

## SYLLABUS

### 1. Information about the program

1.1 Higher education institution	BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY
1.2 Faculty	COLLEGE OF POLITICAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND COMMUNICATION SCIENCES
1.3 Department	JOURNALISM DEPARTMENT
1.4 Field of study	COMMUNICATION SCIENCES
1.5 Level of study	BACHELOR
1.6 Study program / Qualification	JOURNALISM

### 2. Information about the discipline

2.1 Discipline title	MEDIA AND POPULAR CULTURE						
2.2 Course lecturer	RADU MEZA, Ph.D., LECTURER						
2.3 Seminar assistant	PAUL BOCA, Ph.D.c						
2.4 Year of study	1	2.5 Semester	1	2.6. Evaluation type	C/V	2.7 Discipline type	<b>OP</b>

### 3. Total estimated time (hours of didactic activities per semester)

3.1 Number of hours per week	2	of which: 3.2 course		3.3 seminar/laboratory	2
3.4 Total hours in the study plan	28	of which: 3.5 course		3.6 seminar/laboratory	28
Time distribution:					hrs
Studying the manual, course reader, bibliography and notes:					14
Supplementary documentation in the library, on electronic platforms and in the field:					28
Preparing seminars/laboratories, homework, syntheses, portfolios and essays:					14
Tutorials					
Examinations					
Other activities: .....					
3.7 Total hours of individual study	56				
3.8 Total hours per semester	84				
3.9 Number of credits	3				

### 4. Prerequisites (where applicable)

4.1 based on the curriculum	•
4.2 based on competences	•

### 5. Conditions (where applicable)

5.1 for the course	• A minimum number of 10 students enrolled in the practical course
5.2 for the seminar/laboratory	• A minimum number of 10 students enrolled in the practical course

## 6. Accumulated specific competencies

Professional competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying and critical thinking about popular media texts: <b>violent news, tabloid newspapers, cartoons and comic strips, tabloid television, reality-shows, sports talk-shows, music videos, advertisements, online videos</b></li> <li>(C1.1) Defining, understanding and using specific concepts in the field of media and cultural studies: <b>popular culture, high culture, low culture, mass culture, public sphere, attention economy, media spectacle, presentation, representation and self-presentation</b></li> <li>(C3.1) Identifying and using the main theories concerning media communication, target audience segmentation and the dynamics of various types of audience: <b>reception theory, encoding/decoding, uses and gratifications, popular formats and audience segments</b></li> <li>(C4.1) Identifying and describing the communicational environment in which national and local organizations globalize their activity: <b>global popular television formats - talent shows, the construction of media celebrities, video-sharing culture, internet memes, self-presentation in social media, show structure and emotion</b></li> </ul>
Transversal competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the production and consumption of popular media texts in the context of global culture and with respect to the socio-economic and cultural structure of society</li> </ul>

## 7. Discipline objectives (from the accumulated competencies grid)

7.1 General objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The understanding of the structure and dynamics of popular media texts in the context contemporary global culture</li> </ul>
7.2 Specific objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying popular media texts in contemporary culture</li> <li>Classifying popular media texts according to structure</li> <li>Understanding the concepts relating to popular culture and media communication</li> <li>Understanding the cultural dynamics of popular media</li> </ul>

## 8. Contents

8.1 Course	Teaching methods	Observations
1. Popular Journalism and Popular culture. High Culture, Low Culture, Mass Culture	Explanation, Demonstration, Individual Work	The students will be asked to list 5 things they associate with terms such a <b>popular culture, high culture, low culture, mass culture</b>
2. Celebrity and Popular culture: History Through Popular culture	Explanation, Demonstration, Collaborative Work, Video	The students will be asked to agree on the <b>top celebrities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and last years'</b>

		<b>top celebrities.</b> Watch: Mr. Wuhl video – History is Popular Culture
3. The Tabloid Press. Paparazzi Photos. Truth, Fiction and Truthiness	Explanation, Demonstration, Discussion, Video	<b>Watch Steven Colbert define “truthiness”.</b> <b>Fact or fiction?</b> Decide whether a headline is plausibly factual or fictional. <b>What does this piece of news make you feel?</b> Associate emotions with media texts.
4. Heroes, Myths and Conflict in Popular Media. The Discourse of Sports Journalism	Explanation, Demonstration, Discussion, Simulation	What’s your favorite football team? What’s the football team you dislike the most? <b>WHY?</b> Organize a mock sports debate / talk-show.
5. Fan Cultures. Superheroes and Visual Narratives. Comic Strips and Caricature	Explanation, Demonstration, Discussion, Collaborative Work	Who is your favorite comic book superhero? Why? What superpower would you want to have? What secret identity would you have as a superhero? How would you look like as a superhero? Why? In groups: Create doomsday scenarios. Switch. Use superheroes to solve them.
6. Audience Segments. Global Niche Audiences. Consumer Magazines. From Playboy to Cosmopolitan	Explanation, Demonstration,	What magazines do you read? What magazines do your parents read? What sections of magazines do you read? <b>WHY?</b>
7. The Aesthetics of Melodrama. The Fearful Audience. Violent News on Television. Domsday Scenarios – The Counterfactual Documentary	Explanation, Demonstration, Video, Discussion	Watch pieces of violent TV News. Watch How TV Ruined Your Life – Episode about Fear.
8. Interpretative Journalism and the Media Spectacle. Talk Shows on Popular Television	Explanation, Demonstration, Video, Discussion	Watch pieces of talk-shows. Discuss the format.
9. Manufactured Reality. Educating Principles through Reality Shows. Big Brother, Survivor, BGT	Explanation, Demonstration, Video, Discussion	Watch pieces of reality shows. Observe roles and the unfolding of drama. Observe the use of film technique to construct conflict. Discus Reading: <b>Amusing Ourselves to Death</b> by Neil Postman
10. Media and Material Culture. The Practice of	Explanation,	Make a list of things you

