

SYLLABUS: COMMUNICATION 3450 MEDIA AND CITIZENSHIP ONLINE, SPRING 2021

Instructor:

Melissa Foster, PhD

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Office hours: Zoom by appointment

Course description

This course will be delivered 100% online. The main purpose of this course is to learn how to better consume media and participate in interactive media in a way that promotes informed, active, and responsible citizenship. Understanding how media industries operate, how media influence us, how we influence media, how to critique media for accuracy, and how cognitive processing and individual differences impact the way we engage with and process media is vital to decision making that benefits individuals and society at large. Thus, this course provides an overview of media and its role in citizenship in contemporary democracies by examining how media industry works, how various media impact us, how to critically evaluate media, how to engage in media responsibility, and how our own personal experiences and biases affect the way we interpret media in terms of citizenship.

You'll be responsible for material covered in the lecture and in assigned readings from Carmen (see below).

Course Objectives:

1. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they apply to the study of individuals and groups.

Communication 3450 fulfills this requirement by providing lecture materials that utilize key social science theories and methodologies to help us understand individual and group behavior in terms of media use for information acquisition, decision making, and self-reflection. Quizzes assess general understanding of these theories while discussions and short written assignments encourage students to apply theories to real-world behaviors.

2. Students understand the behavior of individuals, differences and similarities in social and cultural contexts of human existence, and the processes by which groups function.

Communication 3450 fulfills this requirement by providing opportunities for students to make connections between lecture materials and observable behaviors of individuals and groups. Weekly assignments include discussions and short written assignments in which students provide examples of communication from various platforms and analyze the effects of these messages in terms of media industries, social and cultural contexts, and individual cognitive processes. Understanding these effects is vital to critical thinking regarding citizenship in personal life as well as public policy.

3. Students comprehend and assess individual and group values and their importance in social problem solving and policy making.

Communication 3450 fulfills this requirement by emphasizing in lecture and in assignments the important iterative connection between media and social change. Through lecture and weekly written assignments, students will explore the influence of media effects, individual differences in attending and processing media, and self-reflection on citizenship.

Other Course outcomes:

1. To help students develop an appreciation for media and citizenship

- Understand how media engagement relates to citizenship engagement for individuals and groups
- Value the importance of this relationship regarding the impact on individuals and society at large
- Understand the current status of media and citizenship both in America and abroad
- Describe current issues that make this relationship particularly relevant today as well as historically

-Students will learn about the relationship between mass media and social and political decision making both in the United States of America and abroad

2. To introduce students, through the study of theories, research methods, and industry practices, to the process of how people engage with media

- Describe media practices and how they can influence media and citizenship for individuals and groups
- Understand cognitive processes and individual differences that influence media and citizenship
- Recognize and evaluate intentional media effects
- Recognize and evaluate incidental media effects

-Students will examine real-world media examples through the lens of social science methods and theories to better understand and predict behavior in terms of policy support and social change

3. To develop abilities and skills in media literacy and apply these media literacy skills to social policy making and problem solving toward enhancing citizenship.

- Describe and apply methods of evaluating media

- Develop self-reflective abilities to understand our role in seeking out and engaging with media
- Improve media literacy skills
- Students will improve skills in interpreting and predicting behaviors of others as well as self-reflection regarding how people consume and contribute to mass media in ways that influence social and political culture
- 4. Soft skills
 - Improve written communication skills (write clearly, concisely, etc...)
 - Critical thinking and professionalism

Credit hour and work expectation

This is a 3-credit-hour course. According to Ohio State policy, students should expect around 3 hours per week of time spent on direct instruction (instructor content and Carmen activities, for example) in addition to 6 hours of homework (reading and assignment preparation, for example) to receive a grade of (C) average. [ASC Honors](#) provides an excellent guide to scheduling and study expectations.

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 using your name.# and password. If you have not setup a name.# and password, visit 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](#)
- **Carmen Zoom:**
 - Office hours will be held through Ohio State’s conferencing platform, Carmen Zoom. A separate guide to accessing Carmen Zoom and our office hours is posted on the course Carmen page under Files.

