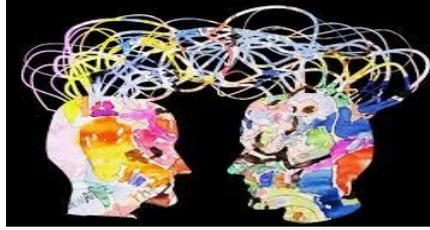


**THE PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA ETHICS**  
**FALL 2019**

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Or by appointment



**Course Description:** In order to understand alternative points of view, one needs to recognize that our own perspectives are based on some deeply engrained assumptions that we consider not only normal but also immutable. Understanding alternative outlooks and imagining suppressed possibilities of dealing with reality requires an intellectual exercise that would question taken-for-granted beliefs, destabilize them, disrupt ideological closures, and thus open the possibility for critical judgment.

This course offers such an intellectual journey. It will allow students to imagine contemporaneity not as a closed set of unquestioned ideological canons but as a project of open possibilities: unexpected demands, unprecedented challenges, unforeseeable articulations, and audacious decisions. In order to realize this potential, students will learn to transcend their social context and subvert everyday experience by opening themselves up to the global horizons of an unrestricted social imaginary.

The course explores fundamental assumptions underlying ways in which we come to communicate with people, ourselves, and the world surrounding us — the assumptions that have come to us through the outstanding works of modern and post-modern philosophers whose writings reflect and contemplate most fundamental changes in social imaginaries of modern and post-modern societies.

**Course Objectives:**

1. To introduce students to major epistemological, ontological, axiological, and praxeological issues underpinning human communication;
2. To provide students with the tools and vocabulary to speak about human communication across a range of perspectives
3. To develop student's understanding of the metatheoretical assumptions underlying any communicative act.
4. To provide a core base of knowledge that promotes intellectual debate and dialogue.
5. To assist students in elaborating their own responses to foundational questions concerning different approaches to the study of human communication.

**Required Reading**

All class readings will be sent by group email or distributed in class – there is no need to buy any textbook. However, if you are interested in acquiring a book from the class list of readings, all the requisites are provided below.

*Readings and discussions are essential* to this class; *You are required* to do the assigned readings and come to class prepared to discuss the material. *Please, print out all assigned class readings* for each corresponding class and bring the hard copies of texts in class with your notes and questions.

## Grading Criteria:

### 1. Attendance/Participation – 20%

Class discussions are critical to your ability to grapple with the readings analytically; therefore, **it is essential that you are in class**, engaged, and ready to participate. You are required to do the assigned readings and come to class prepared to discuss the material. Offer your ideas and interpretations. In case of illness, you will need to provide me with a note from a doctor. Every missed class will cost you 5% of your attendance/participation grade.

### 2. Reaction Papers – 30%

Your class readings, together with questions on them, will be emailed to you each week, the next day after the previous class. Based on these questions, you will need to write reaction papers. **Each paper is 5% of your reaction paper grade**. The grades will be assigned according to the following criteria:

A paper that clearly demonstrates your understanding of the assigned reading and your ability to critically evaluate it. The paper is written clearly, without grammar and other stylistic mistakes.	10
All of the above AND minor problems with grammar	9
All of the above AND any problems with editing	8
The paper is written well and demonstrates your understanding of the assigned reading BUT reveals some problems with your ability to critically evaluate it	7
The paper demonstrates your understanding of the assigned reading BUT reveals some problems with your ability to critically evaluate it AND has problems with grammar	6
The paper demonstrates your understanding of the assigned reading BUT reveals some problems with your ability to critically evaluate it AND has problems with the logical organization of the paper	5
The paper reveals some problems with understanding the assigned reading	4
The paper reveals serious misunderstanding of class readings	3
The paper reveals serious misunderstanding of class readings AND its organization is poor.	2
The paper is not submitted or severely neglected performance is demonstrated	1-0

**IMPORTANT!!** All reaction papers are need to be submitted in time, in line with the class schedule. One cannot submit a paper of the next week (i.e., Week III) if the paper of the previous week (i.e. Week II) has not been submitted. **The grading process will be BLOCKED, and the student will not be able to pass the class if any of the preceding tasks is not completed.**

### 3. Term Paper – 30%

During the first week of the classes, each student will choose a case study to analyze it throughout the semester, by the end of which s/he will prepare a major paper and present it to class on our final class meeting during the final exam week. The criteria of evaluation are similar to that of the reaction papers.

