

COMM 3440 (hybrid) Mass Communication and Society

Autumn 2018 F 10:20 AM – 12:10 PM, JR 360

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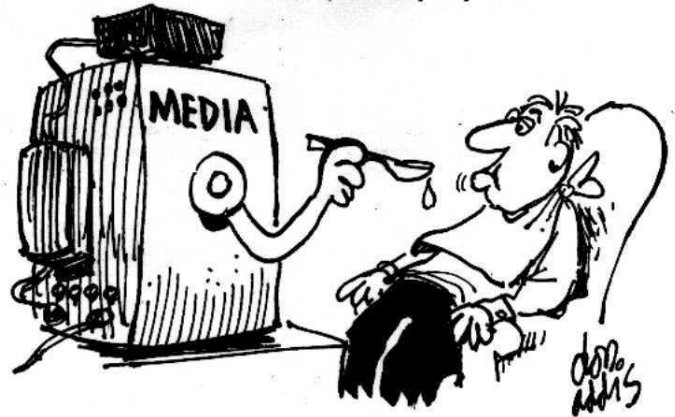
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W 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM



COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to discuss the performance of mass media and their impact on society. We will consider various aspects of performance, including the role of media of various forms (TV, print media, video games, the Internet) in influencing various domains such as violence, sex, health, and politics. Readings and lectures will consider work on the communication process and on the impact of mass mediated messages on people's knowledge, emotions, attitudes, and behaviors. We will also examine issues of information and technology access and implications of that for individuals, society, and cultures.

LEARNING GOALS

- **Knowledge on Mass Communication:** Knowledge on media use; Awareness of diversity of media messages, and of media use responses, Awareness of possible negative effects of media; Acquire knowledge on theories about mass communication; Acquire knowledge on research on mass communication effects.
- **Information search, collection, integration, and presentation:** Exercising systematic observations, collecting data/information about responses to media; Utilizing and interpreting statistical information, reporting on data / summarizing information; Information search, critical reflection and assessment of information and sources; Using academic resources.
- **Abstract thinking, theory application:** Apply theoretical concepts to real-world media content; Extracting relevant information, focusing on particular aspects of a larger development; Connecting abstract information to real world situations, researching real world situation; Derive decisions from theoretical frameworks.
- **Critical thinking and writing skills:** Applying definitions of mass communication to reflect on differences between types of mediated communication; Encourage critical media consumption (media literacy), reflect on your own media use and implications for behavior; Thinking critically about how media may influence others and society at large; Exercise writing and critical thinking skills.
- **Social / empathic skills:** Considering opposing viewpoints, others' perspective; Teamwork and collaboration; Presentation skills.

Disability Services: Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://slds.osu.edu/>.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO FOR CLASS?

Be there, take your notes, ask questions if you are not sure about a topic, and feel free to comment on things based on your own experiences and ideas. The more you are willing to contribute to class discussions, the better the chance to make it a really good learning experience for all of us.

REQUIRED READINGS

Chapters from:

“Mediated Communication Dynamics — Shaping You and Your Society”

By: Silvia Knobloch-Westerwick & Axel Westerwick

Under contract at Oxford University Press, London/New York.

Chapters will be available on Carmen class site

POLICIES

Exams: Exams are to be taken on the designated exam dates. It is your responsibility to note the day/time of exams/assignments NOW and make sure you will be able to attend all the exams and complete the assignments. If you have any schedule conflicts, you should either rearrange your schedule so that you can complete all of the work or drop the class. No make-ups are allowed except in the case of an emergency. Having more than one exam on a particular date does not qualify as an emergency. In the rare event that an emergency arises, it is the student’s responsibility to 1) inform the instructor prior to the exam time, and 2) provide the instructor with written documentation of the emergency (e.g., medical note from certified physician).

Readings & Participation: Students are expected to participate fully and positively in class discussions and activities. The reading material might be more easily ‘digested’ after the associated class session but should be read before the exam/homework linked to it.

