

## Evaluation – MEVIT 4614 – Høst 2017

Charles Ess

### **Pensum**

Reflecting comments and suggestions from previous instantiations of the course, I continue to modify the reading list – first of all, by reducing the number of articles devoted to fine-grained details of policy development and analysis (from the online anthology by Mansell, R., and Raboy, M. (Eds), 2011, *The Handbook of Global Media and Communication Policy*) in order to make room for additional, more contemporary resources.

In particular, I have corresponded with many of the authors of the articles used in the current *pensum* to request suggestions for more recent and/or additional chapters or articles that reflect relevant changes; interestingly, the majority responded by indicating that their contributions remain relevant and current. A few did offer more recent materials which will, of course, be incorporated in the next instantiation of the *pensum*.

*Evaluation:* while there were several suggestions for adding elements to the course (see **Student evaluation questionnaire** summary, below, question 4), there were – unlike in previous years – no criticisms or concerns regarding possibly outdated readings, etc. In addition, there are several positive qualitative comments regarding the quality of the lectures in terms of being relevant and contemporary.

### **Undervisning**

1) I continue to follow my structure of using the first 45 minutes or so of class time for lecture/discussion, usually accompanied by Powerpoints or prepared texts that were then made available afterwards on Fronter, followed by another 45 minutes or so of workshop/discussion, usually guided by prepared workshop/discussion questions (also placed on Fronter).

*Evaluation:* in this evaluation, all the students fully agreed that the teaching was engaging (see **Student evaluation ..., 1**, below), and many commented very positively on the lectures.

While opinions were more split on the discussions (see **Student evaluation ..., 1**), only one person opined that there was there could have been less time devoted to these.

2) Because especially the readings from Mansell and Raboy can be demanding, I now make available annotated PDFs of most of the readings prior to our taking them up in class. I also usually make available some set of notes and/or discussion questions prior to the class to help students get a sense of the highlights and likely questions for discussion.

*Evaluation:* this approach received somewhat mixed results in both the mid-term and final evaluations: it worked well for some students, but not for all. This is not a major problem insofar as both “clean” and then annotated PDFs of the relevant chapters are available on Fronter: students can choose which ones are more helpful to them personally.

3) Finally, after every class I upload the daily class materials (Powerpoints, prepared texts, workshop/discussion questions) on Fronter and then send an email to the

students advising them of this, coupled with instructions and comments for preparing for the next class meeting.

*Evaluation* (see **Student evaluation ...**, **18**, below): apart from the different views regarding annotated PDFs, all of the students found this part of the course to work either well or very well.

### *Course evaluations*

The course was evaluated both at mid-term (approximately) and then at the conclusion of the course.

The **midterm evaluations** were generally quite positive, but also pointed to two concerns:

- 1) While several students found the annotated readings helpful – others found them not as helpful as simply reading on their own. The simple solution to this is that both “clean” and annotated versions of the articles are provided in Fronter so that students can choose which works best for them.
- 2) We originally would have discussion in small groups, but did not always end up with much time for a plenary discussion. Most of the students commented that by mid-term, they were comfortable with one another and that the class was small enough to have more plenary rather than small group discussions.  
This change was made, of course.

### **End of term evaluations**

A total of 9 evaluations were completed. A complete summary of both quantitative and qualitative responses is appended below in the **Student evaluation questionnaire**: numbers in bold refer to correlative sections in the summary.

*Quantitatively*, most of the responses ranged from positive to quite positive.

Most positively,

9 fully agreed that *the teaching was engaging* but opinion was more split with regard to how far the teaching was *well structured* (3 agree, 6 partly agree) and *clear and comprehensible* (5 agree, 3 partly agree). See “*Areas for improvement*,” below.

Other positives include:

**7. exercises** help students work actively / regularly the course content: the majority fully agreed, with a few still partly agreeing.

### **11. learning activities**

Three found the *readings* to demand too much time – as some also commented; but six found the readings to be “demanding but exciting”;

Four found the lectures to be “demanding but exciting” – and five wanted more;

Only one person found that the workshops and discussions “demanded too much time” – as with the lectures, many (6) found the workshops to be “demanding but exciting,” and 2 wished for more.

