

# SYLLABUS

## COMM 3466: COMMUNICATION & POP CULTURE

Fall 2025 - ONLINE, ASYNCHRONOUS - 3 CREDIT HOURS

### Overview

This course examines communication causes and impacts of the changing technological environment. Traditional differences between cultural products, folk, mass, popular, low, elite, high, knowledge, journalistic, and informational are disappearing. We're tracing how and why that's happened, and critically considering popular culture (from movies to music to influencers) as it happens today.

### Instructor

Dr Sara Grady (grady.367@osu.edu)

**Office hours:** Thursday 2-4pm or by appointment (see Carmen for details)

I am always happy to help to students, and I hope you'll reach out any time. BUT, I also have responsibilities outside this class (and I know you do, too). I try to respond to emails within 1-2 working days (M-F, 9-5). Plan ahead to get the input you need long before deadlines come around!

### Materials

**There is no textbook.** Readings are posted on in each week's module. They range from chapters in undergraduate textbooks to cutting edge research articles published in the field's best journals.

### Pre-requisites

Not open to students with credit for 666. Credit Hours: 3.0. The course will be presented entirely online.

### Course Description & Learning Outcomes

This general elective examines how popular culture is reflected in human communication. Although the course will focus primarily on mass communication as a source of popular culture, we will also explore how popular culture influences our interpersonal relationships and how we communicate with each other.

Presented in an online format, this course will take a dynamic approach to learning. We will venture through various aspects of popular culture: Music, movies, slang, and even memes. Although all assignments are completed individually, you should engage with other students through our online discussions. To this end, certain technologies are required for taking this course (see Course Technology). Others are prohibited (see AI in the classroom policy section).

Throughout the class, you'll develop a more thorough understanding of popular culture through the lens of the communication discipline. We will explore how popular culture came to be, why it is more important than many people think, and how it helps us to understand our place in the world and how we communicate with others.

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

- Classify various definitions of popular culture and their relationship to different communication paradigms (e.g., interpersonal, group, mass).
- Recognize and categorize different elements of popular culture as they relate to communication phenomena, such as social bonding and group formation.
- Identify the historical and contemporary sources of popular culture as they relate to communication theories, including but not limited to diffusion of innovations, two-step flow, and entertainment appraisal.
- Apply communication theories to understand the communicative functions of popular culture.

## How this online course works

**Mode of delivery:** This course is 100% asynchronous and online. There are no required sessions at a specific time, but assignments have hard deadlines.

**A note about technology:** See the technology section at the end of this document for what you'll need to have access to.

**Pace:** Modules are released at least one week ahead of their due date. Students are expected to keep pace with weekly deadlines, and can turn anything in early if deadline days have other commitments.

**Credit hours & expectations:** 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 CarmenCanvas activities, for example) in addition to 6 hours of homework (reading articles and writing papers, for example) to receive a grade of (C) average. That adds up to 9 hours of work for this class per week.

# Participation & Grades

## What you'll do (overview)

- **Online lectures & videos**

Recorded lectures will be uploaded every week, often as multiple shorter videos. Feel free to watch a lecture, take a break to digest, then come back to the next. Sometimes these will be supplemented by other videos and digital materials, which will always be available in the assigned module.

- **Readings**

All readings are expected to be completed prior to viewing the lectures.

- **Discussion**

Each week, students will reflect on current topics and use examples from current popular culture and media, including substantially engaging with classmates' posts. This is where we can have a lot of fun if you come prepared to engage.

- **Paper**

Your major analysis paper will be broken down into smaller milestone assignments over the term to help you refine your thinking and develop your arguments.

## Grade Breakdown

Assignment	Number	Points each	Points total
Intro video	1	10	10
Discussions	8 (+2 extra)	15	120
Quizzes	10 (+2 extra)	10	100
Milestone assignment 1	1	20	20
Milestone assignment 2	1	25	25
Final paper	1	75	75
<b>Total</b>			350

### Grade Scale (in %)

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

**Note:** Carmen and Buckeyelink do not round up grades. Your grades will be exactly what is earned and will not be rounded up. Extra credit (via extra discussion posts) is available for those who wish to earn a chance to improve grades.

