

COMM.711.001 TEACHING SEMINAR IN MEDIA ARTS

Thursday 9:55 am-12:35

Professor: Pat Aufderheide

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Office Hours: W 11-12:30, 2-3, Thursday 8:30-10 and 1-3:00 (and I am often on campus on other days as well)

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We use the Blackboard platform. Unfamiliar with it? See me! Don't use AU email? Make sure it's forwarded to an account you do read, so you get my Blackboard emails to the class!

Course Overview

This three credit course provides candidates for the M.F.A. in Film and Electronic Media with an overview of the social institution of higher education in America, the relationship between professional and academic elements of the academy, academic and professional institutions, course management and career management.

Required:

- Wilbert J. McKeachie, *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, research, and theory for college and university teachers*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. (The bookstore has new copies; Amazon sells some used ones)
- Weekly reading of *Chronicle of Higher Education* (If you are not now receiving the Chronicle, you need to subscribe at chronicle.com. But you can also read The Chronicle in the library or access the university library's electronic subscription. If you only access The Chronicle electronically, at least once take a look at the hard copy.)
- Assigned reading (reserves, e-reserves and Blackboard)

Recommended:

- Leigh DeNeef and Crauford D. Goodwin, *The Academic's Handbook*, 3rd ed., Duke University Press, 2007

Assignments:

Summary papers (6 of 8): You'll come to class having completed short summaries of the main points of the reading, as you understand their significance for you and the issues of this course. These can simply be your notes, or a brief, paragraph summary of your notes. These papers need only demonstrate to me that you did in fact do the reading. This exercise should prepare you for discussion. You'll submit them to the Assignment folder in Blackboard before class, as comments (this will force you to be brief!). There are eight opportunities; I'll take the top six grades or you can skip a week or two. This is your choice. But there are two required assignments: the first one, and the day you do McKeachie notes on your part of the reading. (For McKeachie day, each member of the team should post a copy of the notes in Assignments under attachments, and one member of the team should upload them to the Discussion Board part of Blackboard.) 5% each = 30% total

Oral Presentation of *Chronicle of Higher Education* headlines: Once in the semester, you'll discuss leading or most interesting articles in this week's headlines with the class. *Topics should be appropriate to our class topics and discussions*. You may share this responsibility with another person in class; you

should confer before class to make sure you are not both highlighting the same topic/article. If you're going to be absent the week you are to present, it is up to you to find someone to trade weeks with. 5%

Observation of three teachers in action: You will observe three teachers (getting their permission first) for at least 20 minutes each in class. You can pick any class anywhere in higher education, but please make sure to include one production class (any kind of production—digital, journalistic, photo, video, etc.). You will look for *how well McKeachie's teaching tips work or don't work in practice*. Summarize your observations, organizing them into strategies that *help learning* and strategies that *hinder learning*. Submit your paper summarizing your observations in the Assignment folder in Blackboard, in the Comments section. You may do this without reference to the name of the actual teacher. 5%

Teaching evaluation/critique. Arrange with a teacher to conduct a teaching session in class; follow the attached form for critique/evaluation. If you are teaching a course, you may get the teacher to evaluate you for a session of that course. You may not be evaluated by another grad student. You need to use the three-part form available in Course Documents on Blackboard to report; this involves giving the teacher your objectives and method; getting the teacher's evaluation (this may take time—the ideal is getting the teacher to fill it out on the spot); and filling out a self-evaluation. You can submit online or bring this in hard copy to class as early as possible and by our last session at the latest—all parts please!! 5%

Syllabus (for a real or an imaginary course). This syllabus should have, at a minimum, contact information, course description, professor description, assignment descriptions, evaluation information, and a schedule. *Start working on this early!* You may select the format you believe is most effective. Please attach a short explanation page describing your reasons for your presentational choices. Submit to Assignment folder in Blackboard, as an attachment. 10%