- Students may use the audio and video functions if a webcam and microphone are available. If not, there is still a chat function within Carmen Zoom for the student to live chat with the professor or TA in the virtual office hours room.
- [Carmen Zoom](#) help guide
- **Proctorio:**
 - Proctorio, an online proctoring tool, will be used during this course. Proctorio offers you flexibility to take your exams at the time and in the location of your choosing. Students are required to have a webcam (USB or internal) with a microphone and a strong and stable internet connection. During the course of an exam, Proctorio will record the testing environment, therefore students should select private spaces for the exam session where disruptions are unlikely and where recording devices can be enabled. Instructions for Proctorio use will be provided. To use Proctorio you must be **over 18 years of age**. Additionally, the tool has **limitations in its accessibility for students reliant upon screen readers and keyboard navigation. If you have concerns about using an online proctoring tool for the reasons listed above or in general, please work with your instructor to find an equivalent alternative. Additional information on academic integrity at Ohio State and [recommended proctoring options](#)** are available.
- **Turnitin:**
 - Students at The Ohio State University are accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Therefore, you should be familiar with the guidelines provided by the [Committee on Academic Misconduct \(COAM\)](#) and [Section A of OSU's Code of Student Conduct](#) in order to meet the academic expectations concerning appropriate documentation of sources. In addition, OSU has made Turnitin, a learning tool and plagiarism prevention system, available to instructors. For this class, you will submit your papers to Turnitin from Carmen. When grading your work, I will interpret the originality report, following [Section A of OSU's Code of Student Conduct](#) as appropriate. For more information about Turnitin, please see [the vendor's guide for students](#). Note that submitted final papers become part of the OSU database.
- **Self-Service and Chat support:** <http://ocio.osu.edu/selfservice>
- **Phone:** 614-688-HELP (4357)
- **Email:** 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
- Web cam and microphone

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

Course Requirements:

Reading Materials:

Assigned Readings Posted on Carmen (there is no textbook for this class)

Assessments:

- *Quizzes:* Weekly, online, timed quizzes assess students' general understanding of the materials and assigned readings and videos. Quizzes will include multiple-choice, True/False, and short answer items. Quizzes will have approximately 10 questions and a time limit of 10 minutes.
- *Exams:* Online, timed exams will assess students' general understanding of the lecture materials and assigned reading and videos. Each exam will have about 25 to 50 questions which may include multiple-choice, true/false or fill-in-the-blank items. Exams will be set to allow students up to 2 attempts per exam (in case there are technical problems on the first attempt, keep in mind that the questions will not be the same, so you may wish to only take it once if you prefer, though the highest score will be kept)
- *Discussion Assignments:* Students will post an original response to prompts in Carmen and subsequently respond to posts written by classmates to facilitate discussion of concepts covered in the course. An "exceptional" grade on the rubric means that there are no recommendations for improvement. "Above Average" means that while there is some room for improvement, the paper is still above average and suggestions for improvement are minor. "Average" grades mean that the main aspects of the assignment have been addressed but there is non-trivial room for improvement. Discussions are formal and should include information from lecture as well as outside sources.

An overview of the assignments is listed below. A detailed checklist with due dates is at the end of the syllabus. We will have 1000 points possible in the class. Your points are allocated as follows:

<u>Requirement</u>	<u>Points/Percent of Final Grade</u>
Quizzes	250 points total (12 quizzes will be given over the semester. The lowest 2 quiz scores will be dropped. So remaining quizzes are 25 points each)
Exams (4)	300 points total (Exam #1 = 50 points, Exam #2 = 75 points, Exam #3 = 75 points, Exam #4 = 100 Points)
Discussion Assignments	450 points (12 discussion assignments. The lowest 2 scores will be dropped. So, the remaining 10 assignments will be worth 45 points each)
Total Points	1000

To obtain your final grade, we simply add all of your points up at the end of the course. I use the standard OSU grading scheme:

Letter Grade	Percent
A	93-100
A-	90-92.9
B+	87-89.9
B	83-86.9
B-	80-82.9
C+	77-79.9
C	73-76.9
C-	70-72.9
D+	67-69.9
D	60-66.9
Failing	0-59.9

Please note: Carmen Canvas does not round fractions up. Please take that into account in computing grades. I have to make a cut at some point, so I just use Carmen to do that, and I don't round up individual grades, no matter how close you may be; it's not fair to other students.

Also, please note that Carmen has different settings for viewing your grades. There is a setting in which assignments that are not completed are counted as a "zero" and a setting in which incomplete assignments are not yet counted in the final grade. So, if you are calculating your grade throughout the semester, make sure you are factoring in any assignments you failed to turn in on time as a "zero".

