

# VIOLENCE IN SOCIETY AND VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIA

## (COMM 3442, SU 2025)

**Course Description:** This course examines the causes, consequences, and cures to human aggression and violence. It discusses how aggression and violence are defined and measured, aggression theories, individual risk factors, contextual risk factors, protective factors, and aggression targets. It examines in detail violent media research. It also discusses how to reduce anger, aggression, and violent media effects.

*Prereq: Not open to students with credit for 442 or 2442. GE soc sci indivs and groups course.*

### Instructor

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**Office hours:** Tuesday 1-3 PM via this [link](#) on CarmenZoom

### Teaching assistant

**Name:** Sebs Lubert (They/Them)

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**Office hours:** Thursday 4-6 PM via this [link](#) on CarmenZoom

### Learning outcomes

The overarching goal of this course is for students to have a concrete knowledge of how to define aggression, some of its' triggers, understand how aggression operates and is measured, and ways to abate various forms of it. We will also delve into several scholarly approaches that researchers have used to understand the phenomenon and address its' real-world manifestations.

### GE Categories

#### **Social Science: Individuals and Groups**

**Goals:** Students understand the systematic study of human behavior and cognition; the structure of human societies, cultures, and institutions; and the processes by which individuals, groups, and societies interact, communicate, and use human, natural, and economic resources.

## Expected Learning Outcomes:

### Individuals and Groups

1. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they apply to the study of individuals and groups.
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.
3. Students comprehend and assess individual and group values and their importance in social problem solving and policy making.

### Organizations and Politics

1. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they apply to the study of organizations and politics.
2. Students understand the formation and durability of political, economic, and social organizing principles and their differences and similarities across contexts.
3. Students comprehend and assess the nature and values of organizations and politics and their importance in social problem solving and policy making.

### Human, Natural, and Economic Resources

1. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they apply to the study of the use and distribution of human, natural, and economic resources and decisions and policies concerning such resources.
2. Students understand the political, economic, and social trade-offs reflected in individual decisions and societal policymaking and enforcement and their similarities and differences across contexts.
3. Students comprehend and assess the physical, social, economic, and political sustainability of individual and societal decisions with respect to resource use.

## Health and Well-being

### Goals:

1. Successful students will analyze an important topic or idea at a more advanced and in-depth level than in the Foundations component. [Note: In this context, "advanced" refers to courses that are e.g., synthetic, rely on research or cutting-edge findings, or deeply engage with the subject matter, among other possibilities.]
2. Successful students will integrate approaches to the theme by making connections to out-of-classroom experiences with academic knowledge or across disciplines and/or to work they have done in previous classes and that they anticipate doing in future.
3. Students will explore and analyze health and wellbeing through attention to at least two dimensions of wellbeing. (e.g., physical, mental, emotional, career, environmental, spiritual, intellectual, creative, financial, etc.)

## Expected Learning Outcomes:

Successful students are able to:

1. Engage in critical and logical thinking about the topic or idea of the theme.
2. Engage in advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or idea of the theme.
3. Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences as they apply to the theme.
4. Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, self-assessment, and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.
5. Explore and analyze health and wellbeing from theoretical, socio-economic, scientific, historical, cultural, technological, policy, and/or personal perspectives.
6. Identify, reflect on, or apply strategies for promoting health and wellbeing.

## Mode of delivery

This asynchronous course will be presented fully online. All lectures are asynchronous. Closed captioning can be turned on by pressing on the “CC” button.

## How this course works

This course consists of 8 weekly modules, which are listed on Carmen. Each module specifies the topic discussed, the assigned readings, PowerPoint slides, videotaped lectures, and assignments. Some weeks contain supplemental materials (e.g., personality scales, videos, webpages). Given the compressed nature of this course, each module will cover two topics.

## Course materials

There is no standard textbook for this course. All readings will be uploaded to Carmen as PDFs. Some readings will be taken from:

Krahé, B. (2021). *The social psychology of aggression*, 3rd ed. Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

You **DO NOT** need to purchase this book.