### **15. information provided in the course description**

strong majorities (6-9) rated the various kinds of course information as good, with the remaining few (1-3) agreeing it was good.

This represents an improvement on earlier instantiations of course, i.e., earlier evaluations pointed to some instances of lack of clarity in specific areas.

#### *Areas for improvement*

Two comments stand out for me:

1. *The teaching was well structured* received less positive ratings than I would have liked – i.e., only 3 fully agreeing, while 6 partly agreed.
2. A couple of the critical comments observed that, e.g., “the course would’ve been more coherent if the themes were in logical order instead of mixing them.”

Some of the mixing referred to here was the result of adjusting the schedule to meet the calendar requirements of a guest lecturer.

But still, I can see ways to make the structure and coherency of the themes clearer to students next time around.

The students also offered some useful suggestions for additional improvements, e.g., providing summaries following each class. These will be taken on board, along with some updating of the pensum, for 2018.

# **Student evaluation questionnaire for courses offered at the Faculty of Arts – SUMMARY**

You are hereby invited to evaluate the course **MEVIT4614** – Pornography, Protection, Power (Fall, 2014). We would be grateful for your taking the time to answer the following questions. It is only through your feedback that we can improve our courses.

Best regards from the Department of Media and Communication

As a reminder of the course description:

## **Course content**

Pornography? Protection? Power? Should the Internet be regulated? Does regulation strangle the free exchange of ideas, or do we need to police the Internet before it becomes a toxic pile of drugs, pornography, hate and pirated content? And if yes – who should be this Internet police?

This course addresses political, normative and financial arguments for Internet content regulation today. In particular, the dual relationship between the protection of presumed “weak” users from perceived harmful content (such as pornography, specific political views), and freedom of speech/censorship issues will be explored from numerous angles.

The course will concentrate on the conflicting perspectives, policies and goals of the various stakeholders involved in setting the Internet content regulation agenda, such as nation states, supra-national organizations, non-governmental organizations, the Internet industry, freedom of speech movements, content producers and child protection agencies.

## **Learning outcomes**

When you have completed this course you are expected to be able to:

- Analyse the relationship between stakeholders dealing with Internet content regulation

- Describe the various normative and practical perspectives within the context of international regulation of Internet content
- Evaluate current regulatory policies
- Critically reflect upon the challenges involved in creating a functional policy for Internet content regulation

*Evaluation*

**1. How would you evaluate the following statements regarding the quality of teaching in this course?**

<i>Statements</i>	<i>I agree</i>	<i>I partly agree</i>	<i>I disagree</i>
The teaching was engaging.	9		
The teaching was well structured.	3	6	
The teaching was clear and comprehensible.	5	3	

**2. How would you say the teaching covered the course content?**

Very well - 5

Well - 4

Neither well nor poorly

Poorly

Very poorly

**3. Are there parts of the course content that should have been allotted more teaching hours?**

No - 2

Yes - 7

**4. If you answered yes on the previous question, please specify which parts of the course content.**

More coverage of topics (e.g., Braman) + fewer readings; drugs and illegal activities; positive examples of government regulation; policy / code is law; existing international regulations; internet regulations regarding pornography

**5. Are there parts of the course content that should have been allotted less teaching hours?**

No - 7

Yes 1

**6. If you answered yes on the previous question, please specify which parts of the course content.**

Less on deontology, utilitarianism.

**7. How would you evaluate the following statements regarding the exercises you were assigned during the course?**

<i>Statements</i>	<i>I agree</i>	<i>I partly agree</i>	<i>I disagree</i>
The exercises made me work actively with the course content.	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	
The exercises made me work regularly with the course content.	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	

**8. How would you evaluate the relationship between lectures and workshops/group- based teaching in this course?**

- Very well - 5
- Well – 2
- Neither well nor poorly - 1
- Poorly
- Very poorly

**9. On average, how many hours per week have you spent on this course, including attending classes?**

<i>Period</i>	<i>0-5 h per week</i>	<i>5-10 h per week</i>	<i>10-15 h per week</i>	<i>15 h or more per week</i>
First part of the semester		<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	
Second part of the semester	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	