Proposal for an academic professional association activity: You will research one of the professional associations in higher education that is appropriate to your aspirations. These may include the University Film and Video Association, the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the International Communication Association, the National Communication Association, and also some hybrids such as The International Digital Media & Arts Association (iDMAa). If it is not clear that this association caters to higher education you must check with me first. Do not choose a professional association catering to business professionals. The goal of this exercise is for you to go through the steps you would take in order to submit a proposal for an activity such as a panel, a paper, a poster session or a preconference. You should identify the organization, explain the process of submission, explain your objective, and then provide the core information you would submit (e.g. a description of the panel, an executive summary of the paper, etc.) Please do not invent activities that are not already supported by the organization. If your proposal involves research that involves human subjects in any way, please include a form you will submit to the Institutional Review Board (use the AU site, <http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/provost/osp/IRB.htm>). You may want to consult with advisors/faculty on how they have done this work. Submit to Assignment folder in Blackboard, in the Comments section. 10%

Strategy memo on showcasing your professional work: You will select any work of yours, such as a film, video or a web-based project (imaginary or real), and describe what you are going to do to get it

recognized by your peers—the people who will be crucial to you at a point when you need to get either hired or promoted, since higher education depends on peer review. Since your work is likely to have a professional audience rather than or as well as a higher-education audience, you may have to find venues in the professional world that can be looked upon by your higher-education peers as validating your work. You are in charge of explaining why these venues, however improbable, provide a measure of peer recognition of your work. In this paper, you will describe your work, describe the ways in which you will launch it in the world, and describe what value these have that your peers in higher education would recognize as significant. *Be prepared to provide an oral presentation of this strategy in class.* And, of course, put your written work in Assignment folder in Blackboard; put it in the Comments section. 10%

Interviews with three professors about their service work: You will interview three professors, not necessarily in SOC or even on this campus, about service within the university and within their professional associations. These interviews may be brief, e.g. a few minutes, and they can be on email. You may write up this experience without reference to the actual names, and you might want to tell the interviewees that. Don't interview someone who's already been interviewed by a classmate. For instance, an email might state: "Prof. X, I hope you might be able to answer a few questions about what kind of service obligations you have as a professor, for my MFA teaching seminar. If someone has already asked you for this information, I apologize for asking—we can only interview someone who hasn't yet been interviewed." Submit to Assignments folder, in the Comments section. 10%

Curriculum vitae: You'll write a CV, with a cover letter describing why you want a job at a particular university (please provide a description of the job, and the source for your template for your CV). If it is a real job (the Chronicle lists them every week) you should include the description from the Chronicle. If you are making up this job, associate it with a real institution and reflect the real institution's organization and needs, and include that description. Pick the kind of job you might actually want to apply for in the next few years. You may use a variety of formats but you should orient this to an academic audience. Strive for concision, simplicity, lack of "bells and whistles." Submit to the Assignments folder in Blackboard, using Attachments. 10%

Attendance at a Senate meeting: Once in the semester, you will drop in on a Senate meeting, if only for half an hour, in order to watch faculty governance in action. You'll report on it within your summary paper,

Class participation: 5%

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: Sorry, they go down a grade a day.

COURSE STYLE:

In this course, you function much as a university professor does, with responsibilities inside and outside the classroom. You teach, attend a conference, give a guest lecturer in another class, attend the faculty senate, conduct research, write, prepare a syllabus, and apply for a faculty position. These obligations are **time consuming** and **irregularly scheduled**. I understand how difficult your schedules already are, but I also know how valuable other students have regarded these "windows" into university reality. To make some accommodation for these course demands, the class does not meet every week. However, the class does have the required and usual number of total meetings or

their equivalent. I am aware that **the course organization is unusual and challenging.**

GREEN TEACHING AND LEARNING:

This is a certified green class, according to the Center for Teaching Excellence, and every semester we try to make it greener. I'm looking for your suggestions and your support. You can help, for instance, by using your own mug if you're bringing in a drink, by using the *Chronicle* online, by not printing out emails and readings, and by taking the survey that's on Blackboard. Thanks!



DISABILITY SUPPORT: If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please don't hesitate to consult with me. In addition to the resources of the department, a wide range of services is available to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements.

Academic Support Center (x3360, MGC 243) offers study skills workshops, individual instruction, tutor referrals, and services for students with learning disabilities. Writing support is available in the ASC Writing Lab or in the Writing Center, Battelle 228.

Counseling Center (x3500, MGC 214) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.

Disability Support Services (x3315, MGC 206) offers technical and practical support and assistance with accommodations for students with physical, medical, or psychological disabilities.

