

JOURN 822 – GLOBAL COMMUNICATION

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Credits: 3 Credits

Requisites: Graduate student status

Course Designations and Attributes: General Education

Instructional Mode: All face-to-face

Course description

This seminar explores the evolving field of global communication. For the first part, we will pay close attention to foundational theories and key debates in international, transnational, and global communication. For the second part, we will learn about the ethnographic approach to global communication through in-depth reading and discussion of ethnographies. Throughout the course, we will try to provide nuanced answers to the following questions:

- Can any form of communication be truly “global”? When we say global/international/transnational communication, what assumptions are we making?
- How do certain global or international communication processes put certain people at a disadvantage while liberating others?
- What ethnographic toolkits can we develop to explore media technologies, institutions, and practices under global contexts?

Course Learning Outcomes

- Develop a basic understanding of the evolving fields of global/international/transnational communication
- Acquire analytical skills to read ethnographic works in media studies
- Build an ethnographic toolkit for conduct communication research in global contexts
- Write a research paper by integrating theories and/or methods learned in this course
- Enhance oral presentation skills by leading course discussion sections and presenting on one's own research project

Grade breakdown:

Grades in the class will be based on the following:

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|-----|-------------------------------|-------|
| (1) | Research paper & Presentation | — 50% |
| (2) | Reading Response Essays | — 20% |
| (3) | Participation | — 30% |

The following breakdowns provide a guideline for the assignment of final grades. These are standards that are guaranteed. Grades are not curved and attendance/participation are required.

Percentage = Grade: 93-100% = A; 88-92.99% = AB; 83-87.99% = B; 78-82.99% = BC; 73-77.99% = C; 68-72.99% = D; below 68% = F

Books to Read

- Larkin, B. (2008) *Signal and Noise: Media, Infrastructure, and Urban Culture in Nigeria*. Duke University Press.
- Ames, M.G. (2019) *The Charisma Machine: The Life, Death, and Legacy of One Laptop per Child*. MIT Press
- Tufekci, Z. (2018) *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest*. Yale University Press.
- Chua, E. H. C. (2023) *The Currency of Truth: Newsmaking and the Late-Socialist Imaginaries of China's Digital Era*. Michigan University Press.
- Ho, M. H. (2024). *Emergent genders: living otherwise in Tokyo's pink economies*. Duke University Press.

Assignments

Research Paper & Presentation

Breakdown of **50% of your final grade**:

- Research brief: 5%, due by the end of 5th week
- Presentation: 5%, in class
- Final paper: 40%, due May 5, 2026

The major requirement for this course is an original paper written by each student and presented to other seminar participants. The goal of the paper is to contribute to research in global communication. The paper must actively engage with some theoretical discussions and/or methodological approaches covered in the course (*non-engagement will result in a zero grade).

The paper should present findings based on the collection of original data or existing data sets. Your work should reflect an empirical orientation that relies on qualitative and/or quantitative methodologies. Some of you may wish to extend projects you have developed elsewhere, or to refine ideas toward completion of Master's or Doctoral theses; please consult with me if this is the case. Students with a professional

orientation can present a project instead of a research paper. The scope of the project should be discussed with me early in the semester.

You will submit a 1 to 2 page, single-space project brief on week 5 that summarizes what you want to do for your final paper.

The final paper is due May 5, 2026 in a proper form for a conference paper (e.g. ICA, IAMCR, NAC, SCMS, or a conference of your choice) or a journal article (journal of your choice). The major body of the article should be 6,000-7,000 words, excluding the word count for figures, tables, appendices, footnotes, and bibliography.

Presenting the final paper will be a crucial component in this course. You will present your work in the final session of the course and receive feedback from your peers and professor.

Reading Response Essays

Breakdown: **5%X4=20%** (must submit in print in class)

You will have to write 4 reading response essays during the course of the semester. Think of these as a book review of approximately two single-spaced pages in length, which are due in class the day the reading is discussed. To write these “book reviews”: (1) reconstruct the structure and logic of the argument; (2) discuss what is important about the content; (3) discuss the limitations or weaknesses of this work. You decide which 4 weeks you will write a response for, but if for any reason you need to miss a session, write a review for that week. All essays should be submitted to the professor in print form in class.

Participation:

Breakdown of 30% for your final grade

- Seminar attendance: 10%
- Class participation: 10%
- Leading discussion sections: 5%X2=10%

Attendance is crucial in this seminar. You can have 1 unexcused absence and 1 excused absence. For any medical or other emergency reasons, please do get in touch ASAP.

You are expected to go beyond opinion-giving and be able to critically engage readings and explain (or explain away) their findings. At the same time, each student must contribute to a classroom environment in which ideas are debated in a respectful way.

Each student will be expected to lead 2 in-class discussion sessions. For these discussions, you will need to use 10-15 minutes to (1) provide a summary of readings for that week; (2) pick one common issue (e.g. question, theory, method, case study) and provide your interpretation of how this week’s reading treats this issue; (3) provide 2-3 questions for further discussion in the group. Then, for the next 15-25 minutes, you will act as the group discussion leader to navigate the discussion based on your proposed issue, interpretation, and questions. The whole session will last for 30-40 minutes.

