



湖北工业大学
HUBEI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Course Title	Media Governance
Course Code	COMM 5214
Semester	Winter 2027
Course Length	8 Weeks, 60 Contact Hours
Credits	4
Instructor	TBA
Office	TBA
Email	TBA
Prerequisite(s)	N/A
Antirequisite	COMM 5212 Media Governance (4 Weeks)

Course Description:

This unit engages with key issues in contemporary media governance. It focuses upon political and economic structures of power underpinning media and communication systems, services and practices, and examines their effects upon governments, industries and communities. Through a range of domestic and international case studies, the unit explores the regulatory frameworks within which media operate, including the rules and norms surrounding the global production, management and distribution of media content.

At the postgraduate level, the course critically examines the relationships among media institutions, governments, markets, digital platforms, regulatory bodies, and civil society. It explores how formal regulation, institutional arrangements, market structures, professional norms, platform policies, and transnational standards shape contemporary media systems. Particular attention is given to media ownership and concentration, public service media, freedom of expression, platform governance, content moderation, algorithmic accountability, data protection, disinformation, and artificial intelligence.

Through theoretical analysis, comparative case studies, research-led discussion, and policy evaluation, students will develop the ability to assess complex media-governance challenges across different political, economic, legal, and cultural contexts. The course emphasizes independent inquiry, critical reasoning, evidence-based analysis, and the development of feasible policy recommendations that address the public interest, democratic accountability, media pluralism, and social responsibility.

Course Goals:

Students who successfully complete this course will demonstrate competency in the following general education core goals:

- **Critical Thinking Skills** – Students will engage in analytical thinking, demonstrating the ability to critically evaluate, synthesize, and apply knowledge to complex problems, and construct well-reasoned solutions and arguments.
- **Independent Research and Inquiry** – Students will conduct independent research, utilizing academic resources to explore relevant topics, formulating research questions, analyzing data, and presenting findings in a coherent, scholarly manner.
- **Problem-Solving and Application** – Students will apply theoretical concepts and methodologies learned in the course to real-world problems, demonstrating the ability to develop practical solutions informed by academic inquiry.
- **Global and Cultural Awareness** – Students will gain awareness of the global and cultural contexts relevant to the course, appreciating diverse perspectives and considering the implications of their studies in a broader, international context.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Define and critically distinguish media governance, media policy, regulation, self-regulation, co-regulation, and platform governance;
- Apply relevant theoretical frameworks to analyse the relationships among media ownership, political authority, market competition, technological development, and public communication;
- Interpret and compare media policies, regulatory institutions, legal instruments, and industry codes across different jurisdictions;
- Evaluate the implications of governance arrangements for media pluralism, public service provision, freedom of expression, accountability, privacy, and cultural representation;
- Critically analyse digital-platform governance, content moderation, algorithmic systems, data governance, and emerging artificial-intelligence-related policy challenges;
- Conduct independent research using peer-reviewed scholarship, policy documents, regulatory decisions, and credible empirical evidence;
- Develop a comparative case study or research-informed policy brief that identifies a governance problem, evaluates alternative approaches, and justifies practical recommendations;
- Communicate complex analytical findings through clear academic writing and professional oral presentations, demonstrating independent judgement and responsiveness to scholarly critique.

Textbooks:

Freedman, D. (2008). *The Politics of Media Policy*. Polity.
 Flew, T. (2018). *Understanding Global Media* (2nd ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.
 Gillespie, T. (2018). *Custodians of the Internet: Platforms, Content Moderation, and the Hidden Decisions That Shape Social Media*. Yale University Press.
 Napoli, P. M. (2019). *Social Media and the Public Interest: Media Regulation in the Disinformation Age*. Columbia University Press.

McQuail, D., & Deuze, M. (2020). *McQuail's Media and Mass Communication Theory* (7th ed.). SAGE.

Course Requirements:

Critical Reading Memos (15%)

Students will complete five analytical reading memos of approximately 500-700 words each. Each memo should identify the central argument of the assigned reading, evaluate its theoretical and empirical foundations, assess its contribution to media-governance debates, and formulate questions for further discussion.

Comparative Case Analysis (20%)

Students will prepare an individual research paper of approximately 2000-2500 words comparing a media-governance issue across two jurisdictions or institutional settings. Topics may include media ownership regulation, public service broadcasting, platform accountability, content moderation, or data protection. The analysis must employ an explicit theoretical framework and draw on credible academic and policy sources.

Seminar Leadership and Participation (10%)

Students are expected to participate actively in seminars, engage critically with assigned readings, and contribute to evidence-based discussions. Each student will lead one discussion segment by introducing a central question, synthesizing relevant arguments, and facilitating constructive debate. Assessment will emphasize analytical depth, preparation, and the quality of contributions.

Research Proposal and Policy Brief (15%)

Students will develop a research proposal of approximately 1000 words and a policy brief of approximately 1200-1500 words. The proposal must identify a significant media-governance problem, establish a research question, and outline an appropriate analytical approach. The policy brief must identify relevant stakeholders, evaluate alternative policy options, consider implementation constraints, and present evidence-based recommendations.

Final Research Paper and Presentation (40%)

Students will complete a substantial research paper of approximately 3500-4500 words and deliver an oral presentation of their findings. The paper must demonstrate a clear research question, critical engagement with relevant literature, systematic analysis of evidence, and an understanding of the theoretical and practical implications of the findings. Students should identify limitations and discuss the broader significance of their conclusions for media governance and public policy.

Assessments: Activity	Percent Contribution
Critical Reading Memos	15%
Comparative Case Analysis	20%
Seminar Leadership and Participation	10%
Research Proposal and Policy Brief	15%
Final Research Paper and Presentation	40%

Grading:

Final grades will be based on the sum of all possible course points as noted above.