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please notify me in a timely manner with a letter from the Academic Support Center or Disability Support Services so that we can make arrangements to address your needs.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: You are already familiar with the University's Academic Integrity Code, and I am obligated by the university to remind you of it. But you also know for yourself what honest work is, what cheating is, what copying and plagiarism are, and that when you cheat the one who loses the most is you. Obviously, I must hold you to the university's strict enforcement standards if I find any infractions. Please see me if you are ever in doubt.

IN CASE OF BAD WEATHER: Often the weather does not cooperate with our class schedules. If class is cancelled, you can call 885-1100 for updates on AU policy, and can call 885-2069, my number, if there's any doubt about whether our class will meet. For our class time, sometimes AU cancellations are ambiguous. If classes are held as of 11 am, **we will meet.** If our class is indeed cancelled, then you should check both your email, and my voice mail, to see how we will adjust. Adjustment may include doing extra homework on your own to prepare for the next class, or communicating electronically. Please don't assume that a cancelled class means we skip that week's assignment!

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Jan. 9: Attend ANN FERREN TEACHING CONFERENCE, Katzen Arts Center

Jan. 14: Faculty Senate meeting, 2:15-4:45, Butler Board Room (but check http://www.american.edu/faculty_senate/ for updates)

Jan. 15: Introduction and discussion of conference

Do for today:

- Read: Gaff, “Faculty in the variety of American colleges and university,” in *The Academic’s Handbook*, pp. 11-21
- Issues in Higher Education (please click around and sample!) at <http://aaup.org/AAUP/issueded>, the website of American Association of University Professors

Due for today:

- Summary paper on the reading, viewing and conference attendance. This is required for everyone.

UNIVERSITY IN SOCIETY

Jan. 22: Universities, colleges, schools: Higher education as a social institution

Read for today:

- Lucas, *Crisis in the Academy: Rethinking Higher Education in America*, p. 39-71
- Brubacher and Rudy, *Higher Education in Transition*, 389-406

Due for today:

- Summary paper on the reading

We’ll assign McKeachie reading today

Jan. 29: NO CLASS in compensation for half of Teaching Conference

Feb. 4: Faculty Senate meeting, 2:15-4:45

Feb. 5: The professional school within the university

Read:

- Lucas, *Crisis in the Academy: Rethinking Higher Education in America*, 72-88
- Brubacher and Rudy, “Professional education,” in Goodchild and Wechsler, *The History of Higher Education*, 379-393
- William O. Huie, Jr., “UFVA at 40: A Brief History,” *Journal of Film and Video*, Spring 1986, 21-40

Due for today: Summary paper on the reading

Have you started work on your syllabus?

Feb. 12: Course design and class management

Read:

- McKeachie’s teaching tips, assigned chapters to summarize and share (*Prepare a public presentation, with your group, of your teaching that both explains and demonstrates the technique!*)

- Consult resources on American University's Center for Teaching Excellence site, for example, <http://american.edu/cte/tlr.htm>
- **Due for today:**
- Summary papers to share, of McKeachie reading (group presentation is key to grade)
- Group presentations

Feb. 19: Survival strategies for teaching

Do for today:

Spend your time this week (if you've left it till now) observing in at least three classes (obtain the teacher's permission first!). These courses need not be in the School of Communication, but at least one should be in production and at least one should be a media studies course of some kind. You may not "observe" your own course, even if you have a guest lecturer.

Due for today:

- Observation paper on three visits (make sure the strategies that help/hinder learning are clear! Make sure you've incorporated comments drawn from McKeachie!)
- Finish group presentations

How's the work on your syllabus doing?

TEACHING

Feb 26: Teaching challenges

We'll discuss issues including grading, managing diversity in the classroom, plagiarism, and learning disabilities, and we'll talk about your own teaching experience. We'll also compare your approaches to syllabus construction. Have you already managed to teach a segment of a class? We'll hear from you today!

Read:

- Review McKeachie
- Use in preparation of your syllabus:
<http://cte.udel.edu/syllabus.htm>

Due for today:

- A syllabus that you've designed for a course.

GUEST LECTURER:

Kathy Schwartz, director, Academic Support Center, AU

March 4: Faculty Senate meeting, 2:15-4:45

March 5: NO CLASS in compensation for half of Teaching Conference

SPRING BREAK!

CAREER MANAGEMENT

March 19: Creative Work, Research and Networking

We'll look at what kind of creative and/or professional work is expected of a college professor, and what kinds of organizations help you network with academic colleagues, learn what's going on outside your university, and possibly even influence the field.

