



TUESDAY 10:30AM-1:30PM

KRESGE BUILDING K203

FALL 2014



# MIT 3936F

## *International Media & Social Change*

**Instructor: Tiara Sukhan**

**Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:30-2:30pm or by appointment, NCB 286**

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As media have evolved beyond historical political and geographic barriers, they offer new opportunities for expression, knowledge, identity formation, collaboration, and mobilization. But international media can also be tools of subjugation, cultural erosion, fragmentation, and manipulation. Whether we welcome or fear it, this current historical moment is one of unprecedented information exchange and cultural dissemination, due in no small part to changes in media infrastructure at multiple levels of organization and governance.

In this course we will examine the nature of these developments and what consequences they have for the societies experiencing them. Throughout this course the Middle East will serve as a case study to anchor our exploration of *international media and social change*.

### **Official Course Description:**

*This course examines journalism and the local conditions that enable progressive social change, as well as those that constrain it. Case studies from the Middle East, China and Africa may be reviewed. Students will also gain an understanding of the role media plays in the process of globalization.*

International media has in the last few years been a major factor in many profound cultural and political transformations in the Middle East - a vast region which stretches across two continents, from Casablanca to the Tehran. Yet as Edward Said observed over thirty years ago, Western ideas about the 'Orient' have tended towards a binary which is inherently 'othering' and inauthentic. With this in mind, we will reflect throughout this course on what expectations and assumptions are made about societies such as those of the Middle East and the role played by media in the social construction of these people and places. We will also scrutinize the regional political, social and economic forces within which international media operate.

*"Despite the variety and the differences, and however much we proclaim the contrary, what the media produce is neither spontaneous nor completely 'free': 'news' does not just happen, pictures and ideas do not merely spring from reality into our eyes and minds, truth is not directly available, we do not have unrestrained variety at our disposal.*

*For like all modes of communication, television, radio, and newspapers observe certain rules and conventions to get things across intelligibly, and it is these, often more than the reality being conveyed, that shape the material delivered by the media."*

~ Edward W. Said

### **Requisites:**

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate requisites for this course or to obtain special permission from your Dean to enrol in it. If you fail to do so, you will be removed from the course and your fees may not be adjusted. You may not take this course if you already hold credit for MIT 3437 (taken in 2010-11, 2011-2012, 2012-2013 or 2013-2014).

# GENERAL POLICIES

## ◊ Communication

It is important that you regularly check email (please clear your UWO inbox and routinely empty the trash to prevent it from becoming full) and the course Owl site, as any changes or updates to the syllabus will be communicated here, along with additional information regarding assignments. Announcements may also be made in class, but they will always be reiterated in Owl. If you miss important announcements about readings or assignments, you will still be responsible for meeting deadlines. You may contact me via email or Owl's messaging system. I will reply to emails within 48 hours, but I may not check them on the weekend. Please confine email communication to simple queries that can be quickly and easily addressed. If you need help with something more complex like refining a thesis statement, please visit me during office hours (see below).

## ◊ Office Hours

I will hold a scheduled weekly office hour on Tuesdays from 1:30-2:30pm and I will also be available for consultation by appointment. Please take advantage of these opportunities to come and see me, whether to discuss essay ideas, readings, assignment feedback, or just to have a chat.

## ◊ Electronic Devices

The use of mobile phones is not permitted in class. The use of laptops and tablets is permitted, however if it appears that these devices are being used in a way that interferes with or distracts from class objectives then I reserve the right to ban them if necessary. These technologies are tools that should be used in class primarily for note-taking and/or screening short readings.

## ◊ Late Assignments

The course is structured so as to require assignments to be turned in on time. If you are not able to hand in a reading response on the day it is due, then choose a different week (you need choose only 4 from 11 possible options). Seminars can not be rescheduled. With the final essay, there will be a penalty of 3% per day, up until one week, at which point the paper can no longer be accepted. If you have a serious need for a deadline extension that can not be avoided, please seek accommodation via your academic counsellor.

# ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE

<b>Participation</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Reading Responses</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Seminar</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Final Essay</b>	<b>25%</b>

### 1. Participation

Students are expected to prepare for class by completing relevant readings so that you may contribute thoughtfully to discussion each week. Both the quantity and quality of your contributions will be evaluated - these should reflect both familiarity with assigned course materials and respect for your colleagues. Attendance is compulsory – you cannot participate if you do not attend. **Seminar facilitation does not count towards your participation grade.**

### 2. Reading Responses

**DUE:** Weeks 2-12

You must complete 4 written responses (**2-3 pages, double-spaced**) to assigned readings of your choice (1 for each unit), which must be handed in on the day we address the reading in class (before class begins). **This reading response is not a summary.** You will be reviewing and analysing key issues (ideas, assumptions, methods, problems, questions, implications, etc.) that you encounter in the reading. You may address its strengths and/or weaknesses, and feel free to draw on outside sources insofar they contribute to your analysis of the reading. **You may not complete a reading response for the week you run your seminar.**