**10. How would you evaluate the following statements regarding the amount of effort you put into this course?**

<i>Statements</i>	<i>I agree</i>	<i>I partly agree</i>	<i>I disagree</i>
I could have put more effort into working with this course at the beginning of the semester.	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
I get more out of the teaching when I prepare for class.	<b>9</b>		
I could have put more effort into working with this course during the whole semester.	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
I have spent more time working on this	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>



course than on similar courses.			
I have generally been well prepared for class in this course.		<b>8</b>	

**11. Which learning activities have you used, and how would you evaluate their usefulness to your learning in this course?**

<i>Teaching methods</i>  <i>Statements</i>	<i>Demands too much time</i>	<i>Demanding but exciting</i>	<i>Could have been more of this</i>
Reading the required readings	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	
Writing papers		<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>
Attending lectures		<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Attending workshops/discussions	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>
Other			

**12. How do you evaluate the following statements about the course?**

<i>Statements</i>	<i>I agree</i>	<i>I partly agree</i>	<i>I disagree</i>
The course has taught me to analyze problems.	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	
The course has taught me facts, ideas and methods.	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	
The course has taught me practical skills.		<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>

--	--	--	--

**13. How do you evaluate the following statements about the forms of examination used in this course?**

<i>Statements</i>	<i>I agree</i>	<i>I partly agree</i>	<i>I disagree</i>
They give me the opportunity to show acquired knowledge.	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	
They give me the opportunity to show acquired skills.	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	
They make me work regularly with the course during the semester.	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
There is too much assessment during this course.		<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>

**14. If you could choose, which form of assessment would you prefer for this course?**

- Portfolio
- Written examination - **1**
- Semester paper - **7**
- Home examination - **3**
- Oral examination - **1**
- Oral presentation - **1**
- Other

**15. How would you evaluate the information given about following issues in the course description?**

<i>Information about</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Sufficient</i>	<i>Poor</i>
Time and place for teaching	<b>9</b>		
Time and/or place for examination	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	
Course content and objective	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	
Prerequisites for the course	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	
Forms of teaching in the course	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	
Forms of assessment in the course	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	

**16. What were your most important reasons to choose this course? (Check all that apply)**

- It is required in my study programme and/or course group - **1**
- It was convenient to take the course this semester - **5**
- I was interested in the topic - **6**
- I wanted to take a course from this teacher
- Other – **1** (**comment:** only two alternatives for international students)

**17. How satisfied are you, all in all, with this course?**

Very satisfied - 3

Satisfied - 5

Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied - 1

Unsatisfied

Very unsatisfied

**18. Pedagogical dimensions** (asks about the use of follow-up emails, annotated readings, etc.)

Very satisfied - 3

Satisfied - 6

Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied

Unsatisfied

Very unsatisfied

**19. Qualitative comments**

*A. In your view, what has worked especially well in the course – i.e., which aspects of the reading, the teaching, etc.?*

Teaching and group discussion

Lectures worked very well

I really enjoyed the lectures. The way of teaching was great.

Personally, I thought the seminar was very helpful.

I have enjoyed this course a lot, and as such am generally happy with it.

The course lectures help clarify the readings.

I liked the fact that the readings were accessible and I liked the discussions.

*B. In your view, what could be done to improve the quality of the course for the next time it's offered?*

There could be even more time to ensure that everything is understood correctly in the readings for each lecture.

Give a clearer reading schedule with fewer papers to read. Reading multiple sources was often too confusing, sadly.

Group discussions with the whole group.

At the end of each seminar, discuss all findings together.

Less time in workshops.

Perhaps readings that provide contrary opinions.

Maybe less reading that is discussed more deeply

The course would've been more coherent if the themes were in logical order instead of mixing them.

*C. Any additional comments, suggestions, criticisms, etc.?*

Thank you, it's been a blast!

The lectures were very interesting / informative and offered new insights and made me aware of some aspects / problems that I wasn't aware of before & should probably spend a little more time thinking about (privacy, personal data on the internet, and terms of service)

The lecture is very informed, even about very recent developments of the internet, both culturally and technologically.

The catching up with the required reading was often hard.  
And, as I said before, great and interesting lectures.

Sometimes the structure of course was a bit unclear;  
The readings were sometimes hard to understand;  
There were some interesting and new aspects concerning the topic