

SYLLABUS

1. Information about the program

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| 1.1 Higher education institution | BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY |
| 1.2 Faculty | COLLEGE OF POLITICAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND COMMUNICATION SCIENCES |
| 1.3 Department | JOURNALISM DEPARTMENT |
| 1.4 Field of study | COMMUNICATION SCIENCES |
| 1.5 Level of study | BACHELOR |
| 1.6 Study program / Qualification | JOURNALISM |

2. Information about the discipline

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|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------|---|----------------------|-----|---------------------|-----------|
| 2.1 Discipline title | MEDIA AND POPULAR CULTURE | | | | | | |
| 2.2 Course lecturer | PAUL BOCA, Ph.D., LECTURER | | | | | | |
| 2.3 Seminar assistant | CĂLIN CREȚU, Ph.D.c | | | | | | |
| 2.4 Year of study | 1 | 2.5 Semester | 1 | 2.6. Evaluation type | C/V | 2.7 Discipline type | OP |

3. Total estimated time (hours of didactic activities per semester)

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|---|----|----------------------|--|------------------------|-----|
| 3.1 Number of hours per week | 2 | of which: 3.2 course | | 3.3 seminar/laboratory | 2 |
| 3.4 Total hours in the study plan | 28 | of which: 3.5 course | | 3.6 seminar/laboratory | 28 |
| Time distribution: | | | | | hrs |
| Studying the manual, course reader, bibliography and notes: | | | | | 14 |
| Supplementary documentation in the library, on electronic platforms and in the field: | | | | | 28 |
| Preparing seminars/laboratories, homework, syntheses, portfolios and essays: | | | | | 14 |
| Tutorials | | | | | |
| Examinations | | | | | |
| Other activities: | | | | | |
| 3.7 Total hours of individual study | 56 | | | | |
| 3.8 Total hours per semester | 84 | | | | |
| 3.9 Number of credits | 3 | | | | |

4. Prerequisites (where applicable)

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| 4.1 based on the curriculum | • |
| 4.2 based on competences | • |

5. Conditions (where applicable)

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| 5.1 for the course | • A minimum number of 10 students enrolled in the practical course |
| 5.2 for the seminar/laboratory | • A minimum number of 10 students enrolled in the practical course |

6. Accumulated specific competencies

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| Professional competencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying and critical thinking about popular media texts: violent news, tabloid newspapers, cartoons and comic strips, tabloid television, reality-shows, sports talk-shows, music videos, advertisements, online videos (C1.1) Defining, understanding and using specific concepts in the field of media and cultural studies: popular culture, high culture, low culture, mass culture, public sphere, attention economy, media spectacle, presentation, representation and self-presentation (C3.1) Identifying and using the main theories concerning media communication, target audience segmentation and the dynamics of various types of audience: reception theory, encoding/decoding, uses and gratifications, popular formats and audience segments (C4.1) Identifying and describing the communicational environment in which national and local organizations globalize their activity: global popular television formats - talent shows, the construction of media celebrities, video-sharing culture, internet memes, self-presentation in social media, show structure and emotion |
| Transversal competencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the production and consumption of popular media texts in the context of global culture and with respect to the socio-economic and cultural structure of society |

7. Discipline objectives (from the accumulated competencies grid)

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|-------------------------|---|
| 7.1 General objective | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The understanding of the structure and dynamics of popular media texts in the context contemporary global culture |
| 7.2 Specific objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying popular media texts in contemporary culture Classifying popular media texts according to structure Understanding the concepts relating to popular culture and media communication Understanding the cultural dynamics of popular media |

8. Contents

| 8.1 Course | Teaching methods | Observations |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Popular Journalism and Popular culture. High Culture, Low Culture, Mass Culture | Explanation, Demonstration, Individual Work | The students will be asked to list 5 things they associate with terms such a popular culture, high culture, low culture, mass culture |
| 2. Celebrity and Popular culture: History Through Popular culture | Explanation, Demonstration, Collaborative Work, Video | The students will be asked to agree on the top celebrities of the 20th |