#### 4. Semester Paper Presentation – 10%

During the final class meeting, each student will present her/his term paper to other students. You are required to use PowerPoint to present your slides. Please, be creative. Your presentation will be evaluated based on its visual appeal, content, and the way you present it – the criteria of the presentation will be discussed later, closer to the end of the semester.

### TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

(Subject to change)

**NOTE:** References to the works of the authors marked with “\*” sign can be found in the “bibliography” list.

WEEK	DATE	CLASS AGENDA
I	Nov 04-09	The Consciousness and the Unconsciousness of Communication Acts: Common sense knowledge of social structures & the routine grounds of everyday activities. Ontology. Epistemology. Discourse. Paradigm. Culture.
<b>PART I – THE PHILOSOPHICAL DISCOURSE OF MODERNITY</b>		
II	Nov 11-16 <b>Paper 1 is due</b>	The philosophical discourse of modernity-1. The legacy of the Enlightenment. Emanuel Kant*, “What is Enlightenment?” Friedrich Hegel’s* philosophy of history. The traces of Hegelian historical imaginary in contemporary political discourses.
III	Nov 18-13 <b>Paper 2 is due</b>	The philosophical discourse of modernity-3. Karl Marx’s* project of alternative modernity. Critique of Hegel, historical materialism, class struggle. The traces of Marxist social imaginary in contemporary political discourses.
<b>PART II. THE ENTRY INTO POSTMODERNITY</b>		
IV	Nov 15-30 <b>Paper 3 is due</b>	The entry into postmodernity-1. Nietzsche* as a turning point. The criticism of traditional morality & religion. The will to power. Perspectivism. The eternal recurrence of the same. The traces of Nietzschean philosophy in contemporary political discourses.
V	Dec 02-07 <b>Paper 4 is due</b>	The entry into postmodernity-2. The Frankfurt School. Max Adorno & Theodor Horkheimer*: The critique of the Enlightenment. Herbert Marcuse*: One-Dimensional Man. The traces of the Enlightenment critique in contemporary political discourses.
<b>PART III. THE POST-MODERN CONDITION</b>		
VI	Dec 09-14 <b>Paper 5 is due</b>	The postmodern condition-1. Michel Foucault*. The critique of reason. The alternative way of the philosophy of the subject: Communicative vs. Subject-Centered Reason. The power of discipline. The power of knowledge. Bio-power. Analyzing reality by Foucault’s methodology.
VII	Dec 16-21 <b>Paper 6 is due</b>	The postmodern condition-2. Jean Baudrillard*. Simulacra and simulation. Consumer society. Integral Universe. Is this the end of the Enlightenment? Wrapping up discussion.
VIII	Dec 21-26	<b>FINAL PRESENTATIONS</b>

## Bibliography

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- Berman, Marshal. (1988). *All that is solid melts into air: The experience of modernity (Introduction)*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Foucault, Michel. (1984). *The Foucault reader* (Introduction, “What is Enlightenment?” “Truth & Power”). New York: Pantheon.
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- Hegel, Georg. (2009/1837). *The Philosophy of History* (Introduction & Part I, “The geographic basis of history”). Scotts Valley, CA: IAP.
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- Kant, Immanuel: (2009/1784). *An answer to the question “What is Enlightenment?”* New York: Penguin Books.
- Marcuse, Herbert. (1991/1964). *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Chapter 1: “The new forms of control”). Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Marx, Karl. (1978). *The Marx-Engels reader*. (“The German ideology,” “Manifesto of the Communist Party,” and “On social relations in Russia” excerpts). New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. (1989/1886). *Beyond good and evil: Prelude to a philosophy of the future* (excerpts). New York: Vintage.