Syllabus

Instructor: Dickson Louie  
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No formal office hours. By appointment.  
(I can usually see you before or after class if you let me know in advance)

Course Description: This three-session, one-unit course focuses on the media industries and how emerging digital technologies are disrupting the way media consumption, distribution, and business models have traditionally worked. This case-and-lecture-based course will emphasize the economics of several media — both news and entertainment — including newspapers, magazines, radio, television, cable television, motion pictures, video gaming, and social media. The current media ecosystem will be also explored, including information infrastructure and ownership issues and their related impact on the strategies of individual media entities. This course will also highlight innovations across a broad range of media companies, from those starting-up to those in the Fortune 500. The following guest speakers — reflecting the spectrum of macro-to-micro media entities — are scheduled to appear (via phone or in person):

• Yasmin Namini, Senior Vice President and Chief Consumer Officer,  
  The New York Times and nytimes.com  
• Dan Schaub, Corporate Director of Audience Development, The McClatchy Company  
• Jimmy Soni, Managing Editor, The Huffington Post  
• Gary Lee, Founder, Lakersnation.com and managing partner, DodgersNation.com and SportsCity.com

Course Objectives:  
• Learn how traditional media business models have worked  
• Discover how new technologies and entrepreneurs are disrupting those traditional business models  
• Understand the trends in media consumption  
• Determine why many traditional media companies have resisted change  
• Identify what new media business models may evolve
Recommended Prerequisites:
- MGB 202A: Markets and the Firm
- MGB 203A: Data Analysis for Managers

Required readings:

Recommended Readings

Case Studies:

Individual students will have the opportunity to open a case, critique a case opening, and summarize the case takeaways.

Students should use the strategic framework (“An Integrated Cascade of Choices”) provided on Exhibit One of the “A Playbook for Strategy” article by Lafley, Martin, and Riel to help analyze each of the cases.

Course Packet:
- There is no assigned textbook.
- The course packet contains all the readings for all three sessions.
- Students should read all the assigned readings for each session beforehand (see reading schedule on page 4).
- Students should read the assigned case before each session. Case discussion questions will be posted on Study.net about two weeks prior to class discussion.

Individual At-home Assignment
- Over the past three decades, key media entrepreneurs have been game changers in the industry as new technologies evolved. Students should pick only one of
the five articles (written by Ken Auletta (*New Yorker*), Lauren Collins (*New Yorker*) or David Kirkpatrick (*Vanity Fair*)) below to read and analyze the media entrepreneur of your choice for your individual assignment. The articles are in your course packet.

“Twitter was Act One” (Jack Dorsey)  
“The Oracle” (Arianna Huffington)  
“Searching for Trouble” (Google Co-founders)  
“The Lost Tycoon” (Ted Turner)  
“The Bloomberg Threat” (Michael Bloomberg)

Your written one-page analysis (single-spaced) of how that individual transformed a particular media category will be due on Sunday, August 25, 2013. This assignment will account for 25% of your individual evaluation. For the analysis framework, students should use the innovative disruptive model by Johnson, Christensen, and Kagermann (which is in your course packet readings). More background information on this assignment and a sample write-up (of Steve Jobs) will be posted on Study.net by Wednesday, July 31, 2013.

**Individual Evaluation:**

- This is not a graded course. It is Pass/No Pass
- Attendance for both courses will be required
- Individual evaluation is broken down as follows:

  25%  Participation in Session One lecture, case study and guest speaker  
  25%  Participation in Session Two lecture, case study and guest speaker  
  25%  Participation in Session Three lecture, case study and guest speaker  
  25%  Individual assignment- Analysis of a media entrepreneur  
  100%  TOTAL

- In addition to the required readings and individual written assignment, there will be preparation work for the three case studies (plan 2 hours of work at home for each case).

**Schedule:**

- **San Ramon Campus:**
  
  Sunday, July 28, 2013  
  Sunday, August 11, 2013  
  Sunday, August 25, 2013  
  1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
  1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
  1 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Biographical Sketch:**

Mr. Louie has almost three decades of executive experience with media companies, starting with the Los Angeles Times and then with the San Jose Mercury News and the San Francisco Chronicle. He has been responsible for strategic planning, circulation planning, business development and advertising planning during his professional career. A former research associate at the Harvard Business School, he has written and published several cases on media companies, including those on CBS News, The New York Times, QVC, Schibsted (Norway), Amazon.com, Washington Post, ABC News, and Turner Broadcasting.
Session One: Sunday, July 28, 2013

- Introductory lecture: Media economics through the decades – news media
- Case Discussion: The New York Times Paywall
- Guest Speakers: Yasmin Namini, Senior Vice President and Chief Consumer Officer, The New York Times, and Dan Schaub, Corporate Director of Audience Development, The McClatchy Company

Pre-class readings:
- The New York Times Paywall case
- Christensen, Skok, and Allworth, “Breaking News: Mastering the Art of Disruptive Innovation in Journalism,” Nieman Reports
- Louie, Media Economics 101 Primer, pages 1 to 29
- Pew Research Center [Instructor’s note: Skim Only]

Session Two: Sunday, August 11, 2013

- Mid-term lecture: Media economics through the decades - entertainment media
- Case Discussion: Netflix: Valuating a New Business Model
- Guest Speaker: Jimmy Soni, Managing Editor, The Huffington Post

Pre-class readings:
- Netflix: Valuating a New Business Model case
- Johnson, Christensen, and Kagermann, “Reinventing Your Business Model”
- Louie, Media Economics 101 Primer, pages 30 to 57

Session Three: Sunday, August 25, 2013

- Closing lecture: Media infrastructure and entrepreneurship
- Presentation of at-home assignment on media entrepreneurs
- Case Discussion: Twitter
- Guest Speaker: Gary Lee, Founder, Lakersnation.com and managing partner, DodgersNation.com and SportsCity.com
- Course wrap-up

Pre-class readings:
- Twitter case
- Louie, Media Economics 101 Primer, pages 58 to 65
- Eisenmann, Parker, and Van Alstyne, “Strategies for Two-sided Markets”

Note: The reading of Lafley, Martin, and Riel, “A Playbook for Strategy: The Five Essential Questions at the Heart of Any Winning Strategy,” provides an analytical framework for the discussion of the cases in each of the three course sessions.