## How you're graded

Assignments are designed to assess basic-level understandings (e.g., remember and understand) as well as higher-level understandings (e.g., apply and analyze). The specific assignments are presented below along with a short description of the general format of the assignment and its relationship to student learning.

Detailed instructions and rubrics for assignments are on Carmen.

- **Introductions (10 pts)**
  - PURPOSE
    - You describe yourself, some of your current favorite popular culture artifacts, and what you hope to get out of this class.
  - DEADLINE
    - Friday of week 1, 5pm
- **Quizzes (~30% of grade)**
  - PURPOSE
    - The quizzes represent check-in points. They ensure that students are keeping up with the readings and that the students are getting the “overarching lesson” from each reading.
  - DEADLINE
    - Quizzes always due on Fridays at 5pm.
  - DROPPED SCORES
    - There are 12 quizzes, but the lowest two scores are dropped.
- **Discussion Participation (~35% of grade)**
  - PURPOSE
    - These are a large part of your grade because I'm expecting thoughtful, in-depth analysis, critique and thinking. A couple of sentences isn't going to cut it.
    - Participation will be assessed by examining how deeply students engage with the material and each other through online discussion posts.
    - Your contributions in this course are important and valued. You bring your unique background, personality, opinions, and knowledge. I encourage you to share with others to the extent you feel comfortable and ask that you listen to your peers, so you not only learn about them, but you also grow as a scholar, OSU community member, and as a human being. You belong here. This space is designed for us to learn from each other, and I hope you embrace it!
  - DEADLINE

- Posts are due Friday at 5pm.
- Two *substantive* responses to classmates are due the following Monday at 5pm. (If Monday is a university holiday, then this moves to Tuesday).
- DROPPED SCORES
  - There are 10 discussions, but only 8 are required for full points.
  - Participating in additional discussion boards can earn extra credit (up to 5 points per week)
- **Analysis Paper (~35% of grade)**
  - PURPOSE
    - This analysis paper traces the history and impact of a popular cultural product. Students will use theories and content from class to examine the origins of the cultural product, how it gained popularity, and how it has impacted society at large.
    - The paper is broken into 3 assignments over the semester.
      - **Milestone 1 (~5% of grade)**
        - This pitch document asks students to identify their topic/product of interest, why they chose this item, and evidence of its impact.
        - The pitch will also include an annotated bibliography of at least 5 sources that they plan on using in their final paper.
        - Instructions and examples on Carmen
      - **Milestone 2 (~7% of grade)**
        - This outline should show the full skeleton and content the paper will cover.
        - It will include evidence of completed research, including the theories applied to understand and analyze this artifact and their conclusions on the product's impact and importance.
        - Instructions and examples on Carmen
      - **Final Paper (~20% of grade):**
        - A ~6-page (double-spaced) term paper laying out the history, impact, relevance and analysis.
        - Papers must be in [APA format](#)
        - Instructions & examples on Carmen
  - DEADLINES
    - Papers are always due the Monday after it's assigned module at 5pm (just like discussion replies). If Monday is a university holiday, then this moves to Tuesday.

# POLICIES, RESOURCES & FINE PRINT

## Contacting each other

### Contacting me (including about grades)

In general, I will do everything I can to be available to students during business hours (M-F, 9-5). Feel free to email me ask to set up a zoom, or even schedule an appointment to come into office and talk. I have over 300 students most semesters, but I will try to get back to all messages within a *business* day or two.

You can work on this class whenever you want to around your other commitments, provided you meet the deadlines. I also work on this class around other demands and responsibilities, which means I do not generally check emails in the evening or on the weekends.

**Plan ahead! Make sure you get your questions answered a few days before a deadline** so you feel prepared and can submit your best work, even if our work schedules and yours don't match up.

### Me contacting you

I will primarily send out information and updates via Carmen announcements, and occasionally through Carmen mail. Please check your notification preferences ([go.osu.edu/canvas-notifications](https://go.osu.edu/canvas-notifications)) to ensure you receive these messages. Make sure you check this regularly (every couple of days *at least*), and if you prefer, you can set up for Carmen emails to be forwarded to the inbox of your choice for easy monitoring.

Discussion grades will usually take about a week to post online, papers and exams can take 2-3 weeks.