Attendance and Timely Completion of Assignments:

Attendance at all lectures is required and will be recorded at instructor discretion. As it may be disruptive to arrive late, please make an effort to be on time.

- In order to allow for compensation of missed sessions and activities due to illness etc., the grading policy includes a ‘drop lowest score’ component to make up for absences.
- You must provide documentation for illnesses or other legitimate reason for absence, so we can potentially work with you **if extended or several absences** occur. Please upload the absence documentation to the Carmen dropbox folder “Absence Documentation” as soon as possible, ideally before or on the day of the absence. You can take a photo of a document and upload. Only you and the

instructor can see these files on Carmen. This helps the student and the instructor to keep track of the documentation and absences.

- For a missed **in-class assignment, as soon as a SECOND** opportunity is missed due to a legitimate and documented reason, you should inform your instructor via email.
- Given that you can drop the three lowest scores from the online activities and have more than 5 days to complete these activities, you would need extensive documentation to become eligible for a make-up online activity. This situation has never occurred so far.
- If you miss an exam, email your instructor as soon as possible and upload the documentation to the Carmen dropbox folder "Absence Documentation," or we may not be able to allow a make-up exam. Make-up exams will only be allowed if the exam was missed due to illness or other legitimate reason

Course Communication: Some course materials will be presented online, and some course communication will use online channels. Hence, it is absolutely essential that you have access to the Internet and a working OSU e-mail address. Online discussions, chat, and other forms of online interaction may be conducted through CARMEN. It is possible that some in-class activities will be performed through OSU Tophat or simply submitted on paper. If you wish to provide **anonymous feedback**, you can use the link posted under each week section under CONTENT in CARMEN—this will trigger an email to your instructor. And of course, we are happy to chat in person any time!

Academic misconduct:

All students at the Ohio State University are bound by the Code of Student Conduct (see <https://trustees.osu.edu/rules/code-of-student-conduct/>). Suspected violations of the code in this class, especially pertaining to 3335-23-04 Section 1 on Academic Misconduct, will be taken through the procedures which the university has set up to deal with violations of the code.

The university's Code of Student Conduct defines academic misconduct as "any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process."

While many people associate academic misconduct with "cheating," the term encompasses a wider scope of student behaviors which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Violation of course rules;
- Violation of program regulations;
- Knowingly providing or receiving information during a course exam or program assignment;
- Possession and/or use of unauthorized materials during a course exam or program assignment;
- Knowingly providing or using assistance in the laboratory, on field work, or on a course assignment, unless such assistance has been authorized specifically by the course instructor or, where appropriate, a project/research supervisor;
- **Submitting work under a student's name when the student has not contributed to the assignment, was not present during the lecture**
- Submission of work not performed in a course: This includes (but is not limited to) instances where a student fabricates and/or falsifies data or information for a laboratory experiment (i.e., a "dry lab") or other academic assignment. It also includes instances where a student submits data or information (such as a lab report or term paper) from one course to satisfy the requirements of another course, unless submission of such work is permitted by the instructor of the course or supervisor of the research for which the work is being submitted;
- Submitting plagiarized work for a course/program assignment;
- Falsification, fabrication, or dishonesty in conducting or reporting laboratory (research) results;
- Serving as or asking another student to serve as a substitute (a "ringer") while taking an exam;
- Alteration of grades in an effort to change earned credit or a grade;
- Alteration and/or unauthorized use of university forms or records.

STUDY GUIDANCE

Study questions/guidance will be posted on the CARMEN Website that reflect the course material and that should be a great help for you to work on the content, either individually or together with classmates. You can answer these questions, discuss them in a group, and carefully written responses to your instructor or TA in case you are uncertain or desire feedback. Your instructor can provide individual feedback or use responses to clarify questions for the class.

EVALUATION

The maximum of regular points is 100.