## Grading

Specific assignments are presented below along with a short description of the general format of the assignment and its relationship to student learning.

**Online quizzes:** There are 8 online quizzes that are worth 75% of your grade; each quiz

is worth ~ 9%. Quizzes open on Mondays at 6:00 AM and are due the following Monday at 5:59 AM.

1. Each quiz consists of 10 multiple choice items worth 2 points each.
2. There will also be two short answer questions, each worth 5 points. These questions should be answered in about 3-5 sentences.
3. The quizzes have a 30-minute time limit, so you should study prior to taking the quiz.
4. Quizzes cover content from lecture videos and readings for the week listed on the schedule.
5. Quizzes are open **notes**. This means that you may refer to any lectures, readings, or notes you have written while taking the quiz. You **may not** use the internet (e.g., Google, ChatGPT) to look up answers. Evidence of doing so will be reported as academic misconduct.

The purpose of the quizzes is to encourage you to keep up to date on your readings, lecture videos, and to help you understand the course material. Quiz answers will be revealed one week after the due date (or after all students have completed the quiz).

**Reflection Paper:** The reflection paper will ask students to write about a theory or concept covered in class and discuss it in the context of their own lives. For example, a student may write about the third person effect and their own experiences with violent media, or they may discuss cultivation theory and how the news media has shaped their own perceptions of the world. This paper should be between 3-5 pages long and is worth 25% of your grade.

This paper is designed to achieve the following learning goals:

1. **Demonstrate your understanding** of a key theory or concept discussed in class by explaining it in your own words.
2. **Engage with empirical research** by summarizing evidence that supports or challenges the selected theory/concept.
3. **Apply what you have learned** by reflecting on how this theory/concept relates to your own lived experiences,

More explicit instructions and a rubric will be posted later in the semester.

**Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI):** At the end of the semester, you will receive an email about completing an SEI for this course. There are three options to access the SEI: (1) a link in the email, (2) a link in Carmen, or (3) via the OSU Mobile App. OSU uses SEIs to evaluate teachers. However, if the response rate is low, SEIs are difficult to interpret. I will give 1% extra credit to all students **if** the SEI response rate is over 80%. Please complete your SEI.

## Grading

Points will be distributed as follows:

Activity	Points	Percent
Online quizzes (N=8)	240 (30 points each)	75%
Reflection paper (N=1)	60	25%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>

The following standard percentages will be used to assign grades:

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

**Note. Grades are not rounded. No extra credit is offered in this course (other than 1% if at least 80% of students complete the SEI). Please do not ask me to raise your grade, even if you just barely missed the next highest grade. It is against OSU policy to change a grade for any reason other than a clerical error.**

**Grading curve:** I do not use a grading curve. However, if the average total grade at the end of the semester is under 75%, I will add a bonus percentage to everyone's grade (e.g., if it is 73%, I will add 2% to everyone's grade).

## Late assignments

Assignments will be accepted up to 5 days after the posted deadline without a valid excuse, but you will lose 10% of the grade for each day that you are late.

Deadlines may only be extended if you provide a valid medical or university excuse within 5 days of the missed due date. It is the student's responsibility to make sure the assignment is submitted correctly and on time. Please check your Carmen folder after submission to ensure the upload is there and complete.

## 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 an average grade (i.e., "C"). [ASC Honors](#) provides an excellent guide to scheduling and study expectations.

## Student participation requirements

Because this is a distance-education course, your attendance is based on your online activity and participation. Students are expected to read each article, watch each lecture video, and complete each assignment listed in the weekly modules.

## Instructor 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 (614-688-4357)** at any time if you have a technical problem.

### Grading and feedback

For written assignments, you can expect feedback within **7 days**.

### E-mail

I will reply to e-mails within **48 hours on school days**.