Classroom Policies:

Please keep track of when things are due. The professor and class website will provide some reminders, but, as always, it is your responsibility to submit materials on time.

I recommend signing up for email notifications for when there are announcements and discussion posts on Carmen.

Late work and submission details: Late work will not be accepted without documentation of severe illness or emergency. This documentation must include relevant dates (at least 2 weeks in duration) and needs to come from a reputable source (e.g. a doctor's office or police report). This documentation should be submitted **before** the assignment is due, except for dire and unforeseen emergencies. The documentation must provide information relevant to the urgency of the situation (e.g. an emergency room visit is an emergency, seeing your doctor because you had a common cold is not). While medical documentation does not need to include information about your medical history or diagnosis, it needs to be clear that it was urgent. Remember that many of your lowest grades are already dropped, so there is very little room (if any) for late work. **Don't wait until the last minute as technical problems can occur that will not be an acceptable excuse for late work.**

Students who will be observing a religious holiday on a class date or assignment due date must provide date/event written notification to the instructor within the first two weeks of the quarter so that alternative arrangements can be made

If you are permitted an extended deadline, please do not email your paper to the professor. It will not be counted as submitted until you have submitted it to Canvas.

Before you submit an assignment:

All writing assignments and exams must be submitted to our class website by the deadline. In taking this course, students agree to the condition that all required papers will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com to aid in detection of plagiarism. Any submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the Turnitin.com site and at the university.

When you are ready to submit your assignment or exam, make certain it is in "doc", "docx", or "pdf" format (don't use "pages" or "google docs" since they can't be opened).

Remember to leave yourself enough time to verify that your submission went through.

Verifying that you submitted your assignment:

Please do not email your instructor or TA to ask if your assignment was submitted properly. You can check this on Carmen...

Here it is step by step:

- = After submitting the assignment, you should be taken back to the main page for the assignment
- = On the right-hand side is a submission status
- = To verify that everything uploaded correctly, click on 'Download [filename]'; you might want to save it to a different location on your hard drive than the original, or rename it during the download process, to avoid overwriting your original
- = Open the downloaded file and make sure everything looks correct

Recall that you will be graded on what you submit by the deadline, even if it was not what you intended to submit. So, it's really important that you check to be sure your submission was correct.

Grade Disputes: Remember that any dispute about a grade must be taken up with the professor **within one week of the grade posting**. If you are disputing your grade on one of the assignments, you must prepare a .doc or .docx document, going point-by-point through the rubric and explaining why you think your work merits a different grade. Please note that grade disputes are not a normal part of the grading process. Grade disputes should be submitted only when you can justify clearly why you believe your grade should be changed.

Page Limits: Papers with page limits must use APA formatting (12-point, Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins) and must adhere to the page limits. Points will be deducted for going over the limit.

Contact Information for Various Issues

Who to Contact for Specific Problems:

Questions about the course/assignments/lectures/etc: First, post in the discussion area, as that allows the professor, TAs and other students to see issues and respond to everyone in an organized and timely manner.

For personal issues (such as emergency illness or injury), please contact Dr. Foster.

Technical Problems with Your Computer or Internet Connection Issues: OIT can be called at 614-688-HELP (4357). You can also email them about your problem or you can request that they call you back. The website for these alternatives is: https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/help_splash.do (Links to an external site.)

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

Academic integrity policy

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/>

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 ; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu ; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF (Mental Health Statement):

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, 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. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

If you are or someone you know is suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614--292--5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766.

If you are thinking of harming yourself or need a safe, non-judgmental place to talk, or if you are worried about someone else and need advice about what to do, 24 hour emergency help is also available through the Suicide Prevention Hotline (Columbus: 614-221-5445 / National: 800-273-8255); or text (4hope to 741741); or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Tentative Course Schedule