Grade	Percentage of available points
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D	64-69
D-	60-63
F	0-59

Course Schedule:

The schedule of activities is subject to change at the reasonable discretion of the instructor. Minor changes will be announced in class, major ones provided in writing.

COMM 5214 Schedule		
Lecture	Topic	Readings
L1	Introduction to Media Governance: Concepts, Scope, and Key Debates	Freedman, <i>The Politics of Media Policy</i> (2008).
L2	Theoretical Perspectives on Media Power and Governance	McQuail & Deuze, <i>McQuail's Media and Mass Communication Theory</i> (2020).
L3	Comparative Media Systems and Governance Models	Flew, <i>Understanding Global Media</i> (2018).
L4	The State, Public Policy, and Media Regulatory Institutions	Freedman, <i>The Politics of Media Policy</i> (2008).
L5	Media Ownership, Concentration, and Pluralism	Freedman, <i>The Politics of Media Policy</i> (2008).
L6	Media Markets, Competition, and Economic Power	Flew, <i>Understanding Global Media</i> (2018).
L7	Public Service Media and the Public Interest	McQuail & Deuze, <i>McQuail's Media and Mass Communication Theory</i> (2020).
L8	Freedom of Expression, Human Rights, and Regulatory Limits	McQuail & Deuze (2020); <i>United Nations Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 34</i> (2011).
L9	Journalism, Professional Norms, and Media Accountability	McQuail & Deuze, <i>McQuail's Media and Mass Communication Theory</i> (2020).
L10	Self-Regulation, Co-Regulation, and Industry Codes	Freedman, <i>The Politics of Media Policy</i> (2008); Flew, <i>Understanding Global Media</i> (2018).
L11	Global Media Flows and Transnational Governance	Flew, <i>Understanding Global Media</i> (2018).

L12	Digital Platforms as Governance Actors	Gillespie, <i>Custodians of the Internet</i> (2018).
L13	Content Moderation and Platform Accountability	Gillespie, <i>Custodians of the Internet</i> (2018).
L14	Algorithms, Ranking, and the Politics of Visibility	Gillespie, <i>Custodians of the Internet</i> (2018).
L15	Disinformation, Political Communication, and Platform Accountability	Napoli, <i>Social Media and the Public Interest</i> (2019).
L16	Privacy, Surveillance, and Data Governance	Napoli, <i>Social Media and the Public Interest</i> (2019); relevant policy materials provided in class.
L17	Artificial Intelligence, Automation, and Emerging Media Risks	Gillespie, <i>Custodians of the Internet</i> (2018); UNESCO, <i>Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence</i> (2021).
L18	Telecommunications Infrastructure and Network Neutrality	Freedman, <i>The Politics of Media Policy</i> (2008); relevant regulatory materials provided in class.
L19	Intellectual Property, Copyright, and Cultural Production	Flew, <i>Understanding Global Media</i> (2018); relevant copyright materials provided in class.
L20	Cultural Diversity, Representation, and Indigenous Media	Flew, <i>Understanding Global Media</i> (2018); UNESCO, <i>Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions</i> (2005).
L21	Media Governance in China: Institutions, Policy, and Digital Platforms	Freedman, <i>The Politics of Media Policy</i> (2008); Flew, <i>Understanding Global Media</i> (2018).
L22	Comparative Media Governance: China, Australia, and Other Jurisdictions	Flew, <i>Understanding Global Media</i> (2018); Freedman, <i>The Politics of Media Policy</i> (2008).
L23	Policy Evaluation, Regulatory Impact, and Evidence-Based Governance	Freedman, <i>The Politics of Media Policy</i> (2008); OECD, <i>Recommendation of the Council on Regulatory Policy and Governance</i> (2012).
L24	Student Research Presentations, Peer Review, and Academic Argument	Relevant sections of the five required texts and instructor-provided research materials.
L25	Future Directions in Media Governance: Synthesis and Research Frontiers	Review of the five required texts and one recent peer-reviewed article selected by each student.

Accommodation Statement:

Academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor's attention, as he/she is not legally permitted to inquire. Students who may require assistance in emergency evacuations should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow.

Academic Integrity Statement

Each student is expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in academic and professional matters. The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, against any student who is found guilty of academic dishonesty or otherwise fails to meet the standards. Any student judged to have engaged in academic dishonesty in coursework may receive a reduced or failing grade for the work in question and/or for the course.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests, or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or without the University; and nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records.

Other Items:**Attendance and Expectations**

All students are required to attend every class, except in cases of illness, serious family concerns, or other major problems. We expect that students will arrive on time, be prepared to listen and participate as appropriate, and stay for the duration of a meeting rather than drift in or out casually. In short, we anticipate that students will show professors and fellow students maximum consideration by minimizing the disturbances that cause interruptions in the learning process. This means that punctuality is a must, that cellular phones be turned off, and that courtesy is the guiding principle in all exchanges among students and faculty. You will be responsible for the materials and ideas presented in the lecture.

Assignment Due Dates

All written assignments must be turned in at the time specified. Late assignments will not be accepted unless prior information has been obtained from the instructor. If you believe you have extenuating circumstances, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Make-Up Work

The instructor will not provide students with class information or make-up assignments/quizzes/exams missed due to an unexcused absence. Absences will be excused and assignments/quizzes/exams may be made up only with written documentation of an authorized absence. Every effort should be made to avoid scheduling appointments during class. An excused student is responsible for

requesting any missed information from the instructor and setting up any necessary appointments outside of class.

Access, Special Needs, and Disabilities

Please notify the instructor at the start of the semester if you have any documented disabilities, a medical issue, or any special circumstances that require attention, and the school will be happy to assist.