Everyday Life.	Demonstration, Discussion	couldn't live without. Make a list of things you could live without. Observe choices. Discuss the significance of everyday objects and practices.
11. Entertainment. Music Television. Music Videos. Online Video Sharing. Remix Culture	Explanation, Demonstration, Video, Discussion	Watch unfamiliar music video on mute. Try to identify genre and story. Watch Michael Jackson music video. Discuss the signification of Michael Jackson as a cultural product. Discuss ideology in music videos. Debate: <b>YouTube vs. MTV.</b>
12. The Biology of Popular Culture. Evolutionary Culture and the Epidemic Model. Viral Videos and Internet Memes.	Explanation, Demonstration, Video, Discussion	Watch viral videos. What do they have in common? Watch Mike Wesch lecture fragment. Define memes. Discuss familiar Internet memes. Discuss the role of 4chan and reddit. Discuss emotion and rage comics. Discuss celebrity and advice animals.
13. Self-presentation on Social Network Sites.	Explanation, Demonstration, Discussion, Collaborative Work, Experiment	What do you post on Facebook? How many pictures of you do you have online? Discuss stance, posture, accessories. GAME of TAG (game) Make a picture of yourself in class! (Experiment).
14. Colloquium	Student presentations Discussion	
Bibliography		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Berger, A.A. (2012) <i>Media Analysis Techniques</i>, London: Sage.</li> <li>• Berger, A.A. (2009) <i>What Objects Mean. An Introduction to Material Culture</i>, Left Coast Press.</li> <li>• Certeau, M. d. (2002). <i>The Practice of Everyday Life</i>. Londra: University of California Press.</li> <li>• Dahlgren, P.(ed) &amp; Sparks, C.(ed) (1992) <i>Journalism and Popular Culture</i>, London, Sage.</li> <li>• Fiske, J. (1991). <i>Reading the popular</i>. London: Routledge.</li> <li>• Fiske, J. (1990). <i>Understanding popular culture</i>. London: Routledge.</li> <li>• Hartley, J. (1996). <i>Popular Reality. Journalism, Modernity, Popular Culture</i>. London: Arnold.</li> <li>• Postman, N. (2005) <i>Amusing Ourselves to Death. Public Discourse in the Age of Show-Business</i>, London: Penguin Books.</li> <li>• Strinati, D. (1995). <i>An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture</i>. London: Routledge.</li> </ul>		
8.2 Seminar / laboratory	Teaching methods	Observations
1. Popular culture and media culture	Explanation	

2. Celebrities in social media	Discussion	
3. Genres and conventions in TV series	Explanation Discussion	
4. Distribution models for TV series	Explanation Discussion	
5. TV series and fan cultures	Explanation Discussion	
6. The Music Video	Explanation Discussion	
7. Internet memes and virtual communities	Explanation Discussion	
8. Remix culture	Explanation Discussion	

### Bibliography

- Berger, A.A. (2012) *Media Analysis Techniques*, London: Sage.
- Berger, A.A. (2009) *What Objects Mean. An Introduction to Material Culture*, Left Coast Press.
- Certeau, M. d. (2002). *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Londra: University of California Press.
- Dahlgren, P.(ed) & Sparks, C.(ed) (1992) *Journalism and Popular Culture*, London, Sage.
- Fiske, J. (1991). *Reading the popular*. London: Routledge.
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- Hartley, J. (1996). *Popular Reality. Journalism, Modernity, Popular Culture*. London: Arnold.
- Postman, N. (2005) *Amusing Ourselves to Death. Public Discourse in the Age of Show-Business*, London: Penguin Books.
- Strinati, D. (1995). *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*. London: Routledge.

### 9. The corroboration of discipline contents with the expectations of epistemic community representatives, professional associations and representative employers in the study program's corresponding field

- Future journalists are expected to understand popular formats (in all media) and the reasons behind such popularity. Understanding the structure and dynamics of popular media texts and developing the critical thinking skills necessary to identify and question ideology in popular culture are vital in designing media products that suit the needs of specific audience segments. Discussing and understanding popular media are very important for the education of less culturally biased and more tolerant media professionals.

### 10. Evaluation

Type of activity	10.1 Evaluation criteria	10.2 Evaluation methods	10.3 Weight in final mark
10.4 Course	Critical argumentative essay (6000 characters)	Written Paper and Presentation <b>Task:</b> Pick one of the topics or subtopics discussed in the course and write a critical argumentative essay. Refer to at least one popular media text and personal experience. <b>Grading criteria:</b> Clarity and coherence Structure Proper use of terms and	80%

		concepts Number of supporting arguments Strength of arguments	
10.5 Seminar/laboratory	Participation in weekly activities	Observation and Attendance /Activity Participation lists/ Weekly assignments	20%

Attendance is compulsory for at least 12 of the 14 scheduled courses.  
 A maximum of missed 3 meetings (25% of the required attendance) can be recovered before the end of the semester through extra credit assignments (2000 words written assignments per missed meeting)

Fraud / plagiarism are sanctionable under the Babes-Bolyai University regulations.

**10.6 Minimum performance standard**

Understanding and being able to operate with terms such as popular media, mass culture, popular culture, media culture.

Constructing arguments based on systematic observation of popular media formats and consumption practices.

Being able to use personal experience to explain the success of popular texts.

Date

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Course lecturer signature

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Seminar assistant signature

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Date of approval in the Department

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Head of department's signature

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