Globalization and the Media: The International Communications Seminar

1. COURSE OVERVIEW:

This three credit course will include a Spring Break visit to Paris—featuring speakers, panels, and field trips—with journalists, executives, government officials, scholars and others who bring unique international perspectives to major media issues. There will also be time each day during the trip for social and cultural events. Because most of the classroom hours will take place in Paris, the class will meet only on designated Tuesdays in Washington. There will be no examination but a final research paper will be required.

The media have played a central role in shaping the rapidly changing international scene—both its new global connectedness and its intensifying tribal impulses. At the same time, a new category of media has emerged which is decidedly global in scope, even while national and regional media have retained their own distinctive characteristics. The great challenges confronting media in a time of technological revolution and cultural tension are sometimes broadly shared across national frontiers and sometimes sharply differentiated. These developments will provide some of the central themes for the class.

2. INSTRUCTOR:

Professor Lee W. Huebner, huebner@gwu.edu  Phone: 202-994-0042. Office Hours: Tuesdays from 3:30 to 6:00 pm & by appointment. Room 511, SMPA Building

3. READING:


Each student will be asked to lead a discussion on some part of the assigned readings. Graduate students will also be asked to report to the class on one of
the books listed below—or on a similar book about media and international culture (consulting first with the instructor). This is an optional assignment for undergraduate students, who can qualify for extra credit by completing it.


OTHER RELEVANT READING MATERIALS will be distributed as the class proceeds. These resources will provide a deeper background and a relevant update on issues that will be current in Paris—and in Europe—at the time of the overseas trip. Rick Steves’ guidebook to Paris is also useful optional reading.

4. CLASS MEETINGS AND PROJECTS:

A. The class will meet on designated Tuesdays, both before and after the Spring Break. Regular class attendance and participation in class discussions—both in Washington and Paris—will be an important part of the course and grade. Students who must be absent should inform the instructor in advance if at all possible. Note that laptops, tablets, and cell phones should not be used during class discussions.

B. Each student will be asked to prepare a short reaction paper of just 1 to 2 pages (to be submitted on-line in advance of the class) about some of the reading assignments (see assignment schedule below). The paper should (1) briefly summarize the reading; (2) mention your own reactions to the reading, including particular points with which you may agree or disagree; (3) mention any questions which you may have had about the assignment as well as topics that might be pursued in class discussions. Each student will be asked to lead off the discussion on one part of the reading assignments over the course of the term.

C. Each student will write a short “Reflections” paper of 4 to 5 pages, due immediately following the Paris trip and responding to that experience—both in seminar meetings and during non-seminar hours—as well as to reflections growing out of the Gopnik book.

D. Each student will prepare a Research Paper of 5 to 7 pages (double-spaced), which will be due no later than May 2. This paper (to be submitted on line) should focus on a central theme (chosen by the student and approved by the instructor) and relate to the Learning Outcomes described below. The paper should when possible, integrate material from the readings and class discussions, while also probing beyond the assigned readings—investigating points of further interest. These additional resources could include, for example, further writings by one or more of
the Paris speakers, and/or follow-up, e-mail interviews with them, as well as other materials identified by the student or suggested by the instructor. All students should submit their proposed topics to the instructor before Tuesday, April 11.

E. Students will be encouraged to contribute to various logistical dimensions of the program, including providing informed introductions of the Paris speakers, exploring free time opportunities in Paris, organizing a social event in Paris before and/or after the trip, coordinating lodging and travel arrangements, photographing and blogging about the trip, etc. Such contributions will be considered as contributions to the class participation dimensions of the course.

5. GRADING:

Three elements will comprise the final grade. They are: class discussion and participation in Washington and in Paris, including logistical contributions, 30%; the reaction and reflection papers, including class presentations growing out of the reading, 35%; and the final paper, 35%.

6. TOPIC AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

The class will meet in Washington on designated Tuesdays before and after the Paris trip. The meetings in Paris will begin on Sunday afternoon, March 13 and end on Saturday, March 19.

January 17: Introductions and Course Overview

January 24: Read Hachten & Scotten book (Introduction and chapters 1-5—paper due)

January 31: Class will not meet.

February 7: Read Hachten & Scotten book (chapters 6-11).

February 14: Read Hachten & Scotten book (chapters 12-15 and conclusion).

February 21: Read Steger book (paper due)

February 28: Read Moisi book (paper due)

March 7: Class will not meet. Read special materials to be distributed relating to current issues in Europe

March 12-18: Seminar in Paris

March 21: Class will not meet. Read selected chapters in Gopnik book

March 28: Class discussion of Paris trip; Paris Reflection Paper due
April 4: Class will not meet; Read Huebner book (chapters 1-6)

April 11: Read Huebner book (chapters 7-9—paper due). Deadline for Approval of Research Paper topic

April 18: Class will not meet

April 25: Research Paper summary presentations by each student.

Research Papers to be submitted (on-line) no later than May 2.

7. LEARNING OUTCOMES:

At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to: (1) Summarize major trends which have changed the nature of world media in recent years, both the growing category of cross-border media and the changing nature of local and national media; (2) Describe varying ways of interpreting the relationship between media and society in Europe and the US; (3) Compare and contrast differing approaches to professional media careers in an international context; (4) Evaluate the impact of technological change as both a fragmenting and a connecting force.

8. OTHER UNIVERSITY AND CLASS POLICIES

**University Policy on Religious Holidays:** 1. Students should notify the instructor during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance; 2. The instructor will extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations

**Academic Integrity:** The instructor supports and will enforce the GW Code of Academic Integrity, including this provision: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the remainder of the code, see: [http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html](http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html)

**Disability support services:** Any student who may need an accommodation related to a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: [http://gwnired.gwu.edu/dss/](http://gwnired.gwu.edu/dss/)

**The University Counseling Center (UCC):** 202-994-5300—UCC offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include: crisis and emergency mental health consultations, as well as confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals. [http://gwnired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices](http://gwnired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices).

**University Policy on Time Requirements.** This is a three-credit course. Over the semester, students are expected to spend 150 minutes in class lecture and discussion meetings under
the instructor’s supervision (37.5 hours for the semester) and 300 minutes per week on homework and other out-of-class preparations (75 hours for the semester).

**Security:** In case of an emergency, if possible, the class should shelter in place. If the class building is affected, follow the posted evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.