## Deadlines & Makeups

This class is entirely online and asynchronous. Which means there are no attendance or participation points, just weekly assignments.

Everyone will get to drop quizzes and discussion posts, so the ability to miss a week without it harming you grade (for the flu, a job interview, or a family event) is already baked into the class.

But sometimes bigger emergencies happen. I want you to succeed. I want you to show me you know the material and can apply it. If life gets in the way of meeting your deadlines for more than a week or two, it is your responsibility to contact me immediately to make arrangements. I may need to ask for documentation etc., especially for an extended absence (e.g., in the case of a bereavement or major illness) in accordance with university policy, but these aren't the only reasons you might need help. Reach out and let's figure it out together.

**Falling behind? Feeling overwhelmed?** I get it. Life happens. In general, I'm fine with students needing an extra day or two to balance school, work, and life that happens when a major deadline is coming. But these requests must be made before the deadline. DO NOT assume work can be made up after a deadline without getting approval first. Reach out as soon as you start struggling and we'll make a plan together. Accommodations and alternative arrangements will be made on a case-by-case basis once the request has been approved.

Note that make-ups are not available for quizzes or discussion posts. When these are closed they are closed, that's why you get to drop some.

### **Policy for submitting assignments**

- Technical malfunctions at the last minute, getting called in to work on the due date, etc. are not considered excused. Assignments are open for at least a full week and may be completed any time in that week. Do not wait until the last minute. Submit early if you're going to have trouble submitting around deadline time.
- Quizzes are open for a duration of time and the window in Carmen will close when it ends. The quiz will not be re-opened unless University or medical documentation is provided.
- Discussions will be eligible for partial credit if the initial post is late but the responses are on time. At the response-post due date, the board will close and will not be re-opened.
- Written assignments will be assigned early and expected to be turned in (and fully uploaded) on time by the posted deadline. Without a make-up request on file, a 20% deduction will apply for late submissions. There will be a 20% deduction for every day the submission is late. It may take some time for your file to upload. Files that upload past the submission point will be considered late. Please plan accordingly.

## **Grade Appeals**

You earn grades, I do not give them. And the grade you earn is based on the work you produce (not how much time it took you, an assignment can still go poorly if you worked for a long time on it if you fundamentally misunderstand important parts of the material).

If you are dissatisfied with your grade on your papers and feel this is due to something beyond your learning and abilities as they truly are, you have the opportunity to submit an appeal – see instructions below:

1. Write a short statement describing where and why you deserve more points. Simply asking for more points, verbally or in written form, is insufficient. You must justify why your grade does not accurately reflect your work.
2. Email me your written statement no later than the ONE week after your work was graded and posted on Carmen (along with the assignment in question).
3. In this email, acknowledge in writing that you will accept whatever grade you receive on the re-grade, even if it is lower.

## **Communication guidelines**

The following are expectations about how we should communicate with each other at all times (in discussions, via email). Above all, please remember to be respectful and thoughtful.

- **Writing style:**
  - This course is intended to prepare you for future communications as a professional. Assignments should be approached in this manner. Use complete sentences and limit abbreviations and slang (where it is not central to the discussion topic) to ensure everyone can understand you equally. Use professional language and tone, and always proofread and edit your submissions for clarity and errors.
  - Assignments and submissions should always be in APA style.
- **Discussion, reflection and respect across our differences**