Grading Scheme. The OSU “standard scheme” of grading as implemented by Carmen is used and we will try to keep the grades on Carmen’s grade book. Here is the **OSU “standard scheme” IN PERCENTAGE RANGES:** 93 - 100 (A), 90 - 92.99 (A-), 87 - 89.99 (B+), 83 - 86.99 (B), 80 - 82.99 (B-), 77 - 79.99 (C+), 73 - 76.99 (C), 70 - 72.99 (C-), 67 - 69.99 (D+), 60 - 66.99 (D), Below 60 (E). Note that there is *no rounding* in the points system. The following are the components of your grade for the term.

Final Grade Components

Assignment	Maximum Points
• Three exams, 15 or 16 pts max each	46 points
• Online exam prep activity, three with 1 pt each	3 points
• In-class activity (ICA) points, 1 pt each	9 points
• Ten Online Activities, 6 pts max each, three lowest scores will be dropped	42 points
• BONUS Chapter Feedback Activity	[1-2 bonus points]
Total	100 points [plus 1-2 bonus points]

Bonus points/extra credit as offered to everyone in the class—no individual arrangements!

GRADING COMPONENTS

Exams. The exams will cover the material discussed in class and the readings and will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Examinations are not cumulative. The questions will be designed to test not only your recall of information, but also your ability to apply the information to real-world situations and specific media content. In addition, questions will be designed to tap your ability to compare theories and critically evaluate their relative strengths and weaknesses.

It is very important to be on time for the exams. As soon as the first student hands in his/her exam, your instructor may refuse additional students to begin taking the exam.

Online exam prep activities. Before each exam, an online announcement will provide you with access to google spreadsheet. On that spreadsheet, find your name and work on the term that was assigned to you. You are asked to create text for a ‘flash card’ for this term (which may be a concept or a theory). You are asked to do 3 things (which apply well for most listed terms), **with correct spelling and grammar**:

- Provide a carefully worded definition or explanation for the term/concept/theory
- Give an example in your own words—again, carefully worded and with correct spelling and grammar
- Provide personal comment or question to encourage further thinking about the term/concept/theory

There will be more than one student working on each term, but DON'T just copy from another entry! If your entry does not meet the requirements above or after the deadline stated in the announcement, you may not receive point(s) or only partial points.

In-class activity points (ICA). In-class questions and activities will be presented during lecture sessions to allow students to earn points for in-class participation. These activities can only be submitted at this session, usually at the end of the session (do not turn in early, to avoid class interruption). Be sure to respond to all prompts to earn the full point. The ICA points will be posted on the CARMEN gradebook approximately every three weeks.

See section above “Attendance and Timely Completion of Assignments” for make-up policy.

Online Activities.

- There will be 10 opportunities for online activities, the lowest three scores of the 10 will be dropped. The online activity assignments will be posted on a weekly basis after the class meeting.
- The online activities are designed as discussion forums on Carmen. Occasionally, these activities will be performed in small teams of students. To keep things interesting and to address a variety of learning goals, the online activities will be diverse.
- You can find brief descriptions of the online activities on the schedule; detailed instructions will be posted each week right after the class meeting. Additionally, grading rubrics will be provided to clarify how the activities are graded.
- Typically, students are asked to write 700-800 words in response for each online activity. The instructions for an activity will specify length requirements.
- **Please submit your response by pasting text into the discussion post.** Please do NOT submit as a Word or PDF file, unless you are explicitly asked to attach a file in the instructions.
- It is recommended that you **schedule a regular time window in your calendar for the online activities and allow some ‘buffer’ time. Online activities are designed to take about 75 min.**
- Again, in order to allow for compensation of assignments due to illness etc., the grading policy includes a ‘drop lowest score’ component. See section above “Attendance and Timely Completion of Assignments” for make-up policy.

HOW TO POST PAPERS ON CARMEN DISCUSSIONS:

1. You can find the discussion forum on Carmen under “Activities/Discussions”
2. You will see the current Discussion Forum with the Assignment questions
3. Click the title (e.g., “Activity 1”, probably displayed in blue) and then click “REPLY” under the main discussion.
4. Just enter a subject title – either a catchy title, or a simple title like “John Doe, Assignment 1 Comm3440”.
5. You will find “Add attachments” below the text field. If necessary, you can upload a file here, but posting the text into the box is preferred.
6. **Triple-Check that your paper was really uploaded.** We cannot give points if we don’t find the paper or only an empty post.

