



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

# **SYLLABUS: COMM 3440 MASS COMMUNICATION AND SOCIETY SUMMER 2021 ONLINE**

## **Course overview**

This course is designed to promote an understanding of basic mass communication practice. We will examine this from the receiving (how mass communication affects the individual and society as a whole) and production (how to design mass mediated campaigns, theories of persuasion) ends, as well as discuss the state of various mass communication industries and media. This class will be taught from a social scientific perspective, with an emphasis on communication theory. As an advanced level course, it will require a combination of active discussion, well-researched writing, and rigorous examination.

## **Instructor**

Instructor: Erin Drouin, MA

Email address: [Drouin.6@osu.edu](mailto:Drouin.6@osu.edu)

Online office hours: By appointment

## **TA**

TA: Christina Henry

Email address: [Henry.964@osu.edu](mailto:Henry.964@osu.edu)

## **Catalog course description**

Analysis of basic issues affecting media performance; especially social and cultural norms, organizational and occupational variables, and the assessment of the effects of the resulting performance. This course will be delivered entirely online. Prereq: Not open to students with credit for 642.

## Course learning outcomes

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

1. Develop an understanding of basic mass communication theories.
2. Learn how media affects the individual and society as a whole.
3. Learn basic principles of campaign design.
4. Gain an understanding of the history and current state of mass communication industries.
5. Critically apply concepts and theories of mass communication to become a better consumer of mass media.
6. Practice critical thinking and writing skills.

## Course materials

### REQUIRED

Bryant, J., Thompson, S., Finklea, B. (2012). *Fundamentals of Media Effects*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc. (print or e-book)

Available: [https://www.amazon.com/Fundamentals-Media-Effects-Jennings-Bryant/dp/1577667859/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1487365037&sr=8-1&keywords=bryant+media+effects+2012](https://www.amazon.com/Fundamentals-Media-Effects-Jennings-Bryant/dp/1577667859/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1487365037&sr=8-1&keywords=bryant+media+effects+2012)

## Course technology

For help with your password, university e-mail, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the OSU IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at <https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours>, and support for urgent issues is available 24x7.

- **Carmen:**
  - Carmen, Ohio State's Learning Management System, will be used to host materials and activities throughout this course. To access Carmen, visit [Carmen.osu.edu](https://carmen.osu.edu). Log in to Carmen using your name.# and password. If you have not setup a name.# and password, visit [my.osu.edu](https://my.osu.edu).
  - Help guides on the use of Carmen can be found at <https://resourcecenter.odde.osu.edu/carmen>
  - **This online course requires use of Carmen (Ohio State's learning management system) and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor.**
    - [Carmen accessibility](#)

- **Secured Media Library:**
  - Media materials for this course will be made available via the Secured Media Library. [go.osu.edu/SecuredMediaLibrary](http://go.osu.edu/SecuredMediaLibrary)
  - Frequently Asked Questions and support can be found at <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/secured-media-library>
  - To obtain additional help for use of the Secured Media Library, please email [emedial@osu.edu](mailto:emedial@osu.edu)
- **Carmen Connect:**
  - Carmen Connect, Ohio State’s webinar tool, will be used to host synchronous class meetings. Log in to Carmen Connect using your name.# and password. If you have not setup a name.# and password, visit [my.osu.edu](http://my.osu.edu).
  - Help guides on the use of Carmen Connect can be found at <https://odee.osu.edu/resourcecenter/carmenconnect>
- **Mediasite:**
  - Mediasite is Ohio State’s Lecture Capture System. Lectures will be recorded through Mediasite and posted to the course Carmen page.
  - Help guides on the use of Mediasite can be found at <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/mediasite>
- **Self-Service and Chat support:** <http://ocio.osu.edu/selfservice>
- **Phone:** 614-688-HELP (4357)
- **Email:** [8help@osu.edu](mailto:8help@osu.edu)
- **TDD:** 614-688-8743

### Baseline technical skills necessary for online courses

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen

### Necessary equipment

- Computer: current Mac (OS X) or PC (Windows 7+) with high-speed internet connection

### Necessary software

- Word processor with the ability to save files under .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .pdf. Most popular word processing software programs including Microsoft Word and Mac Pages have these abilities.
- OSU students have access to Microsoft Office products free of charge. To install, please visit [https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/kb\\_view.do?sysparm\\_article=kb04733](https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/kb_view.do?sysparm_article=kb04733)

# Grading and faculty response

## Grades

Assignment or category	Points and Percent
Syllabus and Carmen Quiz	25/ 5%
Weekly Activity Each week you will be given an activity to complete that will enhance your understanding of the topic(s) covered that week.	150/ 30%
Discussion Participation	100/ 20%
Discussion Leading	25/5%
Midterm Essay Exam	100/ 20%
Final Essay Exam	100/ 20%
Total	500 Points and 100%

*See course schedule, below, for due dates*

## Assignment guide

### Syllabus and Carmen Quiz

In the first week you will become acquainted with the syllabus, including our course policies. You will also be provided with a student guide to Carmen. The Syllabus and Carmen Quiz will measure what you have learned and ensure you have gained the necessary knowledge to complete the course.

