and how to

avoid it. More information can be found in the Division of SCMP Essay Writing Guide, or at www.scmp.mq.edu.au/plagiarism.html. Additionally there will be PLUS guidance provided on avoiding plagiarism. Students who are experiencing difficulties in one way or the other should consult their lecturer about an extension rather than falling into the trap of plagiarism. Plagiarism can result in failure in the unit or even suspension from the University, depending on the extent of the offence. In order to protect students from the trap of falling into plagiarism, assignments may be subjected to electronic plagiarism detection tests.

Human Ethics

Please note that research projects involving human participants must be conducted in conformity with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans (1999). More information of the University's Human Ethics Guidelines is provided at www.ro.mq.edu.au/eth_hum.htm.

Frequent Asked Questions

Where and what is the Department of International Communication?

The Department of International Communication is located at F9C. For information about the department please check the website www.mucic.mq.edu.au

Late Submission of Work

All assignments that are received after the stated submission deadline may have up to 5 % of the total mark assigned to that assignment deducted for each day (including weekends and holidays) that the work remains unreceived. **A penalty will be avoided if an extension is sought and received before the deadline for submission is reached.** Students who submit their work one week after the due date, where no extension has been granted and where there are no extenuating circumstances, should only expect to receive a mark for that work. Markers are under no obligation to provide further comments on the work.

What are references?

Written academic assignments usually require a student to explore a topic, consider theoretical approaches, and provide examples to support arguments. To achieve these ends they usually need draw on a variety of written or others sources. The following passage provides a model for how this might be done (students should use the Harvard referencing style and not use footnotes or endnotes – instead use in-text referencing which state the author, date of publication and page number.) See <http://www.lib.gla.ac.uk/researchskills/citationstyle.shtml>. In addition, writing tools at <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~wricntr/html/tools.htm> is also a site with useful information on writing assignments.

Weekly Lectures and Readings

Week 1 Introduction

A brief introduction to the study of the field in transnational communication and discussion on the course outline and associated questions. The nomination for

individual presentation week, the grouping for assignment two and student feedback on the expectation of this unit will also be conducted.

Readings:

Palmer, A. (2007), 'Following the Historical Paths of Global Communication', in Y. R. Kamalipour (eds.), *Global Communication* (2nd Ed.), Belmont: Thomson, pp. 1-21.

Sussman, G. and Lent, J. A. (1991), 'Introduction: Critical Perspectives on Communication and Third World Development', in G. Sussman and J. A. Lent (eds.), *Transnational Communications: Wiring the Third World*, Newbury Park: Sage, pp. 1-25.

Week 2 Globalisation and its Critiques

The world is becoming one at last, or is it not? This is the argument that has caused such controversial in the modern world. As the phenomenon of globalisation considered as one of the driving forces behind the occurrence of transnational communication, it is necessary to allocate extra attention in the debate of this development and reach the individual understanding and perspective of this trend.

Readings:

Glenn, J. (2007), *Globalisation: North-South Perspectives*, Oxon: Routledge, pp. 34-69.

Dirlik, A. (1996), 'The Global in the Local', in R. Wilson and W. Dissanayake, *Global/Local*, United States of America: Duke University Press, pp. 21-45.

Week 3 Information Flow: Technology and Society

The rapid development in communication technology is unquestionable strength in resulting the explosion of information. As a result, the evidences of transnational communication can be vividly seen in everyday life. Nevertheless, other essentials, such as economic apprehension and policy planning, also need to be considered as significant roles to determine the direction in the movement of this trans-border information flow.

Readings:

Anderson, W. T. (2004), *All Connected Now: Life in the First Global Civilization*, Cambridge: Westview, pp. 121-136.

Sawhney, H. (2007), 'Global Economy and International Telecommunications Networks', in Y. R. Kamalipour (eds.), *Global Communication* (2nd Ed.), Belmont: Thomson, pp.39-53.

Crack, A.M. (2008), *Global Communication and Transnational Public Spheres*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 67-103.

Week 4 Transnational (Media) Corporations

The transnational corporation is one of the most important economic legacies of the post-WWII period and since, the rapid growth of transnational corporation is unstoppable. The distinctive character of transnational corporation is that strategic decision making and the allocation of resources is based on economic goals and effectiveness with little regard to national boundaries. What are the strengths and weaknesses by proceeding such operation?

Readings:

Gershon, R. A. (2007), 'The Transnational Media Corporation and the Economics of Global Competition', in Y. R. Kamalipour (eds.), *Global Communication* (2nd Ed.), Belmont: Thomson, pp. 55-77.

Flew, T. (2007), *Understanding Global Media*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 66-97.

Week 5 The Theories of Global Media

The phenomenon of global media is undeniable fact in the modern society and it is essential to examine this occurrence in different perspectives by attempting to think connectedly and deeply about some fundamental theories. These theories are not conclusive, but positively arguable, interpretative and evaluative.