### 3. Seminar

**DUE:** Beginning Week 6

In small groups of 2-3 people you will lead a **45 minute** seminar session around any of the readings assigned for weeks 6-12. You are expected to do your own additional reading in relation to what you choose to focus on. You will have until week 3 to sign up and there will be no more than 2 seminars per week. **Each student** will also be required to submit a **1 page** outline to me via email the day before your seminar. This will be worth 1/4 of your seminar grade (5% of your final course grade ).

### 4. Final Essay

**DUE:** Dec. 2nd in class

This 8-10 page research paper should explore a key theme or topic discussed in the course. It does not need to focus specifically on the Middle East. More details to come.

# REQUIRED TEXTS:

- ♦ **Orientalism (25<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition).** Edward Said (available from bookstore)
- ♦ Assorted book excerpts, journal articles and web links, will be available on **Owl** as weekly readings found under “resources”. You do not need to print these if you prefer to ‘screen’ read them.



# Western FIMS

Faculty of Information  
& Media Studies

## NOTES FROM THE DEAN'S OFFICE WINTER 2014

### Statement on Academic Offences:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: [www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

### Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com ([www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)).

### Academic Accommodation:

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, assignments or participatory components worth 10% or more of their final grade for the course must apply to the Academic Counseling Office of their home faculty and provide documentation in the form of a Student Medical Certificate. For

work worth less than 10% of the final grade, the instructor will consider requests for academic accommodation on medical grounds made in a timely manner in writing or by appointment in office hours. Such requests need not be accompanied by documentation. The instructor may, however, decide to require documentation be submitted to the Dean's Office.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.

For Western University policy on accommodation for medical illness, see: [www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf)  
Student Medical Certificate (SMC): [www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medicalform.pdf)

### Compassionate Accommodation:

Academic accommodation (extensions, makeup tests and exams, additional assignments etc.) may be given to students on compassionate grounds. The situations for which compassionate accommodation can be given must be serious, including significant events such as death in the immediate family, trauma (fire, robbery, harassment, muggings, car accidents, etc.) or emergency situations. Documentation is required.

If a member of your immediate family is seriously ill, obtain a medical certificate from the family member's physician and submit the documentation to your Academic Counsellor. If you have been involved in a severe accident, fire or some other exceptional crisis, obtain a copy of the police report or be prepared to provide the necessary documentation upon request.

Generally, for deaths within a student's immediate family (parents, guardians, caregivers, siblings, spouses), bereavement leave is granted, upon provision of documentation. For deaths within a student's extended family, academic accommodation is given for one to three days, upon provision of documentation.

Students seeking additional bereavement leave for religious or other reasons should contact their Academic Counsellors, and provide valid documentation.

### Religious Accommodation:

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and

should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance.

Further specific information is given in the Western Academic Calendar.

### FIMS Grading Policy:

Elective courses have no class average requirement.

Removing the mandatory grade range from elective courses gives truly outstanding students an opportunity to excel in, and faculty greater freedom in the instruction of, such courses. At the same time, FIMS remains committed to rigorous academic standards, and to grading practices that give high marks only for high quality work. To this end, FIMS undergraduate instructors mark according to the Guidelines to the MIT Grade Range, using the full range of marks available. Please consult these Guidelines to see the standards work is expected to meet.

### SUPPORT SERVICES – LINKS

Student Development Centre: [www.sdc.uwo.ca](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca)

Mental Health @ Western: [www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/students.html](http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/students.html)

Psychological Services: [www.sdc.uwo.ca/psych](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/psych)

Services for Students with Disabilities: [www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd)

Accessibility Information: [www.accessibility.uwo.ca](http://www.accessibility.uwo.ca)

Writing Support Centre: [www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing)

Learning Skills Services: [www.sdc.uwo.ca/learning](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/learning)

Indigenous Services: [indigenous.uwo.ca](http://indigenous.uwo.ca)

International and Exchange Student Centre: [www.sdc.uwo.ca/int](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/int)

Career Centre at Western: [www.success.uwo.ca/careers](http://www.success.uwo.ca/careers)

## Appendix A: Grade Ranges

### Guidelines to the MIT Grade Range

Available at [www.fims.uwo.ca/acad\\_programs/undergrad/mit\\_mpi/courses/grading.htm](http://www.fims.uwo.ca/acad_programs/undergrad/mit_mpi/courses/grading.htm)

These guidelines are benchmarks, and are not to be followed as rigid regulations. They will be adjusted as appropriate to take into account the level of the course and any specific instructions given by a professor. As well, competency in English language usage (including spelling and grammar) may be taken into account in the assignment of grades by individual instructors. Note that the 70-79 grade range is broken into two divisions, as this is the grade range into which a large number of students fall.