- We will adhere to the expectations of civil discourse as outlined by the University at all times. Want to better understand them? See [the Center for Ethics and Human Values](#).
- We will also always uphold the [University's shared values](#), including but not limited to the following behaviors:
  - Actively engage others' perspectives as opportunities for individual and institutional growth
  - Use our successes and failures to learn and improve with humility
  - Intentionally foster a sense of belonging where all are valued
  - Strive to understand and appreciate each other's backgrounds and experiences
  - Listen to multiple voices and engage in civil discourse
  - Work conscientiously and assume positive intent of others
  - Actively listen and engage in open, honest dialogue
- Sometimes, we may disagree with one another.
  - The root of the disagreement may be cultural, or it may be related to other aspects of our personal identities and values. But no matter what the root of the disagreement may be, I expect that our discussions and disagreements can remain respectful and tolerant of these differences. Done well, disagreement can actually be a way to show that you care about one another and build trust and understanding across differences.
  - Raising counterpoints is fine and encouraged! But personal attacks, insults, or inflammatory speech will not be permitted. Furthermore, rude or impatient communications are unprofessional. Consider your words as if you were a professional when communicating with other students, the instructor(s), and anyone else with whom you may interact.
  - When you disagree with other students in the class or with me, I ask that you try to do so in a respectful, understanding, and productive way. When others disagree with you, I ask you to be patient, open minded, and willing to listen. Being understanding and tolerant of others is a crucial communication skill that can make you a more persuasive and effective communicator, but it is also a skill that we need to learn and practice.
  - I hold myself to these same standards. If you feel disrespected, uncomfortable, or discouraged from participating in the course for any reason, I encourage you to speak with me, so that we can work towards improving the classroom environment. We should hold each other to the shared values set by the university, as a collective commitment.
- **Citing your sources:**
  - Cite your sources to back up what you say. This includes providing evidence of your claims, but also gives necessary credit to people whose ideas you are sharing. Plagiarism is an example of academic misconduct, which could lead to reporting to the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM). Please carefully review [what constitutes plagiarism](#). I will explain in greater detail in the semester.



## AI use in this class



Generative AI (the kind that spits out text or pictures based on a prompt, like ChatGPT, Co-pilot or Dall-E) is all over the news. It's an important and developing tool to understand both as students and future professionals (some of which we'll cover in class).

Because you will best accomplish the goals of this course by undertaking all activities and assessments without AI assistance, you are not permitted to use any AI tools in this course without explicit permission (as part of the assignments learning goals).

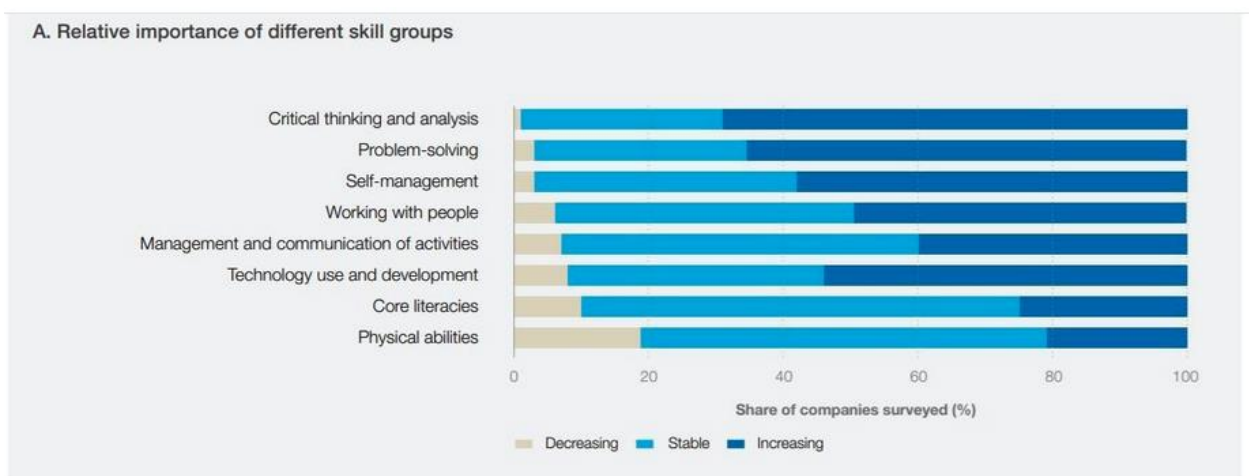
Any use of GenAI tools for work in this class where it is not assigned may therefore be considered a violation of Ohio State's Academic Integrity policy and Code of Student Conduct because the work is not your own. The use of unauthorized GenAI tools will result in referral to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.

If you are uncertain about any part of this policy or its application to any assignment or activity in the course, consult with me before proceeding.

If you feel you need to use GenAI for translation for example, please contact me first. If you have any other questions regarding this course policy, please contact me.

### But why though?

1. AI-generated work is full of hallucinations and errors, and rarely does a good job being precise and critical the way I am asking you to. Don't outsource to subpar solutions.
2. **I'd also encourage you to ask yourself: if everything I asked you to do can be done as well or better by AI, why would anyone hire you?** You need to make sure you have skills that make you valuable, contributing member of teams and communities you belong to – and that includes communication and critical thinking skills. These are the things your assignments are designed to help you practice.
  - a. Don't believe me that it matters? Here's the World Economic Forum projections for necessary job skills:
    - i. Being able to think, analyze and problem solve on your own is critical.



