Senior Seminar in Media Studies

**Course Description:**

This seminar serves as a capstone course for students in the Media Studies track, offering the student opportunity to synthesize information learned in other Media Studies courses and demonstrate abilities to think critically, conduct independent research linked to appropriate media theories, create independent and collaborative projects that demonstrate effective use of media strategies and skills, and present written and oral media projects at an advanced level. The course will prepare you to enter graduate studies and/or the job market well prepared and with self-confidence. Topics vary by instructor. Senior level standing.

**Learning Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes:**

At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to:

-- Demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving abilities to understand the foundation for studying the new digital media within media studies, media systems and practices in the context of the U.S. media and American democracy;

-- Create individual and collaborative projects that demonstrate effective use of communication strategies, media theories and insights by identifying effects of new digital media and their audiences on American cultural diversity, political practice;

-- Identify and analyze issues in communication and media ethics relating to the role new digital media—journalism, advertising, public relations, film, television, entertainment industry, music—play in American culture, politics and society; and

-- Understand and apply critical theories, research methods, and/or production skills relating to the focus of the course.

**Required Textbook:**


**Recommended Textbook:**


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Major Course Requirements and Expectations:

Students will be required to attend every class period, write weekly abstracts, two think pieces/essays and a team project at the conclusion of the term. The course will be composed of instructor’s lectures, class discussions relating to course materials and readings, individual and team written and oral presentations. These presentations will be video-taped and evaluated.

Students will be evaluated and their performance will be assessed based on the following criteria and grading scale:

**In-class participation/Attendance:** 10% (Discussion on assigned readings, lectures and related media readings). Each student is required to engage in all aspects and phases of class work).

**6 Weekly goals:** 60% of 10% each. These goals include: a) Poster Session participation, b) Peer Review of Resume and Resume Writing; c) Preliminary Research Proposal; d) Review of Literature; e) Review of Sample Section of Data Analysis or Method; f) Rough Draft of Research Report.

**Team Project/Term Research Paper/Oral Presentation:** 30% (Research paper on an approved topic in new and digital media and culture). Fully developed team project/term paper is expected at the end of the course that shows rigor in research and critical analysis relating to a specific topic or problem selected with approval of instructor. Oral presentation of the team term paper must be presented in class.

**Grading Scale:** 90-100 A; 80-89 B; 70-79 C; 60-69 D; 59-below F

Course Policies:

*Attendance and Tardiness:* Attendance is required—both physically and mentally. You are expected to take an active role in classroom discussions. Absences, late arrivals, and chronic failure to engage in class discussion will all be reflected in your participation grade.

*Late work and make-up work*

- If there should be a legitimate reason for you missing class (illness, family emergencies, certain University-sponsored extracurricular activities), please provide the instructor with the notification prior to the event or as soon as you are able—before the missed class period. If appropriate, we can arrange alternate times for you to make up quizzes or exams, but it will be your responsibility to get any information from lecture from one of your classmates.
- Unexcused absences will be noted and reflected in your participation grade. Also, any work missed due to an unexcused absence cannot be made up.
- Late work for any reason considered unexcused will be penalized by at least one letter grade for each day it is late.

*Cell Phone/Electronic Device Usage:* While in class, please make sure your phone is off or on silent (and in your backpack or out of sight), so it's not heard in class. Also, limited laptop/tablet use is permitted --for note-taking only, but do not abuse this privilege.

- Please remember to check your email regularly for any course updates.
- If you would like to discuss any course readings, lectures, or assignments outside of class, you should feel free to contact me via email or by arranging to visit me during office hours or set up an appointment to see me at any other time.

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Please submit hard copies of your papers, prior to the class period on the due date. Marked copies will be returned to you. All writing for this course must be composed using a standard, 12-point font size, and with the standard 1-inch margins.

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism:** University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examination or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work). In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in the course grade of F.

**Dropping the Course:** I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation will not automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Please check published dates for the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Preferred methods of scholarly citations**

For the purpose of citation, please follow The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th Edition, humanities style (notes and bibliography). For guidance, see: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html. Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will result in the grade of F for the course.

**Classroom/professional behavior**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

**GRADE APPEALS PROCESS:** Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, ela.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.

**ACADEMIC ADVISING:** The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**NOTICE TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816. Students with Disabilities and/or Returning Veterans

*Class Schedule and Assignments on following page*
Class Schedule and Assignments (subject to change)

Week 1:  Introduction, course outline/expectations
Jan. 22:  Introductions, Introduction to Course, review of textbooks and syllabus. Partners to be assigned.

