

**Communication 3440: Mass Communication and Society - Hybrid**  
Spring 2019; Thursdays 1:50 -3:40 pm; 360 JR

**Dr. Amy Nathanson**

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Office Hours:

By appointment

This syllabus is available in alternative formats upon request. Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to the instructor and seeking available assistance in a timely manner. Any student who feels he/she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the office for disability services at 292-3307 in room 98 Baker Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

**REQUIRED READINGS**

1. Harris, R.J. & F. W. Sanborn (2014). *A cognitive psychology of mass communication* (6th edition). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates\*
2. Readings available on Canvas

\*Older editions of the textbook should be fine. A copy of the textbook will be available at the Main Library.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will analyze the uses and effects of the mass media (and especially television). In the beginning of this course, we will consider how we use the media to fulfill certain psychological or social needs. In the second half of the course, we will explore how the media affect us and society. Students will be encouraged to conceptualize media effects from the audience-centered approach developed in the earlier part of the course.

## LEARNING GOALS

- To gain knowledge of mass communication (Knowledge of 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)
- To engage in abstract thinking and theory application: Apply theoretical concepts to real-world media content; Connecting abstract information to real world situations, researching real world situation; Derive decisions from theoretical frameworks.
- To practice 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.

## GRADING

Your grade will be determined by your performance on the following:

Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
In-class Activities	15%
Canvas Assignments	40%
<u>Reflective Writing Assignment</u>	<u>5%</u>
TOTAL	100 %

The grading scale for this course will follow the standard OSU grading scheme, which is:

A = 93-100%	C+ = 77-79%
A- = 90-92%	C = 73-76%
B+ = 87-89%	C- = 70-72%
B = 83-86%	D+ = 67-69%
B- = 80-82%	D = 60-66%
	E = 0-59%

Exams: There will two exams based on material covered in class and in the assigned readings. Both lecture material and reading assignments will be tested. The exams will be multiple choice in format.

In-Class Activities: You will regularly be asked to complete in-class assignments and/or quizzes. Students can expect roughly 5-8 of these assignments throughout the semester, though you will not know in advance which days these will occur. Because many of these assignments involve your participation in some discussion, group, or activity these assignments **cannot be made up outside of class**. That is, you must be in class in order to earn these points. However, I will drop your two lowest scores to account for situations in which you must miss a class on a day that an in-class assignment is given (this includes missing class due to illness or other commitments). **You do not need to contact me to inform me that you will (or have already) missed a class.** I will automatically drop the two lowest scores, regardless of the excuse.

Canvas Assignments: There are 8 Canvas assignments in this class. These assignments are designed to help you prepare for the next class meeting and to process the material on a deeper level. The assignments will typically require you to read something and/or watch a video, and then to respond to some questions. All assignments should be typed and submitted to the Canvas Dropbox by 1:50 p.m. on the day of class. No late work will be accepted. Each assignment is worth 5 points. The assignment descriptions are posted on Canvas.

Reflective Writing Assignment: Students will complete an end-of-semester writing assignment that is designed to encourage reflecting thinking and analysis. Students may use their notes and readings while completing the assignment. The assignment is designed to allow students to 1) demonstrate their comprehension of the material; and 2) reflect on and integrate the knowledge they've gained throughout the semester. More information on this assignment is provided in a separate document posted on Canvas. This assignment is worth 5 points and is due to the Canvas Dropbox by 1:50 p.m. on April 18, 2019.

## **POLICIES**

Exams. Both exams are to be taken on the designated exam dates. It is your responsibility to note the day/time of exams now and make sure you will be able to attend all the exams. 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 extreme 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). Please note that make-up exams may be of a different format or cover course content in a different ratio than the original.

Use of Email and Canvas: You are responsible for all information sent to you via your OSU email account and/or posted on the Canvas Website. Therefore, it is important for you to check your OSU email account regularly and be sure to purge your account of unneeded email so that new messages can get through. Similarly, check the Canvas website regularly for any updates or announcements. Supplementary materials may be posted to Canvas throughout the semester.

Class absences. Students are expected to come to class each day. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get the notes from a classmate. The professor will not provide lecture notes. **You do not need to inform me if you are going to miss (or have already missed) a class.** If you miss class, you may miss out on completing an in-class activity; however, as noted above, I will automatically drop the two lowest scores on in-class activities (regardless of the reason for missing class).

Respect for Fellow Students and Professor: Please turn off phones during class. If you choose to come to class, you should give your full attention to any person who is speaking (whether it is the professor or another student). During class, avoid reading newspapers, sending text messages/email, updating your Facebook page, sleeping, talking while others are talking, etc. ***Students engaging in these or other disruptive behaviors during class will be asked to leave.***

The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

A general note about grades: There will NOT be opportunities for students to re-take exams or re-complete assignments in order to raise their grade. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that he or she receives a passing final grade by working diligently and responsibly throughout the semester. Exceptions will NOT be made. **Providing extra assignments for one student or "bumping up" a grade for one student invalidates the standards applied to the class and is unfair to every student.** For this reason, please do not ask me to reconsider your grade unless there has been an error in how it was calculated.

## **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The

term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>

### **COURSE OUTLINE: TOPICS, READINGS, AND IMPORTANT DATES**

(schedule subject to change, with notice;  
students are responsible for all changes announced in class)

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>
Jan 10	Introduction Review syllabus on Canvas
Jan 17	Mass Communication & Society; History & Research on Mass Communication; Media Effects Reading: Chapter 1; pp. pp. 26-37 <b>ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE TO CANVAS</b>
Jan 24	Uses and Gratifications Readings: Chapter 3 from Harris book; pp. 41-45 from Harris book; Uses and Gratifications reading on Canvas <b>ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE TO CANVAS</b>
Jan 31	Mood Management & Selective Exposure Reading: pp. 37-41 & pp. 45-50 from Harris book; Mood Management reading on Canvas <b>ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE TO CANVAS</b>
Feb 7	Media violence Reading: Chapter 9 from Harris book; Media violence reading on Canvas <b>ASSIGNMENT 4 DUE TO CANVAS</b>
Feb 14	Catch-up & Review
Feb 21	<b>Exam 1</b>

Feb 28	Advertising; Stereotypes Reading: Chapters 4 & 5 from Harris book <b>ASSIGNMENT 5 DUE TO CANVAS</b>
Mar 7	Sports & Music Readings: Chapter 6 from Harris book; Sports reading on Canvas; Music reading on Canvas <b>ASSIGNMENT 6 DUE TO CANVAS</b>
Mar 14	<b>Spring Break</b>
Mar 21	Sex & media Reading: Chapter 10 from Harris book; Sex and media reading on Canvas <b>ASSIGNMENT 7 DUE TO CANVAS</b>
Mar 28	Prosocial Media; Responding to Media Reading: Chapters 11 & 12 from Harris book; Responding to media reading on Canvas <b>ASSIGNMENT 8 DUE TO CANVAS</b>
Apr 4	Catch-up & Review
Apr 11	<b>Exam 2</b>
Apr 18	<b>End of Semester Reflection</b> <b>END OF SEMESTER REFLECTION DUE TO CANVAS</b>