Perceived skills and skills groups with growing demand for 2025.

Image: World Economic Forum

I'm not asking you to do busy work or waste your time. I would use shortcuts for that too. But the tasks in this class are for a reason. And these are skills you need *alongside* AI-literacy in the workplace. If after a few weeks you disagree with me on that, come to office hours. I'm

absolutely happy to chat about this and what you think will help you learn best.

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

### Technology skills needed for this course

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating CarmenCanvas ([go.osu.edu/canvasstudent](https://go.osu.edu/canvasstudent))
- CarmenZoom virtual meetings ([go.osu.edu/zoom-meetings](https://go.osu.edu/zoom-meetings))

### Required equipment

- Computer: current Mac (MacOs) or PC (Windows 10) with high-speed internet connection
- Webcam: built-in or external webcam, fully installed and tested
- Microphone: built-in laptop or tablet mic or external microphone
- Other: a mobile device (smartphone or tablet) to use for BuckeyePass authentication

### Required software

- Microsoft Office 365: All Ohio State students are now eligible for free Microsoft Office 365. Full instructions for downloading and installation can be found at [go.osu.edu/office365help](https://go.osu.edu/office365help).

## CarmenCanvas access

You will need to use BuckeyePass ([buckeyepass.osu.edu](https://buckeyepass.osu.edu)) multi-factor authentication to access your courses in CarmenCanvas. To ensure that you are able to connect to CarmenCanvas at all times, it is recommended that you take the following steps:

You can contact the IT Service Desk at 614-688-4357(HELP) and IT support staff for help.

## Technology support

For help with your password, university email, CarmenCanvas, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the Ohio State IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at [ocio.osu.edu/help/hours](https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours), and support for urgent issues is available 24/7.

- **Self-Service and Chat support:** [ocio.osu.edu/help](https://ocio.osu.edu/help)
- **Phone:** 614-688-4357(HELP)
- **Email:** [servicedesk@osu.edu](mailto:servicedesk@osu.edu)
- **TDD:** 614-688-8743

# University Policies

University-wide policies on a variety of topics can be found online in [the Office of Undergrad Education](#):

## 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 3335-5-48.7 (B)).

For additional information on university guidelines, see the Code of Student Conduct and the link above.

## ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The university strives to maintain a healthy and accessible environment to support student learning in and out of the classroom. 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.

If you are ill and need to miss class, including if you are staying home and away from others while experiencing symptoms of a viral infection or fever, please let me know immediately. In cases where illness interacts with an underlying medical condition, please consult with Student Life Disability Services to request reasonable accommodations. You can connect with them at [slds@osu.edu](mailto:slds@osu.edu); 614-292-3307; or [slds.osu.edu](http://slds.osu.edu).

## Harassment, discrimination & 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 Civil Rights Compliance Office:

- Online reporting form at <http://civilrights.osu.edu/>,
- Call 614-247-5838 or TTY 614-688-8605,
- 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 Civil Rights Compliance Office 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.

## Religious Accommodations

Ohio State has had a longstanding practice of making reasonable academic accommodations for students' religious beliefs and practices in accordance with applicable law. In 2023, Ohio State updated its practice to align with new state legislation. Under this new provision, students must be in early communication with their instructors regarding any known accommodation requests for religious beliefs and practices, providing notice of specific dates for which they request alternative accommodations within 14 days after the first instructional day of the course. Instructors in turn shall not question the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system in reviewing such requests and shall keep requests for accommodations confidential.

With sufficient notice, instructors will provide students with reasonable alternative accommodations with regard to examinations and other academic requirements with respect to students' sincerely held religious beliefs and practices by allowing up to three absences each semester for the student to attend or participate in religious activities. Examples of religious accommodations can include, but are not limited to, rescheduling an exam, altering the time of a student's presentation, allowing make-up assignments to substitute for missed class work, or flexibility in due dates or research

responsibilities. If concerns arise about a requested accommodation, instructors are to consult their tenure initiating unit head for assistance.

