CMST 4E03: Media and Promotionalism (Fall 2017)

Dr. Phil Rose -- email: rosep@mcmaster.ca
Office: TSH 333 - Office Hours: Tuesdays 5:15-6:15pm
Tuesdays 2:30 – 5:30
Central Campus, TSH B126

Course Description: An examination of media’s role in the promotion of different interests, values and patterns of behaviour. Topics include advertising, propaganda, public relations, social activism, and public information campaigns.

The course examines the relationship between media and promotionalism. In both the past and present, it emphasizes the ways in which this relationship manifests itself in everyday life and society, in the public sphere, and throughout our emerging planetary community. We address a couple of fundamental questions: how does advertising, consumer culture, and ‘promotional culture’ structure the society in which we live? And how do they connect with the values, structures, belief systems, and ideas about what constitute personal and social satisfaction and ‘the good life’ in our present day? We conclude by reflecting on the future of promotionalism in a rapidly changing global media landscape.

Course Learning Objectives: Students will acquire a sound understanding of theories and historical contexts of promotional culture, and how it has informed various aspects of contemporary social life. Students will be able adeptly to critique the promotional texts of different forms of media, campaigns, and phenomena using relevant concepts. They will refine their ability to research and communicate such ideas through formal presentations, classroom discussions, and written assignments. Emphasis will be placed on enhancing students’ critical thinking as well as writing and presentation skills.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

professionalism/participation: 20%
literature search (due in class Oct. 3): 5%
proposal/annotated bibliography (due in class Oct. 17): 5%
presentation (beginning Oct. 24): 10%
term test (in class Nov. 28): 35%
final project - term paper (due in class Dec. 5): 25%
ASSIGNMENTS:

Professionalism and participation (20%) --

Each student will be responsible for leading discussion around one of the weekly readings/recordings (or portion thereof).

After a very brief synopsis of the reading (2-3 mins), the following rubric should guide the observations of presenters (as well as the rest of the class) in our ongoing discussions of weekly materials:

a) key terms and concepts?

b) most interesting aspects? Why?

c) problematic aspects?

d) author’s oversights?

e) confusing aspects?

f) general thoughts/commentary/conclusions?

g) at least 1 good discussion question.

Students are required to come to each class prepared to discuss the readings allocated for that week. While they can also make contributions to the learning environment of the course through Avenue to Learn, doing so will only make up in part for physical absence from classes. In preparation, students should keep notes regarding the main points and strengths or weaknesses of each course item for tutorial discussions and other term work.

Literature Search 5% (due in class Oct. 3) -- Literature searches form part of the wider process of literature review when conducting research projects. This is how we determine what work has already been done on our chosen topics, and, thus, they shape our research accordingly. Literature search bibliographies must use APA style and include a minimum of 12 academic books or journal articles, in addition to any popular sources like news media, blogs etc. (max. two credible web resources), and selections from course readings. Students should describe their proposed topic/project in a short paragraph above their bibliographic listing. Assignments are required to be submitted in hard copy.

Project and thesis proposal/annotated bibliography 5% (due Oct. 17) -- Proposal will consist of essay's introductory paragraph, and will thus describe your paper's topic, and the argument or thesis you will be presenting (max 500 words). Students will also hand in a bibliography of at least 12 relevant academic sources that provide a launch pad for their research (in addition to sources from the course curriculum and credible web resources). Students must use APA style, and annotate their bibliographies, explaining in two to five sentences how the resource will contribute to their research. Assignments are required to be submitted in hard copy.
Presentation 10% (beginning Oct 24.) -- Taking between 8-10 minutes to do so, you will briefly present (not read) your topic and argument to the class starting in week 8. Presenters should be sure to outline any difficulties they may be having, and solicit from their colleagues any suggestions for the research project that they might offer.

term test 35% (in class Nov. 28) -- The term test will be cumulative (September 5 to November 28) and consist of long answer questions that test knowledge of key concepts, questions, and issues dealt with in our readings, lectures, and in-class discussions throughout the course.

final project - term paper 25% (due in class Dec. 5) -- You will use course concepts, theories, and methodologies in the final paper, which is due by the beginning of class on Dec. 5. Detailed information on expectations will be available on Avenue to Learn (and discussed in class). Assignments are required to be submitted in hard copy.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: INTRODUCTION (Sept. 5)

no readings - what do we mean by "promotionalism" and "media"?

