Course Overview

This course considers the emergence of new media technologies in historical and social contexts. It begins with the assumption that the term new media must be understood to include all media as emergent phenomena; any medium was new once. Our understanding of new media as a term describing recent and contemporary digital and networked technologies should benefit from an understanding of the long history of new technologies of communication.
The course also considers how existing media change to adapt to innovations in technology, such that an old medium like television can be approached as a form of new media when it develops new technologies such as digital sets and recording devices. We will approach new media as a way of understanding both emergent and developing technologies.

Texts

Readings for this course include books, book chapters, and articles. The books listed below may be purchased from the UWM eCampus Panther Shop or from other sellers. Books assigned for this course will also be available on reserve at the Golda Meir Library. Additional readings will be posted to Canvas. You will need to figure out how to access You’ve Got Mail on your own.

- You’ve Got Mail (1998 motion picture written and directed by Nora Ephron)

Class Meetings and Due Dates

Weeks 1 & 2: Introducing Old and New Media

Wednesday, September 4 Course Introduction

Monday, September 9 “Making New Media Make Sense,” Nancy Baym, Personal Connections in the Digital Age (Polity, 2010), 22-49

**Week 3: Medium Theory**

**Monday, September 16** Walter J. Ong, “Writing Restructures Consciousness,” *Orality and Literacy*, 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2002), 78-116


**Week 4: Telegraph**


**Week 5: Telephone**

**Monday, September 30** Claude S. Fischer, “The Telephone in America,” *America Calling: A Social History of the Telephone to 1940* (California, 1992), 33-59

**Wednesday, October 2** Fischer, “Personal Calls, Personal Meanings,” *America Calling*, 222-254

**Week 6: Radio**


**Wednesday, October 9** Czitrom, “The Ethereal Hearth,” *Media and the American Mind*, pages 60-90

**First project due Friday, October 10 at noon**

**Week 7: Exam #1/TV — Flow**
Monday, October 14 exam #1 due at 1:45 pm; no class


*After week 7: checkpoint for reading responses*

**Week 8: TV — The Home**


**Wednesday, October 23** Spigel, *Make Room For TV*, 99-135 “The Home Theater”

*After week 8: checkpoint for attendance & participation*

**Week 9: TV — Video**

**Monday, October 28** Michael Z. Newman, *Video Revolutions: On the History of a Medium* (Columbia, 2014); reading response on VR though page 72

**Wednesday, October 30** Continuation of *Video Revolutions* discussion; reading response on VR page 73-end

**Week 10: Video Games/working with primary sources**

**Monday, November 4** Early video games primary sources PDF bundle (*NB: not a reading response day*)


*Final research project proposal due Friday, November 8 at noon*

**Week 11: Conferences, no class**

**Monday, November 11** conferences
Wednesday, November 13 conferences

Weeks 12 & 13: The Master Switch


Wednesday, November 20 Wu, *The Master Switch*, 157-204

Extra credit revision (optional) due Friday, November 22 at noon

Monday, November 25 Wu, *The Master Switch*, 205-319

Week 14: When the Web Was New/presentations


Annotated bibliography due Friday, December 6 at noon

Week 15: Internet Histories/presentations

Monday, December 9 Andrew J. Bottomley, “Podcasting, Welcome to Nightvale, and the Revival of Radio Drama,” *Journal of Radio & Audio Media* 22.2 (2015), 179-189; listen to any episode of Welcome to Nightvale and choose any episode (one each) from column A and column B; presentations

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<td><em>This American Life</em></td>
<td><em>WTF with Marc Maron</em></td>
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Final project due Wednesday, December 11, 12:30

Final exam due Friday, December 20, 2:30pm

Assignments, Expectations

Readings Responses (10x2=20%)

You are required to submit at least 5 reading responses of minimum 200 words during each half of the course. The checkpoint is after week 7. If you have submitted fewer than 5 on October 13, you cannot make up any of these. Each reading response should engage with the reading for a particular day and must be submitted before the beginning of class time for full credit. Responses submitted after the beginning of class can only earn a maximum of 1 out of 2 points. If you submit more than 5, the top 5 grades will count. We will circulate a sign-up sheet for reading responses on the first day of class. For more info see the assignment prompt in Canvas.

