

Media, Culture and Technology

2016

Students of the Bachelor's In Computer Applications (BCA) course used to take a one-semester course in Technical English under the University Syllabus. After autonomy, the BCA course retained this one-semester model. A representation was made to the Principal by the Department since an anomalous situation had resulted—the Department had perforce to provide teachers and set papers but had no say in the syllabus—and because we have felt, for long, that these students would benefit from a course with a Liberal Arts orientation rather than from an approach that privileged language-learning in the form of discrete skills. In response to this representation, the College authorised a four-semester course in English for the BCA students effective from 2010.

In another development, the College began a three years Bachelor's Programme in Visual Communication in June 2010.

The Department is of the opinion that there is something to be said for the synergy created by combining students of the Visual Communication course with the BCA students for a four-semester interaction. The course we have in mind has four major objectives:

- 1. To explore the interface between Media, Culture, and Technology and the new textualities that this interface allows—in a manner that is meaningful for both BCA and BVC students**
- 2. To build reading and writing lives for these students through transactions with the audiences who consume these new textualities**
- 3. To promote an active interest in interpretation and insight out of a fruitful engagement with the narrative pleasures that this interface offers**
- 4. To thus lead the student to an awareness of the interactions between society and technology**

The students of this combined course will be streamed into two sections on the basis of their abilities with the English language. We hope to ensure that differences in course-experience for our streamed students are restricted only to where our conversations with them may actually begin. The streams share the objectives identified above.

MCT-Stream I, comprising students with basic English-language skills, will thus do a course that runs in the following sequence:

1. Semester I—Images as Texts
2. Semester II—The Fourth Estate
3. Semester III—The Moving Image
4. Semester IV—Online Lives in Web 2.0

MCT-Stream II, comprising students with more advanced English-language skills, will thus do a course that runs in the following sequence:

5. Semester I— Online Lives in Web 2.0
6. Semester II— The Moving Image
7. Semester III—The Fourth Estate
8. Semester IV— Images as Texts

Images as Texts will incorporate the following themes:

1. The Superhero Comic—excerpts from Superman and Batman
2. Amar Chitra Katha—excerpts
3. The Graphic Novel—excerpts from Joe Sacco’s Footnotes in Gaza and Marjane Satrapi’s Persepolis
4. The Animated Film—Shrek and its success
5. The Anime Film--Hayao Miyazaki films (Princess Mononoke, Castle in the Sky and Spirited Away)
6. Webcomics—xkcd, PHD Comics, Russell’s Teapot

The Fourth Estate will incorporate the following themes:

1. The idea of the newspaper—Deccan vs. Times in Bangalore
2. The idea of the newspaper—English versus Bhasha in Bangalore
3. The idea of the newspaper—who becomes a journalist?
4. The idea of the newspaper—ideology, slant and ethics
5. The idea of the newspaper—Reading the foreign newspaper (*NYT* and *Guardian*)
6. The idea of the magazine—Reading *The Economist’s* Technology Quarterlies
7. The idea of the magazine—Reading *Wired Magazine*
8. The idea of the magazine—Reading *Rolling Stone*
9. The women’s magazine in India—*Women’s Era*, *Femina* and one magazine in the student’s own language
10. The men’s magazine in India—*Man’s World*, *Open* and *For Him Magazine*
11. The newsmagazine in India—India Today, Outlook, Tehelka and Frontline

The Moving Image will incorporate the following themes:

1. Fiction into Film; Kipling's The Man who would be King
2. Film Genre: Rom-Coms and the idea of romance
3. World Cinema on television.
4. History on Film: Good Night and Good Luck
5. Star Studies: Amitabh Bacchhan, Rajnikant and Dr. Rajkumar
6. Documentaries and Digital Video
7. Genre on TV: Reality Shows and Quiz Shows in India

Online Lives in Web 2.0 will incorporate readings organised according to the following themes:

1. The idea of the digital native
2. Blogging—Communities on LiveJournal
3. YouTube films
4. Social Networking—The Facebook story
5. Downloading as Lifestyle Choice—The Piratebay Case
6. Twitter controversies

These themes will be supported by the reading list given below.

Readings for Students

- I. Extracts from Nayar K, Pramod " Sites, Terms, Conditions" **An Introduction to Cultural Studies** New Delhi: Viva Books 2009 p. 4-7
 - a) " Culture"
 - b) "Popular Culture"
 - c) "The Production and Consumption of Culture"
 - d) "Power/ Culture"
- II. Extracts from Nayar K, Pramod " Sites, Terms, Conditions" **An Introduction to Cultural Studies** New Delhi: Viva Books 2009 p. 17-19
 - a) The Circuit Of Culture
 - b) Television and Representation
 - c) Television and Production
 - d) Television and Consumption
 - e) Television and Regulation
- III. Extracts from Nayar K, Pramod " Sites, Terms, Conditions" **An Introduction to Cultural Studies** New Delhi: Viva Books 2009 p. 41-46
 - a) Media Culture and Cultural Studies
 - b) Audience/Reception Studies

- IV. Extract from Weiten, Jan & Pantti, Mervi “ Obsessed with The audience: breakfast television revisited” **Media, Culture and Society** Vol 27, No. 1
London: Sage Publication Jan 2005 p.35-36

Testing and Evaluation

Continuous Internal Assessment –30%

To be based on Attendance, a Mid-Semester Test, and writing + speaking tasks.

Final Examination – 70%

Based on a set of unseen passages that test the student’s grasp of the ideas encountered in the course and the range of reading he or she has done on his/her own. The tests held prior to the exam will work on the same model.