## Encouraging an optimal learning experience

Previous distance learning courses have provided insights from students on how to improve the learning experience and optimize outcomes. Here are a few tips from previous students to encourage your success in this online course:

- Students kept up with the Schedule and assignment due dates.
- Students made sure they had access to a reliable internet connection.
- Students had access to at least one reliable device and a backup plan in case of a technological issue.
- Students have made plans to back up work. OSU provides free access to data storage through [Microsoft One Drive](#).
- Students reported that completing assigned readings before viewing lectures (or attending synchronous lectures) helped them to be prepared to follow along with lectures.
- Students scheduled time to complete activities at a steady pace during the week. Keeping a schedule prevented a last-minute rush and kept the workload manageable.
- Students approached the material by thinking about the connections between readings, lectures, and assignments.

## 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 ([link](#)), which is available 24/7.

- **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 [here](#).
  - **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](#)
- **CarmenZoom:**
  - Office hours for the instructor and teaching assistant will be held through CarmenZoom.
  - Help guides on the use of CarmenZoom can be found [here](#)
  - One [study](#) found that you can reduce your carbon footprint by 96% by turning your camera off during Zoom meetings.
- **Self-Service and Chat support ([link](#))**
- **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 [here](#).

## OTHER COURSE POLICIES

### Academic integrity policy

See **Descriptions of major course assignments**, above, for my specific guidelines about collaboration and academic integrity in the context of this online class.

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) 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 ([link](#)).

**If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by university rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.** If COAM determines that you have violated the university’s *Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the university.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

- Committee on Academic Misconduct web page ([link](#)).
- *Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity* ([link](#)) which includes this suggestion about plagiarism:  
**“Acknowledge the sources that you use when completing assignments**  
 If you use another person’s thoughts, ideas, or words in your work, you must acknowledge this fact. This applies regardless of whose thoughts, ideas, or words you use as well as the source of the information. If you do not acknowledge the work of others, you are implying that another person’s work is your own, and such actions constitute plagiarism. Plagiarism is the theft of another’s intellectual property, and plagiarism is a serious form of academic misconduct. If you are ever in doubt about whether or not you should acknowledge a source, err on the side of caution and acknowledge it.”

I also have included a module on “Plagiarism” on Carmen, which includes a document on AI (e.g., ChatGPT), videos with handouts (to test for comprehension), a webpage on [Ethical Information Use](#), and a handout called “Plagiarism: Definition & Forms.”

### Student services and advising

University Student Services can be accessed through BuckeyeLink ([link](#)).



Advising resources for students are available [here](#).

## Copyright for instructional materials

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.

## Statement on Title IX

All students and employees at Ohio State have the right to work and learn in an environment free from harassment and discrimination based on sex or gender, and the university can arrange interim measures, provide support resources, and explain investigation options, including referral to confidential resources. If you or someone you know has been harassed or discriminated against based on your sex or gender, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, or sexual exploitation, you may find information about your rights and options at [titleix.osu.edu](https://titleix.osu.edu) or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator at [titleix@osu.edu](mailto:titleix@osu.edu). Title IX is part of the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) at Ohio State, which responds to all bias-motivated incidents of harassment and discrimination, such as race, religion, national origin and disability. For more information on OIE, visit [equity.osu.edu](https://equity.osu.edu) or email [equity@osu.edu](mailto:equity@osu.edu).

## Commitment to a diverse and inclusive learning environment

The Ohio State University affirms the importance and value of diversity in the student body. Our programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from them. We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach their own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

## Creating an environment free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct

The Ohio State University is committed to building and maintaining a community to

reflect diversity and to improve opportunities for all. All Buckeyes have the right to be free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct. Ohio State does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, pregnancy (childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom), race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, academic programs, admission, and employment. Members of the university community also have the right to be free from all forms of sexual misconduct: sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation.