Week 2: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS - ADVERTISING (Sept. 12)


Week 3: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS - CONSUMER CULTURE (Sept. 19)


Week 4: PROPAGANDA (Sept. 26)

Week 5: PUBLIC DIPLOMACY (Oct. 3) - Literature Search Due


Oct. 10 -- Midterm Recess: No classes


Week 7: PUBLIC RELATIONS (Oct. 24)


Week 8: ACTIVISM (Oct. 31)


John Lennon/Yoko Ono video Bed Peace

Week 9: ACTIVIST NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS (Nov. 7)


E-BOOK THROUGH LIBRARY

Week 10: PROMOTIONALISM ON A GLOBAL STAGE (Nov. 14)


Week 11: PROMOTING MUSIC (Nov. 21)


Week 12: CASE STUDIES - MADONNA AND RADIOHEAD (Nov. 28) - term test


Week 13: PROMOTING DEMOCRACY? (Dec. 5) - final project due


POLICIES:

Missed Work, Extensions, and Late Penalties:

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)

There is a self-reporting tool available for McMaster Students, in order to report absences due to minor medical situations that last up to 3 days. This form provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work, but cannot be used during any final examination period. For further information, see http://mcmaster.ca/msaf/.

Since the university uses software that can check for plagiarism, you must submit papers directly in hard copy and electronically through the link to 'Turn it in' on Avenue to Learn. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day due. Papers are late if they are submitted the same day after class. Late assignments must be submitted to me by email, in order to document completion date, but submit hard copies of late papers directly to me as soon as possible. Hard copies must be identical to electronic copies or risk a mark of 0%. Retain a copy of your paper for your own files. Extensions may be granted to individuals with special circumstances, but students must speak with me about this well in advance.

All late assignments incur a penalty of 10% per day late (starting immediately upon collection of papers in class); weekend days are treated separately, due to the fact that you can submit on Avenue. Assignments more than ten days late will not be accepted. If you know you will not be in class on an assignment due date, it is your responsibility to submit work early.

Academic Honesty:

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is knowingly to act or fail to act, in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: 'Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty'), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.
The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained. 2. Improper collaboration in group work. 3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Students may want to refresh their knowledge of such issues by completing the Academic Integrity Tutorial at the link below:
http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity/students/quizzes/index.html.

**Turnitin:**

1. McMaster University approves the use of Turnitin.com for the following reasons:

   a) prevention – if students know their academic work is being checked for plagiarism, they will hopefully use proper citation methods

   b) protection of honest students and their work

   c) detection – with the type of technology in common use today, it is necessary to use a detection tool which checks academic work against the Internet

2. Guidelines for the use of Turnitin.com:

   a) papers should be submitted to Turnitin.com only with the student’s knowledge;

   b) the instructor should indicate that Turnitin.com will be used in the course outline and/or on the assignment details;

   c) the use of Turnitin.com cannot be mandatory*. If a student refuses to submit his or her work to Turnitin.com, he or she cannot be compelled to do so and should not be penalized. Instructors are advised to accept a hard copy of the assignment and grade it as per normal methods. The assignment can be subjected to a Google search or some other kind of search engine if the instructor wishes.

* Some students object to the use of Turnitin.com because of ownership issues. All work submitted to Turnitin.com becomes part of their database and is used to check authenticity of other student’s assignments. Some students object to their work being put in the database and others object to their work being used by Turnitin.com

Student Info regarding Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.
**Course Modification** The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of students to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

**Faculty email policy:** It is the policy of the Communication Studies and Multimedia Department that all email communication between students and instructors (including TAs) must originate from their official McMaster University email accounts. This policy protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information and confirms the identities of both the student and instructor.

Effective time management is critical for university students. Adhering to the schedule for assignments supports the development of this skill. In this regard, therefore, consider the following:

“What information consumes is rather obvious: it consumes the attention of its recipients. Hence a wealth of information creates a poverty of attention, and a need to allocate that attention efficiently among the overabundance of information sources that might consume it” (Herbert A. Simon).