

# AIM 505 Convergent Media Theory and Practice

Syllabus  
Dr. Robert Bergland

## Required Texts

Convergent Journalism: An Introduction--Writing and Producing Across Media  
Stephen Quinn and Vincent Filak (Editors), 2005.

Principles of Convergent Media  
August Grant, Jeff Wilkinson, Douglas Fisher, 2008.

Making Online News  
Ed Chris Paterson and David Domingo, 2008.

Making Media, Second Edition: Foundations of Sound and Image Production  
By Jan Roberts-Breslin, 2007.

## Central Focus

AIM 505 Convergent Media Theory and Practice is a three-hour graduate-level course that considers the mixing and convergence of contemporary media: print, film, video, photography, music, electronic, and digital. The course delineates media forms, including their emergence and uses, and examines theories of culture, media, and information that include theories of audience participation, non-hierarchical flattening, rhetorical positioning, long tails and niches, pervasive economical marketing, dispersals of authority, and others. The course is for students majoring in the Master of Applied Arts in Integrated Media and for non-majors interested in learning about convergent media. This is a fall semester offering.

## Competencies

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Identify strengths and weaknesses of various media.
- Explain the relationships between media elements and their contexts.
- Explain the various media theories and how they help one to balance the demands of content, purpose, and audience in multimedia messages.

## Assignments (1000 points)

Students will complete the following assignments:

- Analysis of Commercial Convergent Media Product (CD/DVD/WWW). 100 points

Students will give a written and oral critique of a professional multimedia product, integrating into that critique the readings and best practices seen on other projects examined in and out of class.

- Research Project (500 points)

This project, which will include several smaller assignments, will give students the opportunity to work on a mini-research project that could later be developed into a published article.

Proposal memo (50 points)

Summary of two journal articles (50)

Analysis of target journal content and style (50)

Oral presentation of project (50)

Final paper (200)

- Presentation on topic in Convergent Media (200 points)

Students will be given a number of possible topics within the field of convergent media and may select one of those topics or propose their own topic to deliver a 25-30 minute class lesson on that topic.

Proposal memo/bibliography of sources (50 points)

Handouts/Summary (50 points)

Oral Presentation (delivery and visual materials/PP slides) (100 points)

- **Final Exam** (200 points)—take home essay exam

Assignments are due at the *beginning* of a given class period, either announced in class or indicated in the course outline. **IMPORTANT:** Late work is not accepted (except under extenuating circumstances the professor considers valid).

### **Grading Scale**

The following scale will be used for all final grades this semester:

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	Below 60%

### **Professor's Office Hours, Phones**

The professor will hold office hours on [days/times] and by appointment in [office number]. When you have questions or concerns, you should contact the professor by phone at 271-4446 (office) or 279-1699 (home) or by email at [bergland@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:bergland@missouriwestern.edu).

### **Attendance**

Students are expected to attend *all* class meetings. It is always better to come late or leave early rather than miss an entire meeting.

### **Academic Honesty Policy and Due Process**

Academic honesty is required in all academic endeavors. Violations of academic honesty include any instance of plagiarism, cheating, seeking credit for another's work, falsifying documents or academic records, or any other fraudulent activity. Violations of academic honesty may result in a failing grade on the assignment, failure in the course, or expulsion from the University. When a student's grade has been affected, violations of academic honesty will be reported to the Provost or designated representative on the Academic Honesty Violation Report forms.

Please see the 2006-07 Student Handbook and Calendar on page 21 for specific activities identified as violations of this policy and the student due process procedure. This handbook is also available online at <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/handbook/index.pdf>.

Students are expected to do their own work for all assignments.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Any students in this course with a disability that may prevent them from completing assignments should contact me personally as soon as possible so that we can discuss how they may work to meet class requirements.

### **Changes**

With appropriate notice, the professor reserves the right to make changes to course content, assignments, requirements, and so forth that will improve the overall experience for the majority of students enrolled.