Readings:

Thussu, D. K. (2006), *International Communication: Continuity and Change*, London: Hodder Arnold, pp. 40-68.

Flew, T. (2007), *Understanding Global Media*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 30-65.

Week 6 Transnational Television: News and Advertising

With the advancement of the communication technology, the practice of transnational television and its impact in society has been hugely discussed since the 20th century. However, it is indisputable that the implications of carrying transnational television cross national and cultural borders have some far more serious and complicated consequences.

Readings:

Chalaby, J. K. (2005), 'Towards an Understanding of Media Transnationalism', in J. K. Chalaby (eds.), *Transnational Television Worldwide: Towards A New Media Order*, London: I. B. Tauris, pp. 1-13.

Meyer, W. H. (1988), *Transnational Media and Third World Development: The Structure and Impact of Imperialism*, New York: Greenwood, pp. 17-39.

Kruckeberg D. and Vujnovic, M. (2007), 'Global Advertising and Public Relations', in Y. R. Kamalipour (eds.), *Global Communication* (2nd Ed.), Belmont: Thomson, pp. 271-291.

Week 7 Transnational Cinema: *Eat Drink Man Woman*

Students are invited to watch the film, *Eat Drink Man Woman* (Ang Lee, 1994) and join the discussion on how the film/filmmakers contribute to the better understanding of the homeland (Taiwan) and its culture in terms of the theories of transnational cinema and its critics.

Readings:

Ezra, E. and Rowden, T. (2006), *Transnational Cinema: The Film Reader*, London: Routledge, pp. 1-12.

Laine, T. (2005), 'Family Matters in *Eat Drink Man Woman*: Food Envy, Family Longing, or Intercultural Knowledge Through the Senses?', in P. Pisters and W. Staat (eds.), *Shooting Family: Transnational Media and Intercultural Values*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp. 103-114.

Week 8 Transnational New Media: Internet

In this information age, the role and impact of new media is becoming more and more significant and profound, to be more specific, the internet. It is speedy, efficient and resourceful. Is this a fair statement? Why is it/ isn't it? Every scenario has two sides of stories and this is no exception.

Readings:

Flew, T. and McElhinney, S. (2006), 'Globalisation and the Structure of New Media Industries', in L. A. Lievrouw and S. Livingstone (eds.), *The Handbook of New Media*, London: Sage, pp. 286-306.

Thussu, D. K. (2006), *International Communication: Continuity and Change*, London: Hodder Arnold, pp. 207-249.

Barnett, G. A. and Rosen, D. (2007), 'The Global Implications of the Internet: Challenges and Prospects', in Y. R. Kamalipour (eds.), *Global Communication* (2nd Ed.), Belmont: Thomson, pp.157-179.

Week 9 Culture: the Concept of Identity

There is no question about the notion of 'culture is everywhere'. However, under the umbrella of globalisation and the rapid growth of transnational communications, is there a 'global culture' presented? If there is, what is it then? How about the existence of individual identity? It seems that the whole generation is by some means lost in the transition, or isn't it?

Readings:

Smith, A. D. (1990), 'Towards a Global Culture?', in M. Featherstone (eds.), *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalisation and Modernity*, London: Sage, p. 171-191.

Hannerz, U. (1996), *Transnational Connections*, London: Routledge, p. 56-64.

Flew, T. (2007), *Understanding Global Media*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 138-169.

Week 10 People: Diaspora Mediascapes

With the development of new communication technologies, transnational and diasporic communities have the opportunities to increase the capacity in the improvement of effective networks. It can be seen as part of noteworthy emerging transnational communications; however, it is unfortunate that very little comparative discussion has been carried out.

Readings:

Karim, K. H. (2003), 'Mapping Diasporic Mediascapes', in K. H. Karim (eds.), *The Media of Diaspora*, London: Routledge, pp. 1-17.

Sinclair, J. and Cunningham, S. (2001), 'Diasporas and the Media', in J. Sinclair and S. Cunningham (eds.), *Floating Lives: The Media and Asian Diasporas*, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, p. 1-34.

Week 11 Place: World Cities

Students will be asked to answer the following questions and discuss the concept of world cities and its critiques:

- 1) Where/which city are you from?
- 2) What does it make this city special?
- 3) What is the future of this city?

Readings:

Hannerz, U. (1996), *Transnational Connections*, London: Routledge, p. 127-139.

Weesep, J. V. (1998), 'World Cities: Where the Global Meets the Local', in S. G. E. Gravesteijn, S. V. Griensven and M.C.D. Smidt (eds.), *Timing Global Cities*, Netherlands Geographical Studies, pp. 13-20.

Abrahamson, M. (2004), *Global Cities*, New York: Oxford, pp. 1-22.

Week 12 Group Presentation

Week 13 Group Presentation