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| | | <p>century and last years’ top celebrities. Watch: Mr. Wuhl video – History is Popular Culture</p> |
| <p>3. The Tabloid Press. Paparazzi Photos. Truth, Fiction and Truthiness</p> | <p>Explanation, Demonstration, Discussion, Video</p> | <p>Watch Steven Colbert define “truthiness”. Fact or fiction? Decide whether a headline is plausibly factual or fictional. What does this piece of news make you feel? Associate emotions with media texts.</p> |
| <p>4. Heroes, Myths and Conflict in Popular Media. Fan Cultures. Superheroes and Visual Narratives. Comic Strips and Caricature</p> | <p>Explanation, Demonstration, Discussion, Simulation</p> | <p>Who is your favorite comic book superhero? Why? What superpower would you want to have? What secret identity would you have as a superhero? How would you look like as a superhero? Why? In groups: Create doomsday scenarios. Switch. Use superheroes to solve them.</p> |
| <p>5. TV series and distribution models. Linear distribution and Video-on-Demand services</p> | <p>Explanation, Demonstration, Discussion, Collaborative Work</p> | |
| <p>6. The Aesthetics of Melodrama. The Fearful Audience. Violent News on Television. Domsday Scenarios – The Counterfactual Documentary</p> | <p>Explanation, Demonstration,</p> | <p>Watch pieces of violent TV News. Watch How TV Ruined Your Life – Episode about Fear.</p> |
| <p>7. Fake news. Satire, parody and news discourse. Media hoaxes. The distribution and credibility of fake news</p> | <p>Explanation, Demonstration, Video, Discussion</p> | |
| <p>8. Talk Shows on Popular Television. Manufactured Reality. Educating Principles through Reality Shows. Big Brother, Survivor, BGT</p> | <p>Explanation, Demonstration, Video, Discussion</p> | <p>Watch pieces of talk-shows. Discuss the format. Watch pieces of reality shows. Observe roles and the unfolding of drama. Observe the use of film technique to construct conflict. Discus Reading: Amusing Ourselves to Death by Neil Postman</p> |
| <p>9. Entertainment. Music Television. Music Videos</p> | <p>Explanation, Demonstration, Video, Discussion</p> | <p>Watch unfamiliar music video on mute. Try to identify genre and story. Watch Michael Jackson music video. Discuss the</p> |

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| | | signification of Michael Jackson as a cultural product. Discuss ideology in music videos. Debate: YouTube vs. MTV. |
| 10. Online media sharing. Remix culture | | |
| 11. The Biology of Popular Culture. Evolutionary Culture and the Epidemic Model. Viral Videos and Internet Memes | Explanation, Demonstration, Discussion | Watch viral videos. What do they have in common? Watch Mike Wesch lecture fragment. Define memes. Discuss familiar Internet memes. Discuss the role of 4chan and reddit. Discuss emotion and rage comics. Discuss celebrity and advice animals. |
| 12. Self-presentation on Social Network Sites. | Explanation, Demonstration, Video, Discussion | What do you post on Facebook? How many pictures of you do you have online? Discuss stance, posture, accessories. GAME of TAG (game) Make a picture of yourself in class! (Experiment). |
| 13. The social lives of networked teenagers. Public and private communication | Explanation, Demonstration, Video, Discussion | |
| 14. Colloquium | Student presentations Discussion | |
| <p>Bibliography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berger, A.A. (2012) <i>Media Analysis Techniques</i>, London: Sage. • Berger, A.A. (2009) <i>What Objects Mean. An Introduction to Material Culture</i>, Left Coast Press. • Boyd, Danah. <i>It's complicated: The social lives of networked teens</i>. Yale University Press, 2014. • Certeau, M. d. (2002). <i>The Practice of Everyday Life</i>. Londra: University of California Press. • Dahlgren, P.(ed) & Sparks, C.(ed) (1992) <i>Journalism and Popular Culture</i>, London, Sage. • Fiske, J. (1991). <i>Reading the popular</i>. London: Routledge. • Fiske, J. (1990). <i>Understanding popular culture</i>. London: Routledge. • Hartley, J. (1996). <i>Popular Reality. Journalism, Modernity, Popular Culture</i>. London: Arnold. • Postman, N. (2005) <i>Amusing Ourselves to Death. Public Discourse in the Age of Show-Business</i>, London: Penguin Books. • Strinati, D. (1995). <i>An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture</i>. London: Routledge. | | |
| 8.2 Seminar / laboratory | Teaching methods | Observations |
| 1. Popular culture and media culture | Explanation Discussion | |
| 2. Celebrities in popular culture. Celebrities in social media. Tabloids | | |
| 3. TV culture. Violent news. Genres and conventions in TV series | Explanation Discussion | |