Section A: Introductions, Concepts, Status

Modules	Assignments	Due Dates (11:59pm)	Check Box
Section A Introductions and Concepts			
Module 1: Course Introduction	Lecture Videos		
	Quiz #1 (Syllabus Quiz)	Due Jan 15 *counts as attendance for class	
	Discussion #1	Original due Jan 14, Responses to classmates: Jan 19	
	C-REP Extra Credit	See "Student Guide"	
Module 2: Finding Sources	Lecture Videos		
	Quiz #2: Covers Modules 1 and 2	Jan 21	
	Discussion #2	Jan 19,21	
Module 3: Historical Perspectives	Lecture Videos		
	Quiz #3: Covers material from Module 3	Jan 28	
	Discussion #3	Jan 26,28	
	Exam #1: Covers Modules 1, 2, and 3	Feb 2	
Section B Mass Media Industries			
Module 4: Mass Media Industries	Lecture Videos		
	Quiz #4: Covers material from Module 4	Feb 9	
	Discussion #4	Feb 4, 9	
Module 5: Journalism Today	Lecture Videos		
	Quiz #5	Feb 16	
	Discussion #5	Feb 11, 16	
Module 6: Media Vs Reality	Lecture Videos		
	Quiz #6	Feb 25	
	Disc 6	Feb 18, 25	

	Exam #2: Covers Modules 1-6	March 2	
Section C Mass Media and Us			
Module 7: Algorithms and Bots	Lecture Videos		
	Quiz #7	March 9	
	Discussion #7	March 4, 9	
Module 8: Mis, Dis, and Mal-Information	Lecture Videos		
	Quiz #8	March 16	
	Discussion #8	March 11, 16	
Module 9: Cognitive Biases	Lecture Videos		
	Quiz #9	March 23	
	Discussion #9	March 18,23	
	Exam #3 (Covers Modules 1-9)	March 30	
Section D Action Steps			
Module 10: Decision Making	Lecture Videos		
	Quiz #10	April 8	
	Discussion #10	April 6, 8	
Module 11: Media Literacy	Lecture Videos		
	Quiz #11	April 15	
	Discussion #11	April 13,15	
Module 12: Civility and Democracy	Lecture Videos		
	Quiz #12:	April 22	
	Discussion #12:	April 20, 22	
	Exam #4 (Cumulative; Covers Modules 1-12)	April 26	

Reading List

- Burke, T. (2018, March 31). How America's largest local TV owner turned its news anchors into soldiers in Trump's war on the media. *The Concourse*. Retrieved from: <https://theconcourse.deadspin.com/how-americas-largest-local-tv-owner-turned-its-news-anc-1824233490>
- Chang, J. & Bushman, B. (2019). Effects of exposure to gun violence in video games on children's dangerous behavior with real guns. *JAMA*, 2.
- Fletcher, R. & Nielson, R. K. (2017). Are news audiences increasingly fragmented? A cross-National comparative analysis of cross-platform news audience fragmentation and duplication. *Journal of Communication*, 67, 476-498.
- Howard, P.N., Woolley, S., & Calo, R. (2018). Algorithms, bots, and political communication in the 2016 election. *Journal of Information Technology and Politics*, 15, 81-93.
- Hovland, C. & Weiss, W. (1951). The influence of source credibility on communication effectiveness. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 15, 635-650.
- Iquani, M. A better life for all? In: Garmen & Wasserman (eds) *Media and Citizenship: Between Marginalization and Participation*, HSRC Press.
- Lister R. (1997) What is Citizenship?. In: Campling J. (eds) *Citizenship: Feminist Perspectives*. Palgrave,
- McNamee, R. (2019). *Zucked: Waking up to the Facebook Catastrophe*. Penguin Press,
- Papacharissi, Z. (2004). Democracy online: civility, politeness, and the democratic potential of online political discussion groups. *New Media and Society*, 6(2), pp. 259-283. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444804041444>

- Pearson, G. D. H. & Knobloch-Westerwick, S. (2018). Perusing pages and skimming screens: Exploring differing patterns of selective exposure to hard news and professional sources in online and print news. *New Media and Society*, 20, 3580-3596.
- Potter, W. J. (2019). *Media Literacy*. Sage Publications, California.
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- Son, J., Lee, S., Cho, E., & Kim, H. (2016). Examining online citizenship behaviours in social network sites: A social capital perspective. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 35(9), 730-747. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0144929x.2016.1143032>
- Walter, N. (2018). How to unring the bell: A meta-analytic approach to correction of misinformation. *Communication Monographs*, 85(3), 423-441 DOI: 10.1080/03637751.2018.1467564
- Wineburg, Sam and McGrew, Sarah and Breakstone, Joel and Ortega, Teresa. (2016). *Evaluating Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning*. Stanford Digital Repository. Available at: <http://purl.stanford.edu/fv751yt5934>