The activities will always include an online commenting component—so you will read other students’ submissions and provide input on them, and you will also receive feedback from other students. The commenting component helps greatly with learning from each other and understanding issues on media and society from other people’s perspective.

You must post your own activity submission first before posting your comment on other students’ submissions. Online comments, as a general rule, must be **at least 50 words long, with substantive reference to the post and to the theory/issue.** Thus, to receive points, the comment should be at least 50 words long, consist of full sentences that have substance and demonstrate that you have read the short paper of the other student and seriously reflected on it.

- Harsh critique or unqualified/inappropriate posts are not appreciated and may lead to a point reduction of your online assignment grade.
- Comments on comments are not allowed. Your post must relate only to the original post of a fellow student’s short paper.
- Only 5 comments are allowed per original post. That means that you need to read and comment on a paper that wasn’t already commented by 5 other students.

All online activity submissions are due 8:00 PM Wednesday, four days after the activity was posted. Late submissions within 4 hours after the deadline will be penalized with a 1 pt subtraction; submissions after 11:59 pm on that Wednesday will not earn points. The discussion board closes at 11:59 PM each Wednesday. The related online comments on other students’ postings are also due at 11:59 PM each Wednesday.

BONUS chapter feedback activity. This is a voluntary activity for which you can receive bonus points. Each student will be assigned to one chapter, possibly two chapters. A document in the carmen module ‘Course Organization’ will list the chapter assignments for all students. To receive the bonus point, read the assigned chapter and fill out a feedback form, accessible at the carmen module ‘Course Organization’.

Week	Topic/Textbook Chapter	Online Activities All online activities are due 8:00 PM, the Wednesday after activity was posted. Online comments due 11:59 PM that Wednesday.
Week 1 Aug 24	Introduction to Class & Reflection on Hopes and Concerns regarding Mass Communication	<u>Activity 1: Hopes and Concerns related to Mass Media Impacts</u> Group Assignment – Find a social issue that is impacted by media. Create presentation on the concern and related research
Week 2 Aug 31	Reality perceptions – Chapter 2	<u>Activity 2: Explain and Illustrate Cultivation</u> Select a topic that television tends to present in a homogenous way and discuss how this contrasts with the real world
Week 3 Sep 7	Disentangling Communication - Chapter 1	<u>Activity 3: Americans' Leisure Time and Media Use</u> Find statistics about Americans' use of leisure time and reflect on the meaning of “mass media”
Week 4 Sep 14	Stereotypes/social group – Chapter 3	<u>Activity 4: Reflecting on Stereotypes</u> Complete an activity and then write a paper reflecting on your experience
Week 5 Sep 21	Exam I	
Week 6 Sep 28	Media use motivations- chapter 4	<u>Activity 5: Media Use and Experience Log</u> Keep track of your media use and use motivations & reflect
Week 7 Oct 5	Agenda setting & framing – chapter 5	<u>Activity 6: Analyze Media Framing</u> Pick a current public affairs topic and examine how the media frame it
Week 8 Oct 12	Autumn break observed	
Week 9 Oct 19	News – chapter 11	<u>Activity 7: Illustrating the Changing News Landscape</u> Watch a documentary, then create a presentation featuring a current example of one of the issues presented in the documentary
Week 10 Oct 26	Exam II	
Week 11 Nov 2	Political communication – chapter 10	<u>Activity 8: A Political Communication Jigsaw</u> Choose a research article and write a mini research report.
Week 12 Nov 9	Public Opinion Chapter 6	<u>Activity 9: Public opinion mini-case study</u>
Week 13 Nov 16	Media & Emotion Chapter 7	<u>Activity 10: Interview about Fright and Anger Reactions to Media</u> Design and conduct an interview addressing your interviewee's fright and anger reactions.
Week 14 Nov 23	Thanksgiving Break observed	
Week 15 Nov 30	Exam III	