First project (10%)

The first project will be a paper of minimum 1500 words analyzing a particular “old” media artifact using primary sources such as newspaper or magazine articles or advertisements to understand how they were regarded in the past. The cutoff for “old” media is September 1, 2009, and none of your sources may be more recent than that date. For this assignment, you may have an extra credit opportunity to revise the paper based on my feedback to improve your grade or, if you have gotten a very good grade initially (9 or 10), to possibly place out of taking an exam depending on the quality of the revision. The deadline for the extra credit opportunity is November 22.
Exams (15x2=30%)

There are two exams of equal weight and they are not cumulative. Questions will be based on our readings and class discussions.

Final research project including the following components (30%)

➢ proposal (3)
➢ annotated bibliography (3)
➢ Presentation (3)
➢ Paper (21)

If any preliminary piece of the final project is missing (proposal, bibliography, presentation), the maximum grade you can get on the paper will be a C (15/21). More info on this assignment to come later in the semester.

Participation (5x2=10%)

This grade will be calculated twice, once after week 8 and once at the end of the semester.

How to earn good grades in participation:

● Come to class having done the reading, which you have brought with you
● Speak in class on the topic of the day's readings
● Raise your hand to answer the instructor's questions
● Ask questions about things you don't understand or want to know more about
● Contribute to other students' learning

Submission Formats

All work for this seminar will be submitted to Canvas. The assignments in Canvas will specify whether you are going to type into a text box or upload a document, and they will specify the acceptable document formats.

Late Work
Reading responses may be submitted late for half credit, maximum one per week of the course, until the mid-semester cutoff for the first five, and the final class meeting for the second five.

The first project, the first exam, the proposal, and the annotated bibliography will be penalized one point per day for lateness.

The final paper and the final exam will be penalized one point per day for lateness up to three days. After three days late, they will not be accepted unless an incomplete grade is given (see more on incompletes below).

Please speak with me if you think you cannot meet any course deadline before the deadline and I will work with you on accommodations if possible. If you wait until after the deadline has passed, the relevant late work policy will apply.

Policies

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. You may miss one class without penalty in each half of the course. Each additional absence during each half of the course will result in a penalty of 2 points off your final grade. If you have to miss more than one class during each half, you should speak with me in person during my office hours.

Devices in Class

We will spend most of our class time discussing assigned readings, and some of our time discussing assignments. Please come prepared for a discussion of the readings and please bring the readings to class if possible. If you read using an electronic device (e.g., an app for PDFs or a Kindle), be sure to use the annotation features for highlighting and note-taking.

While you are encouraged to engage in class using whatever tools best meet your needs, you are also expected to avoid distracting yourself and your classmates by using connected electronic devices for non-class purposes. While you may like to use a device in class to
access readings and look up information, note-taking using a pen and paper is also encouraged.

You are responsible for your own attention.

**Academic Misconduct**

Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct may result in severe sanctions. Plagiarism includes using words from sources without proper attribution, including failure to put such words in quotation marks. Please also refer to the Dean of Students' page on Academic Misconduct.

**Incompletes**

If a graduate student is unable to finish all of the required work for a course during the semester, a grade of incomplete may be given, but only when the student is facing extraordinary circumstances. An incomplete will only be given after consultation with the instructor in person. Please also refer to UWM's policy on Incomplete Grades.

**Syllabus Links**

These and other UWM policies are detailed in the Secretary of the University's Syllabus Links.

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**Student Success and Support**

**Communication outside of Class**

Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor in person during regularly scheduled office hours MW 2-3 pm or by appointment to discuss their progress in the course and their work on assignments.

At other times, email is the best way to reach the instructor. I do not check my email in the evenings or on the weekends, so if you contact me via email you may expect a response by the next weekday morning.
Disability and Accessibility

UWM supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students working with the Accessibility Resource Center are encouraged to discuss their plan with the instructor in person so that every possible accommodation may be made.

Emergencies, Crises, Stressful Situations

UWM has resources to help students facing difficult challenges. Here are some:

- **UWM Emergency Grant**, which can make funds available to help cover expenses related to an unforeseen financial emergency
- **Norris Health Center and University Counseling** can help with medical care and mental health services
- **The Dean of Students** office is a place to report incidents and concerns

Grading Scale

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<td>93-100%</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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Time Allotment

This 3-credit course should take 144 of your time.
- In-class or equivalent (re midterm exam/conferences): 35 hours
- Studying for and writing exams: 15 hours
- Reading: 3 hours most weeks or 42 hours
- Working on Reading Responses: an hour each, times 10 = 10 hours
- Working on first project: 10 hours
- Working on final project: 32 hours