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| 4. Fan cultures | Explanation Discussion | |
| 5. YouTube culture | Explanation Discussion | |
| 6. Internet memes | Explanation Discussion | |
| 7. Colloquim | Student presentations Discussion | |

Bibliography

- Berger, A.A. (2012) *Media Analysis Techniques*, London: Sage.
- Berger, A.A. (2009) *What Objects Mean. An Introduction to Material Culture*, Left Coast Press.
- Certeau, M. d. (2002). *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Londra: University of California Press.
- Dahlgren, P.(ed) & Sparks, C.(ed) (1992) *Journalism and Popular Culture*, London, Sage.
- Fiske, J. (1991). *Reading the popular*. London: Routledge.
- Fiske, J. (1990). *Understanding popular culture*. London: Routledge.
- Hartley, J. (1996). *Popular Reality. Journalism, Modernity, Popular Culture*. London: Arnold.
- Postman, N. (2005) *Amusing Ourselves to Death. Public Discourse in the Age of Show-Business*, London: Penguin Books.
- Strinati, D. (1995). *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*. London: Routledge.

9. The corroboration of discipline contents with the expectations of epistemic community representatives, professional associations and representative employers in the study program's corresponding field

- Future journalists are expected to understand popular formats (in all media) and the reasons behind such popularity. Understanding the structure and dynamics of popular media texts and developing the critical thinking skills necessary to identify and question ideology in popular culture are vital in designing media products that suit the needs of specific audience segments. Discussing and understanding popular media are very important for the education of less culturally biased and more tolerant media professionals.

10. Evaluation

| Type of activity | 10.1 Evaluation criteria | 10.2 Evaluation methods | 10.3 Weight in final mark |
|------------------|--|---|---------------------------|
| 10.4 Course | Critical argumentative essay (6000 characters) | Written Paper and Presentation Task: Pick one of the topics or subtopics discussed in the course and write a critical argumentative essay. Refer to at least one popular media text and personal experience. Grading criteria: Clarity and coherence Structure Proper use of terms and concepts Number of supporting arguments Strength of arguments | 80% |

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| 10.5 Seminar/laboratory | Participation in weekly activities | Observation and Attendance /Activity Participation lists/ Weekly assignments | 20% |
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Attendance is compulsory for at least 12 of the 14 scheduled courses.
A maximum of missed 3 meetings (25% of the required attendance) can be recovered before the end of the semester through extra credit assignments (2000 words written assignments per missed meeting)

Fraud / plagiarism are sanctionable under the Babes-Bolyai University regulations.

10.6 Minimum performance standard

Understanding and being able to operate with terms such as popular media, mass culture, popular culture, media culture.

Constructing arguments based on systematic observation of popular media formats and consumption practices.

Being able to use personal experience to explain the success of popular texts.

Date

Course lecturer signature

Seminar assistant signature

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Date of approval in the Department

Head of department's signature

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