Graders' Guide: MEVIT4614 Pornography, Protection, Power

The term paper submitted for the course will be evaluated and assigned a grade according to how well the paper responds to the **broad questions and instructions**:

As a reminder, the **broad questions** in this course are:

A) What are the primary challenges to Internet regulation - beginning with defining, justifying such regulation, e.g., because of the risks of pornography - or, more foundationally, the use of social media, e.g., by violent extremists to recruit and sponsor terrorism, etc.?

B) What might be possible paths to / resolutions of one of the most significant of these challenges?

Instructions for the term paper assignment:

For your paper, you will develop your own hypotheses and/or research questions as these draw on, relate to, and/or help illustrate either the large patterns and/or the primary questions of the course.

In your discussion, please choose a primary example or case from among those we have read and discussed in class – or, alternatively, that you have taken up and has been approved by the instructor – that seems to you an interesting and important example or case for illustrating your hypotheses and/or research questions.

Your paper should help your reader better understand both your chosen specific example or case <u>and</u> how it illustrates and responds to the two **defining questions** of the course.

Formal requirements:

Papers can have a maximum length of 10 pages. Each page should be about 2300 characters without spaces.

The front page, Reference/literature list and any appendices are not included in the 10 page limit.

Generally, a full 10 pages will be required to do full justice to the complexity of the questions and issues addressed.

Structure

While students are certainly allowed flexibility in using their own judgments as to how best craft a paper that responds to the defining questions and instructions – the following can be used as a rough guide for how to begin to think about structuring the paper:

> *Introduction* – in which you briefly but clearly identify your chosen case or example, how it responds to or illustrates both "A)" and "B)", and the structure of your paper. (ca. 1 page)
>
> *Body* –
>
>> *Case / example* – identify and carefully represent for your reader the case/example you have chosen to explore. Be careful to provide all the relevant details – along with very careful documentation of all references to the relevant sources – needed to help your reader understand the case, especially in connection with – (ca. 4-5 pages)
>>
>> *Connection to the larger patterns and questions* defining the course. Here you will provide your own version of the **background** sketched out above – one that includes more details and perhaps examples from the literature we have read and discussed.
>>
>> You will then use this background to further make clear and explicit how your chosen case / example illustrates and responds to the two defining **questions** of the course. (ca. 3-4 pages, depending on the length of the case/example section, above)
>
> *Conclusion* – summarizing your most important claims and insights. (ca. 1 page)
>
> *References*

Grading criteria

Generally: we follow the grading guidelines established by the Department. The highest grade – A / Excellent – fulfills these specific benchmarks:

> Answers / responds to the problems / questions defined by the assignment.
>
> Independent, clear and interesting reflection and arguments; relevant examples and

very good use of theory (where relevant). Clear and precise language; clear connections; very well focused and consistent / clear structure. Convincing with regard to the use of relevant facts; and demonstrates very clear familiarity with the course readings. High level of familiarity with relevant theories, figures, etc. in media and communication studies; high analytical competency. Very well proportioned in terms of appropriate length for specific elements and contents of the essay. Clear impression of original and interesting work.

Grade range. Broadly, the Norwegian system counts a "C" grade as a *good* grade – an achievement both students and instructors can be satisfied with (in contrast, say, with countries in which grade inflation over time has rendered a "C" grade all but an insult). Achieving most, if not all, of the above criteria at an acceptable or competent – but not outstanding – level will accordingly result in a C.

After that, lower grades follow from failure to meet one or more of either these general requirements and/or the more specific criteria detailed next.

More specifically: graders will further evaluate term papers vis-à-vis:

1) Completeness and coherency of responses to the primary questions to be addressed in the paper, namely:

For your paper, you will develop your own hypotheses and/or research questions as these draw on, relate to, and/or help illustrate either the large patterns and/or the primary questions of the course.

In your discussion, please choose a primary example or case from among those we have read and discussed in class that seems to you an interesting and important example or case for illustrating your hypotheses and/or research questions.

Your paper should help your reader better understand both your chosen specific example or case <u>and</u> how it illustrates and responds to the two defining **questions** of the course.

2) This means that an excellent paper will clearly demonstrate your fulfillment of the

majority of the **Learning Outcomes** defined for the course – namely, your ability to:

Analyze 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.

3) *Demonstration of close familiarity with curriculum readings.* An excellent paper will

make strong use of relevant course readings, and thereby make clear and explicit how

central elements of the curriculum cover the task themes.

At the same time, it is expected that students will undertake independent research,

especially in conjunction with developing a specific case study or example.

Because many of these case studies are contemporary and therefore have yet to be the

subject of scholarly research published in peer-reviewed journals or anthologies, some

use of online only / more popular resources (e.g., leading newspaper websites) is

appropriate and necessary. But it is expected that the majority of resources made use of

and included in the **Reference list** will come from the course readings and the student's

own research via scholarly library resources such as the UiO Oria database.

4) *Writing, documentation, and weighting of components of the paper*. Papers will be

graded according to standard requirements for academic excellent writing – beginning

with clear introduction, fully developed body, and then a summary/conclusion, coupled

with careful and consistent documentation techniques following a major academic style

sheet (e.g., APA, Chicago as primary choices in the Department).

Nota Bene: academic requirements for careful *documentation* of all materials drawn

from written and other scholarly and popular sources are quite strict, including the

requirement that *specific / direct quotes* of *three words or more* must be so identified by

way of quote marks and the appropriate documentation (usually author-date, page, with

the author-date referring clearly to the relevant reference listed in the **References** section of the paper). At the same time, close paraphrases of another's words, ideas, etc., must likewise be carefully documented. *Failure to observe careful and consistent documentation practice will usually result in a drop of one to two grade levels*; worst-case, *poor documentation practice can lead to questions of whether or not the student has plagiarized; plagiarism is grounds for an automatic "F" / failure*. Please be careful!

The general requirement, "Very well proportioned in terms of appropriate length for specific elements and contents of the essay" means specifically that each component of the paper should be properly proportioned. Broadly, the introduction needs to be substantive enough to make clear the central points of the paper as well as its structure and (argumentative) trajectory; the body should constitute the main bulk of the paper; and the conclusion should be clear and complete, but in general less extensive than the introduction.

If major components of the assignment are not fully responded to and/or one component is over/under developed in comparison with the others, the paper will earn a comparatively lower grade.

5) *Language requirements*. The course and paper are in English, and it is expected that students will demonstrate sufficient proficiency in written English as to be clear, accurate, and concise in responding fully to the paper requirements. Non-native English speakers / writers will not be expected to write at quite the same level as native English speakers / writers. At the same time, one purpose of the paper is to help students further develop their writing skills and proficiencies; significant deficits in writing will reduce the final grade accordingly.