Rules, rights & responsibilities

See the Guide's to [Rules, Rights and Responsibilities](#)

[Institution Academic integrity statement]

[Accommodations for students with disabilities]

[Institutional Diversity & Inclusion efforts]

Course Schedule

Day	Topic	Plan & Reading
W1 – Jan 26	Introduction	Plan: - First part (12:30-2pm): Attendance to Cara Wallis's talk (lunch provided, starting at 12) - Second part (2-3pm): Introduction, Syllabus Reading: - Mullaney, T. S., & Rea, C. (2022). <i>Where research begins: Choosing a research project that matters to you (and the world)</i>. University of Chicago Press. Question, Problem, Project
Part I Foundational Theories: Key Concepts and Debates		
W2 – Feb 2	What do we mean by "global"?	Readings: - Karim, K. H. (2004). Re-viewing the 'national' in 'international communication' through the lens of diaspora. <i>The Journal of International Communication</i>, 10(2), 90-109. - Chalaby, J. K. (2005). Deconstructing the transnational: a typology of cross-border television channels in Europe. <i>New Media & Society</i>, 7(2), 155-175. - Lee, C. C. (2015). International Communication Research: Critical Reflections and a New Point of Departure. <i>Internationalizing International Communication</i>, 1-28. - Darian-Smith, E., & McCarty, P. C. (2017). Global Studies as a New Field of Inquiry. <i>The global turn: Theories, research designs, and methods for global studies</i>. Univ of California Press. Chapter 1
W3 – Feb 9	Complicating Early Thinkers in	Readings:

	"International" Communication	- Lazarsfeld, P. F. (1952). The prognosis for international communications research. <i>Public Opinion Quarterly</i>, 16(4), 481-490. - Chang, T. K. (2014). Beyond lazarsfeld: International communication research and its production of knowledge. In <i>Internationalizing International Communication</i> (pp. 41-65). University of Michigan Press. - Lerner, D. (1963). <i>Toward a communication theory of modernization: A set of considerations</i>. Center for International Studies, MIT. - Gajjala, R., & Mamidipudi, A. (1999). Cyberfeminism, technology, and international 'development'. <i>Gender & Development</i>, 7(2), 8-16.
W4 – Feb 16	Comparing Media Systems	Readings: - Hallin, D. C., & Mancini, P. (2004). <i>Comparing media systems: Three models of media and politics</i>. Cambridge university press. Introduction - Kraidy, M. (2011). "The Rise of Transnational Media Systems: Implications of Pan-Arab Media for Comparative Research." From <i>Comparing media systems beyond the Western world</i>, Hallin, D. C., & Mancini, P. (Eds.). Cambridge University Press. - Hallin, D. C., & Mancini, P. (2017). Ten years after comparing media systems: What have we learned? <i>Political communication</i>, 34(2), 155-171.
W5 – Feb 23	De-Westernizing "International" Communication	Readings: - Ayish, M. I. (2003). Beyond western-oriented communication theories a normative Arab-Islamic perspective. <i>Javnost-The Public</i>, 10(2), 79-92. - Martín-Barbero, J. (2006). A Latin American perspective on communication/cultural mediation. <i>Global Media and Communication</i>, 2(3), 279-297. - Wang, G., & Kuo, E. C. (2010). The Asian communication debate: Culture-specificity, culture-generality, and beyond. <i>Asian Journal of Communication</i>, 20(2), 152-165. - Benson, R. (2015) Public Spheres, Fields, Networks: Western Concepts for a De-Westernizing World?. In <i>Internationalizing International Communication</i>, ed by C. C. Lee. University of Michigan Press. (pp. 258-280)

W6 – Mar 2	Critiquing Media/Cultural Imperialism	Readings: - Schiller, H. I. (1991). Not yet the post-imperialist era. <i>Critical Studies in Media Communication</i>, 8(1), 13-28. - Thussu, D. K. (2006). Mapping global media flow and Contra-Flow. Media on the move: Global flow and contra-flow. - Imre, A. (2009). Gender and quality television: A transcultural feminist project. <i>Feminist Media Studies</i>, 9(4), 391-407. - Jin, D. Y. (2025). Platform Imperialism Theory From the Asian Perspectives. <i>Social Media+ Society</i>, 11(1).
Part II Ethnographic Approaches to Global Communication		
W7 – Mar 9	When Ethnography Met International Communication	Readings: - Murphy, P. D., & Kraidy, M. M. (2003). International communication, ethnography, and the challenge of globalization. <i>Communication theory</i>, 13(3), 304-323. Introduction - Ginsburg, F. D., Abu-Lughod, L., & Larkin, B. (Eds.). (2002). <i>Media worlds: Anthropology on new terrain</i>. Univ of California Press. Introduction - Kraidy, M., & Murphy, P. D. (2004). <i>Global media studies: an ethnographic perspective</i>. Routledge. Introduction
W8 – Mar 16	Infrastructural Turn	Reading: - Larkin, B. (2008) <i>Signal and Noise: Media, Infrastructure, and Urban Culture in Nigeria</i>. Duke University Press.
W9 – Mar 23	Technological Utopianism	Reading: - Ames, M.G. (2019) <i>The Charisma Machine: The Life, Death, and Legacy of One Laptop per Child</i>. MIT Press
W10 – Mar 30	Spring break	
W11 – Apr 6	Networked Protest	Reading: - Tufekci, Z. (2018) <i>Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest</i>. Yale University Press.
W12 – Apr 13	Contesting Truth	Reading:

		- Chua, E. H. C. (2023) <i>The Currency of Truth: Newsmaking and the Late-Socialist Imaginaries of China's Digital Era</i>. Michigan University Press.
W13 – Apr 20	Emergent Genders	Readings: - Ho, M. H. (2024). <i>Emergent genders: living otherwise in Tokyo's pink economies</i>. Duke University Press.
W14 – Apr 27	Final Presentations	