#### **90-100 (Outstanding, A+)**

The report shows sparkling originality and exhibits a high degree of critical analysis of the topic. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the writing and background research is exemplary.

#### **80-89 (Excellent, A)**

The report shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical analysis of the topic; it gets to the heart of the matter with comments and/or questions. It is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing makes the report immediately understandable. Mastery of complex material and ideas is demonstrated. The report is of appropriate length, while preserving the priorities and emphasis of the material, so that the result is meaningful, not simplistic.

#### **75-79 (Very Good, B+)**

The report shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The topic is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. The analysis is organized around focal points and the argument is easily followed. The report demonstrates an above average ability to write in an intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material.

#### **70-74 (Good, B)**

The report shows an attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The topic is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. The analysis is organized around focal points. The report is generally well written and well argued.

#### **60-69 (Competent, C)**

The report demonstrates adequate comprehension of the topic. The report is on topic and is a reasonable summary of material covered in the course, but goes no further. Facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the report.

#### **50-59 (Marginal, D)**

The report shows less than adequate comprehension of the topic and of the material covered by the course. The report is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the report.

#### **Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)**

The report demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. The material is disorganized and unintelligible. The report clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment.

## Appendix B: Guidelines for Academic Appeals for FIMS Students

Available at [www.fims.uwo.ca/current/counselling/undergrad-counselling/appeals/guidelines\\_appeals.htm](http://www.fims.uwo.ca/current/counselling/undergrad-counselling/appeals/guidelines_appeals.htm)

**NOTE:** The outcome of an appeal may result in an increase, decrease, or no change in the grade under appeal.

#### **Grounds for Appeal:**

The Faculty of Information and Media Studies does not view the appeals process as an opportunity for students to solicit a second opinion on a grade assigned to a particular piece of work. Appeals must pertain to the final grade in a course, and will only be entertained if sufficient grounds for appeal can be met, including: medical or compassionate circumstances, a defect in the evaluation process, bias, inaccuracy or unfairness.

#### **Stages in the Appeals Process:**

- The first stage of the process is a discussion of the disputed grade with the appropriate Teaching Assistant (if applicable), and subsequently, the course Instructor.

For grades assigned to individual assignments, essays, lab reports, projects and tests completed throughout the term, the student first must appeal to the Teaching Assistant or Instructor of the course, within three weeks of the date on which the Instructor or Teaching Assistant returned the assignments to the class. The Appeals Committee will not hear any further appeals about the final grade in any course unless this first step has been taken.

- If completion of the first stage has not resolved the matter, the student may appeal the final grade in the course to the FIMS Appeals Committee.

Appeals of final grades must be within the time frame indicated in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars [Note: MA Journalism students must consult the Appeals Procedures described in the Graduate Student Handbook for more specific timelines]. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the appeal is submitted within the deadline. The student shall submit a formal letter to the FIMS Appeals Committee outlining the grounds for the appeal, the remedy sought and relevant materials. If the appeal involves a request for work to be regraded, the original marked work and a clean copy (if possible) must be included. If the appeal is commenced once the deadline has passed, it will not be considered either by the Appeals Committee or by the Associate Dean.

- The FIMS Appeals Committee has the discretion to determine whether the grounds for appeal have been met.

If the Committee deems that the reasons for the appeal are not legitimate, the Associate Dean will be informed. The appeal will be terminated and the student will be informed.

- If the Committee decides that the grounds for appeal have been met, the following steps will be taken:

- I. the course Instructor will be shown the appeal letter and offered an opportunity to make a written response;
- II. if work is to be regraded, a reader will be appointed who is competent in the area in question and was not involved in the assignment of the original mark. The reader will consider the work in question and will arrive at an independent evaluation. If there is a large discrepancy between the original mark and the regraded mark, a second reader may be appointed by the Committee. If the appointed reader(s) arrive at a grade within five marks of the original, the original grade will stand.

- The FIMS Appeals Committee will review the evidence and will make a recommendation on the case to the Associate Dean.

The Associate Dean will consider the recommendation from the Appeals Committee, and will make a decision. The student and the instructor will be notified promptly and in writing by the Associate Dean of the decision and of the change in grade, if any. Within the Faculty of Information and Media Studies, the Associate Dean's decision on the matter is final. Further appeals are possible under certain circumstances to the Senate Review Board Academic (for Undergraduate students) or to the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (for Graduate students) but the student should carefully consult the guidelines regarding such Appeals.