Read:

- Matthew Finkin, "The Tenure System," in *The Academic's Handbook*, pp. 155-167
- Crauford Goodwin, "Some Tips on Tenure," in *The Academic's Handbook*, pp. 168-175
- Professional organizations list, on Blackboard Course Documents
- Presidents forum: What should UFVA bring forward from the past to the future?, *Journal of Film and Video* 49:3, pp. 73-84, in Course Documents on Blackboard
- Tenure Standards, University Film and Video Association, available at http://www.ufva.org/content.php?type_id=7&article_id=86
- Tenure standards on new media, College Art Association, <http://www.collegeart.org/guidelines/newmedia07.html>
- Michael Jensen, The New Metrics of Scholarly Authority (on Blackboard)
- AU SOC research standards, at soc.american.edu/content.cfm?id=888

Due for today:

- Summary paper on reading.
- Proposal for an activity for an academic professional conference.

March 26: Building your creative portfolio: Distribution and Networking

We'll talk about strategies to get your work showcased, and to find ways to make synergy work for you.

Read (in light of the research/tenure standards you read last week!):

- Independent Filmmakers Working with New Technologies: Case Studies by Scott Kirsner, at <http://itvs.org/producers/digitalinitiative/fieldreport/> (choose one case study appropriate to your interests and report on it as well as the overview)
- Peter Broderick, Welcome to the New World of Distribution, <http://peterbroderick.com/writing/writing/maximizingdistribution.html>
- "International festivals and markets," by Chris Haws, on Blackboard Course Documents

Investigate:

What do the various trade associations in your area do, and what do they offer you?

Find one that is interesting to you and describe why your progress toward tenure would be helped by active participation in it.

Due for today:

- Summary paper on your reading and research (*Be prepared to share your discoveries with the class!*)
- A paper describing how you can showcase a particular work. *Be prepared to explain your strategy and to answer questions about it to a panel of judges from a university committee willing to give you money if you can explain to them how this advances your progress toward tenure!*

April 1: Faculty Senate meeting, 2:15-4:45

April 2: NO CLASS! In compensation for attending Senate meeting and teaching a class.

April 9: Service and Support

We'll learn about what's expected of you as a member of an academic team within your university.

Read:

- "Should faculty be 'managed'?" *Academe* May-June, 2003, 40-44, available at <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/academe/2003/MJ/Feat/Rael.htm>
- "Class Issues Outside the Classroom," *Academe* Sep-October 2006, available at

<http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/academe/2006/SO/Feat/soanon.htm>

- Kenneth Pye, "University governance and autonomy: who decides what in the university," in *The Academic's Handbook*, pp. 349-366
- Philip Stewart, "The Academic community," in *The Academic's Handbook*, pp. 387-394

Due for today:

- Summary paper including reading AND your reactions to a Senate meeting
- Report on interviews with three professors.

GUEST LECTURER: Rodger Streitmatter, Associate Dean, SOC

April 16: NO CLASS! in compensation for class observation time, but file a summary paper of the following reading:

- Henry Wilbur, "On getting a job," in *The Academic's Handbook*, pp. 123-135
- Sudhir Shetty, "The Job market," in *The Academic's Handbook*, pp. 136-143
- Cross and Goldenberg, "Off-track vetting," in *The Academic's Handbook*, pp. 144-154
- DeNeef, "Academic salaries and benefits," in *The Academic's Handbook*, pp. 176-200

Due for today:

Summary paper

April 23: The job interview

Read for today:

- Sources on writing a curriculum vitae. Sample and select; and include your model or source when you hand in your own CV. Here are some, and you may discover others:
<http://www.training.nih.gov/careers/careercenter/cv.html#acad> (this has several sites listed)
<http://www.collegeart.org/guidelines/> (this has a variety of resumes for different kinds of artists and professionals)
- Lee Bollinger, The Value and Responsibilities of Academic Freedom (on Blackboard)
- Stanley Katz, What Has Happened to the Professoriate? (on Blackboard)

Due for today:

- A curriculum vitae, with cover letter
- *Be prepared to "interview" for the job that you applied for! Be prepared to play the role of the interviewer, using all your knowledge gained of higher education priorities!*

April 30: Hold this day tentatively, in case we have weather-related or other cancellations or schedule changes.