### Discussions

Each week, students will be asked to respond to a question about either lecture or media assigned. The initial post will be due by 11:59pm on **Wednesday** of each week. A post responding to the initial post of another student will be due by **Friday** of each week. Discussion posts should be a minimum of a paragraph. The post should demonstrate 1. Understanding of the concept(s) in the material provided 2. Independent thought regarding the concepts and material 3. Thoughtful response to the work of at least 1 other student in the class. The first 5 discussion posts are worth 10 points total. The final 4 discussion posts are worth 12.5 points to reflect the increased complexity expected in the response.

## Discussion Leading

Discussion leaders are responsible for guiding their group's discussions for that week. One or two students per group will lead the discussions each week. Everyone will lead once over the course of the semester. Further information on discussion leading can be found on Carmen.

## Activities

Weekly activities will encourage students to engage with the weekly topic. Activities will vary from .5-2 pages in length (see the individual assignment guidelines as assigned), double spaced, and in .pdf format. Activities are due by 11:59pm each **Friday**. Exemplary activities should 1. Demonstrate comprehension of the theories and concepts addressed in lecture and media 2. Provide independent thought regarding the theories, concepts, and materials provided 3. Actively and thoughtfully reflect on the questions and prompts provided 4. Demonstrate an understanding of how the concept or media discussed has influenced society.

## Exams

Exams will be in essay format and will encourage students to deeply consider the effects of mass media concepts on our society. Responses to each question should be .5-1 page, double spaced, and in .doc or .pdf format.

## Late assignments

Late assignments without a valid medical excuse will incur a letter-grade penalty for each day they are late. **Assignments 3 or more days late will not be accepted.**

## Grading scale

93–100: A  
90–92.9: A-  
87–89.9: B+  
83–86.9: B  
80–82.9: B-  
77–79.9: C+  
73–76.9: C  
70–72.9: C-  
67–69.9: D+  
60–66.9: D  
Below 60: E

## Faculty feedback and response time

I am providing the following list to give you an idea of my intended availability throughout the course. (Remember that you can call **614-688-HELP** at any time if you have a technical problem.)

### Grading and feedback

For large weekly assignments, you can generally expect feedback within **7 days**.

### E-mail

I will reply to e-mails within **24 hours on school days**. Please note that while email works 24/7 I do not. I will do my best to get back to you in a timely fashion. If you do not receive a response after 24 hours, please resend your email in case it got lost in the shuffle.

### Discussion board

I will check and reply to messages in the discussion boards every **24 hours on school days**.

# Attendance, participation, and discussions

## Student participation requirements

Because this is a distance-education course, your attendance is based on your online activity and participation. The following is a summary of everyone's expected participation:

- **Logging in: AT LEAST THREE TIMES PER WEEK**  
Be sure you are logging in to the course in Carmen each week, including weeks with holidays or weeks with minimal online course activity. (During most weeks you will probably log in many times.) If you have a situation that might cause you to miss an entire week of class, discuss it with me *as soon as possible*. Video lectures will be posted 1-2 times per week on Monday and when needed, Wednesday. Media materials may take the place of Wednesday lectures.

## Discussion and communication guidelines

The following are my expectations for how we should communicate as a class. Above all, please remember to be respectful and thoughtful.

- **Writing style:** While there is no need to participate in class discussions as if you were writing a research paper, you should remember to write using good grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Informality (including an occasional emoticon) is fine for non-academic topics.

- **Tone and civility:** Let's maintain a supportive learning community where everyone feels safe and where people can disagree amicably. Remember that sarcasm doesn't always come across online.
- **Citing your sources:** When we have academic discussions, please cite your sources to back up what you say. (For the textbook or other course materials, list at least the title and page numbers. For online sources, include a link.)
- **Backing up your work:** Consider composing your academic posts in a word processor, where you can save your work, and then copying into the Carmen discussion.

## Other course policies

### Student Academic Services

Arts and Sciences Advising and Academic Services' website provides support for student academic success. Information on advising issues such as tutoring, transfer credits, academic standing, and contact information for Arts and Sciences advisors can be obtained through this website. The site is: <http://advising.osu.edu/welcome.shtml>

### Student Services

The Student Service Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition and fee payments. Please see their site at: <http://ssc.osu.edu>

### Copyright Disclaimer

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

### Diversity

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.

## Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at [titleix@osu.edu](mailto:titleix@osu.edu)

## Academic integrity policy

### Policies for this online course

- **Written assignments:** Your written assignments, including discussion posts, should be your own original work. In formal assignments, you should follow **APA** style to cite the ideas and words of your research sources. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your assignments before you turn them in--but no one else should revise or rewrite your work.
- **Reusing past work:** In general, you are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you've explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me.

