

COM105A: Introduction to Media Studies
Midterm Take-Home Exam

The coverage of this requirement is based on the readings included in the first three modules* taken up in class:

- (1) Culture, Ideology, and Hegemony
- (2) Social Life and Cultural Studies
- (3) Political Economy

You will be required to answer three questions, one for each module. Your answers will take the form of a short essay that should address these general questions in specific ways, facilitated by the mandatory use of direct quotes and paraphrases from several readings. I expect a correct and consistent use of either the APA or the MLA citation styles†. The questions are as follows:

- (1) Why is ideology a concern for media and cultural studies?**
(You may wish to discuss the need for this question in the first place, since it assumes that people not familiar with media and cultural studies may not associate notions of ideology with that field of study.)
- (2) What is the connection between social life and cultural studies?**
(You may ponder the necessity of studying social life through cultural studies as a way of answering this question, relating it to the particular idea of social life upheld by cultural studies scholars.)
- (3) What kind of perspective is provided by political economy in understanding issues and concerns in and of the field of media and cultural studies?**
(You may think about this question in terms of the limitations of a media and cultural studies approach that neglects the political economy aspect, and how the latter can overcome those limitations.)

These questions are broad enough to accommodate different perspectives and approaches, but an alternate option is for you to generate your own question to answer or for you to generate a thesis statement that can address the themes listed above. Like the given questions, doing this requirement in this manner also involves an understanding of the diverse ideas relevant to each module. Similarly, the answer you will furnish should also refer to several readings.

There is neither a minimum nor a maximum page requirement; consequently, I demand strict adherence to paper format and mechanics:

- 1-inch margins on all sides
- double-spaced lines
- Times New Roman in either size 10 or 12—no more, no less, no in-between
- proper use of paragraphs and all aspects of formal/academic written English
- no real names: only ID numbers or an optional pseudonym
- black ink on white 8.5 × 11 bond paper
- no cover pages and/or folders
- no illustrations and fancy layouts, unless absolutely necessary (e.g., tables and charts, etc.)
- no email submissions will be accepted, but you must keep your “soft copy” in case it is needed
- any other stipulation will be mentioned in class

* This categorization, in turn, is of course derived from the structure and arrangement of our course text. Please ensure that you have the correct and complete bibliographical information of this book.

† Students under the School of the Social Sciences are required to use the APA system for their formal research requirements, so you may as well get used to that system for this assignment.