Week 2:  Towards Media Literacy: Understanding Communication Technology
Jan. 27, 29:  Schmidt: Introduction; Booth, 1 (Organize for Poster Session Presentation; Teams of 2)

Week 3:  The Future of Media
Feb. 3, 5:  Schmidt: Chapter 1; Booth 2 (Resume Writing prep begins)

Week 4:  New Media and Identity Politics

Week 5:  New Media and Citizenship

Week 6:  New Media and the News Industry
Feb. 24, 26:  Schmidt: Chapter 2; Booth 5 (Review of Research Approach/Analysis outline)

Week 7:  New Media, Politics and Governance
Mar. 3, 5:  Schmidt: Chapter 3; Booth 6 (Draft of Research Report); Submit Poster for Poster Session Presentation

Spring Break: March 10, 12

Week 8:  New Media and Revolutions in the World (Form Teams of 3 for Final Term Project)
Mar. 17, 19:  Schmidt: Chapter 4; Booth 7 & 8 (Team Project topic chosen)

Week 9:  New Media and Terrorism
Mar. 24, 26:  Schmidt: Chapter 5; Booth 9 & 10 (Research Proposal submission)

Week 10:  New Media and Human Conflict
Mar. 31, Apr. 2:  Schmidt: Chapter 6; Booth 11 & 12 (Review of Literature)

Week 11:  New Media, National Security and the Military
Apr. 7, 9:  Schmidt: Chapter 6 contd.; Booth 13 & 14 (Research Analysis approach)

Week 12:  New Media and Social Interventions
Apr. 14, 16:  Schmidt: Chapter 6 contd.; Booth 15 & 16 (Writing Final Term Project)

Week 13:  New Media and National Reconstruction
Apr. 21, 23:  Schmidt: Chapter 7; Booth 17 (Oral Team Presentations of Final term Project)

Week 14:  New Media and the Future
Apr. 28, 30:  Schmidt: Conclusion; Booth Conclusion (Oral Team Presentations of Final Term Project)

Week 15:  Course overview
May 5: **Written Final Term Papers due**

ABOUT THE PROFESSOR

**Anantha S. Babbili** (Ph.D., The University of Iowa) is Professor of Communication & Media Studies at Texas A&M - Corpus Christi. He was Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs of the university from 2007 to 2010. He is former Dean of the College of Mass Communication (2002-2007) at Middle Tennessee State University. Babbili taught and directed the Journalism and Media Studies department at Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, for more than two decades. He was the visiting Rogers Chair in Journalism and New Information Technologies at the University of Western Ontario, Canada and lectured in Mexico, India, Slovakia, UK and Asia. Babbili is the co-author of the book, *An Ethics Trajectory*, published by the University of Illinois Press and has published his research in several books including *Communication Ethics and University Values*, *Critical Issues in Media, Bosnia by Television* (British Film Institute), *Mass Media in the Middle East*, and *The Press and the State*.

A former journalist, Babbili has published scholarly articles that have appeared in journals such as *Media, Culture and Society*, *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, *Newspaper Research Journal* and the *International Third World Studies Journal*. Babbili was the Editor (2000-2008) of the national *Journalism & Communication Monographs* and served on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* and *Journalism Studies*. He is on the *International Bibliography of the Social Sciences* advisory board at the London School of Economics and Political Science. He received the Barry Bingham Award from the National Conference of Editorial Writers and was the consultant to the United Nations and the UNESCO on human rights and communication. The Carnegie Foundation and the Council on the Advancement and Support of Teaching named Babbili the Texas Professor of the Year. He is the recipient of the National Teaching Award from the Poynter Institute for Media Studies, St. Petersburg, Florida. His columns and opinions as a news source on breaking events and U.S. foreign policy appeared on CNN, ABC News, CBS, and NBC and in *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Times*, *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* and many other media outlets. Before earning his doctorate, Babbili earned two undergraduate degrees in biological sciences and journalism from his native India and M.A. in journalism from the University of Oklahoma.

Since 2006, Babbili has been a member of the governing board of a communication institute operated by a reputed media-related reputed foundation in India. As the Provost of Texas A&M Corpus Christi, Babbili served as the chief institutional liaison to the successful SACS accreditation Process and was responsible for overall quality of academic affairs of the University. He is the graduate of the Management and Leadership program of Harvard University.

**What do we do in the Department of Communication & Media? Here’s our mission:**

**Develop students who are effective and ethical communicators with the creative, critical, and collaborative skills necessary to succeed in a diverse global environment.**

**What are the Department’s Objectives? After graduation, our graduates are able to:**

- Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively;
- Practice the ability to work with others to create a product; and
- Recognize ethical issues in communication