### 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/>

### Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the land that The Ohio State University occupies is the ancestral and contemporary territory of the Shawnee, Potawatomi, Delaware, Miami, Peoria, Seneca, Wyandotte, Ojibwe and Cherokee peoples. Specifically, the university resides on land ceded in the 1795 Treaty of Greeneville and the forced removal of tribes through the Indian Removal Act of 1830. I/We want to honor the resiliency of these tribal nations and recognize the historical contexts that has and continues to affect the Indigenous peoples of this land.

More information on OSU's land acknowledgement can be found here:

<https://mcc.osu.edu/about-us/land-acknowledgement>



## Your mental health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learn, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. No matter where you are engaged in distance learning, The Ohio State University's Student Life Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) is here to support you. If you find yourself feeling isolated, anxious or overwhelmed, on-demand resources are available at [go.osu.edu/ccsondemand](https://go.osu.edu/ccsondemand). You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614- 292-5766, and 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org). The Ohio State Wellness app is also a great resource available at [go.osu.edu/wellnessapp](https://go.osu.edu/wellnessapp).

## Accessibility accommodations for students with disabilities

### Requesting accommodations

**The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know via email immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: [slds@osu.edu](mailto:slds@osu.edu) ; 614-292-3307; [slds.osu.edu](https://slds.osu.edu) ; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.**

## Course schedule (tentative)

Week	Dates	Topics, Readings	Media	Assignments
1	5/12	Syllabus Overview/ Reflection on Own Media Use	None	Due: Syllabus and Carmen Quiz (5/14) Activity 1: Media Use Log (5/17)  Keep track of your thoughts and feelings during an hour of TV viewing and reflect on these responses.
2	5/19	Introduction to Mass Media Effects Research  Read: Chapter 1 (pgs. 3-20)	None	Due: Discussion Post 1 and response  Activity 2: Americans' Leisure Time and Media Use  Find statistics about Americans' use of leisure time and reflect on the meaning of "mass media"
3	5/25	Historical Perspectives Concerns of Mass Media  Read: Chapter 2	Listen: <i>War of the Worlds</i> radio broadcast (Link provided on Carmen)	Due: Discussion Post 2 Activity 3: Historical Social Implications

		(pgs. 21-33)		Explore context of the time and provide thoughts on the mass panic following the <i>War of the Worlds</i> broadcast.
4	5/31	Social Cognitive Theory Read: Chapter 4 (pgs. 57-73)	Video: <i>Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory: An Introduction</i>	Due: Discussion Post 3 Activity 4: Applying SCT to Everyday Media Use Reflect on how a media message has impacted your behavior or beliefs, find examples of disinhibitory techniques in media
5	6/7	Cultivation, Media Violence Read: Chapters 8, 11 (pgs. 108-121, 155-177)	Video: <i>The Mean World Syndrome, The Killing Screens: Media and The Culture of Violence</i>	Due: Discussion Post 4 Activity 5: Analyzing and Interpreting Violence in the Media Watch a TV program or film and assess what types of violence it contains and what potential reactions it could provoke.
6	6/14	Midterm Essay Exam	None	Midterm Essay Exam Assigned 6/14, Due 6/18
7	6/21	Fright Reactions Read: Chapter 13 (pg. 198-213)	None	Due: Discussion Post 5 Activity 6: Interview about Fright Reactions to Media Design and conduct an interview addressing your interviewee's fright reactions.

8	6/28	Children and Media Read: Chapter 17 (pgs. 266-279)	Video: <i>Mickey Mouse Monopoly</i>	Due: Discussion Post 6 Activity 7: Reflecting on Childhood Media Influences Evaluate popular media of your childhood and how it shaped perceptions and preferences.
9	7/5	News and Agenda Setting/ Political Communication Read: Chapters 6, 14 (pgs. 87-99,214-227)	Video: <i>News War (Part 3), Now with Bill Moyers: Kathleen Hall Jamieson on Political Advertising</i>	Due: Discussion Post 7 Activity 8: Illustrating the Changing News Landscape Watch a documentary, then create a presentation featuring a current example of one of the issues presented in the documentary
10	7/12	Media and Health Read: Chapter 15 (pgs. 228-241)	None	Due: Discussion Post 8 Activity 9: Evaluating Health Information Read selected research articles and then create a presentation.
11	7/19	Media, Stereotypes, and Identity Read: Chapter 16 (pgs. 242-265)	Video: <i>The Codes of Gender: Identity and Performance in Popular Culture</i>	Due: Discussion Post 9 Activity 10: Reflecting on Stereotypes Complete an activity and then write a paper reflecting on your experience.
12	7/26	Media and Science	None	Final Essay Exam Assigned 7/26

Finals		Final Essay Exam		Final Essay Exam Due August 2 11:59pm