To report harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation and/or seek confidential and non-confidential resources and supportive measures, contact the Office of Institutional Equity:

1. Online reporting form at [equity.osu.edu](https://equity.osu.edu),
2. Call 614-247-5838 or TTY 614-688-8605,
3. Or Email [equity@osu.edu](mailto:equity@osu.edu)

The university is committed to stopping sexual misconduct, preventing its recurrence, eliminating any hostile environment, and remedying its discriminatory effects. All university employees have reporting responsibilities to the Office of Institutional Equity to ensure the university can take appropriate action:

- All university employees, except those exempted by legal privilege of confidentiality or expressly identified as a confidential reporter, have an obligation to report incidents of sexual assault immediately.
- The following employees have an obligation to report all other forms of sexual misconduct as soon as practicable but at most within five workdays of becoming aware of such information: (1) Any human resource professional (HRP); (2) Anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers; (3) Chair/director; and (4) Faculty member.

## 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. 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](#).

## Wellness

As a student, your health and wellness can have an impact on your academic success. Common wellness concerns during your time at the university may include high levels of stress, sleep and diet behaviors, alcohol and other drug use, depression and anxiety, and interpersonal relationship issues. The Office of Student Life has numerous resources and services available to you at no charge to help you address those concerns. You can learn more about health and wellness resources available on campus by visiting the websites for the [Student Wellness Center](#), [Wilce Student Health Center](#), [Recreational Sports](#) and [Counseling and Consultation Service](#). For students in recovery or seeking recovery from substance use disorders, learn more about support on campus by visiting the [Collegiate Recovery Community](#). For students facing food insecurity, learn more about the free on-campus food pantry by visiting the [Buckeye Food Alliance](#). For students interested in speaking with a peer to learn more about campus resources, call the [Buckeye Peer Access Line](#). For students interested in meeting with a peer and setting holistic wellness goals, learn more about [Wellness Coaching](#).

## 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 ([link](#)). 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 ([link](#)).

## 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 immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. 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; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

## Accessibility of course technology

This online course requires use of CarmenCanvas (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.

- Canvas accessibility ([link](#))
- Streaming audio and video
- CarmenZoom accessibility ([link](#))
- Collaborative course tools

## Course schedule

### Week 1 (June 2)

**Topics:** Syllabus, Aggression: Definition and Measurement

**Videos:** Syllabus video, Lecture 1

**Readings:** Chapter 1

**Assignments:** Quiz 1

### Week 2 (June 9)

**Topics:** Theories of Aggression, Individual Differences

**Videos:** Lecture 2, Lecture 3

**Readings:** Chapter 2, *Game On!* Sections 21 and 22

**Assignments:** Quiz 2

### Week 3 (June 16)

**Topics:** Situational Factors Promoting Aggression

**Videos:** Lecture 4, Lecture 5

**Readings:** Chapter 5

**Assignments:** Quiz 3

## **Week 4 (June 23)**

**Topics:** Violent Media Effects

**Videos:** Lecture 6, Lecture 7

**Readings:** Huesmann (2007), Blumer (1933)

**Assignments:** Quiz 4

## **Week 5 (June 30)**

**Topics:** Violent Media Myths, Reducing Violent Media Effects

**Videos:** Lecture 8, Lecture 9

**Readings:** Bushman (2018), Davidson (1983), Chapter 6 (pp. 177-180)

**Assignments:** Quiz 5

## **Week 6 (July 7)**

**Topics:** Mass Media Effects, Aggression Between Groups

**Videos:** Lecture 10, Lecture 11

**Readings:** Chapter 10, TBD

**Assignments:** Quiz 6

## **Week 7 (July 14)**

**Topics:** Crime, Mass Shootings and Terrorism

**Videos:** Lecture 12, Lecture 13

**Readings:** Rocque & Duwe (2018), Chapter 11

**Assignments:** Quiz 7

## **Week 8 (July 21)**

**Topics:** Preventing Aggression, Positive Media Effects

**Videos:** Lecture 14, Lecture 15

**Readings:** Chapter 12, Passmore & Holder (2014)

**Assignments:** Quiz 8, Reflection Paper