A student's request for time off shall be provided if the student's sincerely held religious belief or practice severely affects the student's ability to take an exam or meet an academic requirement and the student has notified their instructor, in writing during the first 14 days after the course begins, of the date of each absence. Although students are required to provide notice within the first 14 days after a course begins, instructors are strongly encouraged to work with the student to provide a reasonable accommodation if a request is made outside the notice period. A student may not be penalized for an absence approved under this policy.

If students have questions or disputes related to academic accommodations, they should contact their course instructor, and then their department or college office. For questions or to report discrimination or harassment based on religion, individuals should contact the Civil Rights Compliance Office. (Policy: Religious Holidays, Holy Days and Observances).

## **Intellectual Diversity**

Ohio State is committed to fostering a culture of open inquiry and intellectual diversity within the classroom. This course will cover a range of information and may include discussions or debates about controversial issues, beliefs, or policies. Any such discussions and debates are intended to support understanding of the approved curriculum and relevant course objectives rather than promote any specific point of view. Students will be assessed on principles applicable to the field of study and the content covered in the course. Preparing students for citizenship includes helping them develop critical thinking skills that will allow them to reach their own conclusions regarding complex or controversial matters.

### **The Fundamental Principles of Academic Inquiry**

This course engages with the key theories, debates, and empirical findings that are central to understanding the state of the scholarship in <course topic>. My role is not to promote any political, social, or religious belief, but to facilitate your engagement with the ideas that shape this area of study. You are encouraged — and expected — to think critically, ask questions, and form your own evidence-based conclusions, while also learning how to understand and evaluate the full range of perspectives that exist within this scholarly conversation.

University-level learning begins with the assumption that no idea is beyond question and that even long-standing or widely accepted beliefs — including those held within academic disciplines — are open to scrutiny, debate, and revision on the basis of new arguments and evidence. This approach reflects the nature of scholarly inquiry, which evolves through critical engagement and not by passive agreement. A central purpose of a university education is to encounter and evaluate ideas that are new, challenging, or even sharply in tension with one's own personal, political, social, or religious beliefs. Developing the ability to analyze and engage with such ideas through reasoned and respectful dialogue is essential to responsible citizenship in a healthy democracy.

Student learning will be assessed by evaluating mastery of the course content assigned and/or presented by the instructor. Though students are free to express a range of viewpoints in class discussions, they are expected to demonstrate mastery of course content in assignments, exams, and related forms of evaluation.

### **Understanding disagreements and debate in this context**

Disagreements and intellectual differences are central to academic life and are not evidence of

bias or oppression. Bias is prejudice in favor of or against an ideology, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair. In scholarly debates/discussions, participants question and test the evidence, the logic of the argument/interpretation, the applicability of the model or theory, presenting evidence truthfully/accurately and in a respectful manner. Scholarly consensus refers to the widespread agreement among experts in a particular field on a specific topic or interpretation of evidence. It is neither static nor monolithic, but rather a dynamic and evolving understanding within an academic community. This consensus is built through various forms of scholarly communication and debate, including conferences, publications, peer review, and replication of results.

*Bias in teaching* refers to the undue promotion of personal beliefs, ideological perspectives, or favored theories in ways that *misrepresent opposing views in an academic discipline or discourage open academic inquiry*. It can occur when instruction lacks critical engagement with the breadth of established disciplinary perspectives or presents ideas that are contested within an academic discipline as settled without sufficient justification.

Bias is distinct from *teaching the scholarly consensus*, which involves presenting ideas, evidence, and interpretations that are *widely accepted within a field based on rigorous peer-reviewed research and disciplinary standards*. It does not preclude the discussion of minority viewpoints but requires framing them within the context of the discipline's standards of evidence and debate.

## Copyright

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.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## Your mental health

### PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

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 or someone you know are 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](https://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 and 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 by dialing 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

## Student Services & Advising

University Student Services can be accessed through [BuckeyeLink](#). Advising resources for students are available at [this link](#).

## Military-Connected Students

The Military and Veterans Services (MVS) Office offers a wide range of resources for military-connected students. Whether using educational benefits or not, all military-connected students are encouraged to learn more about how the university supports military-connected students (i.e., information about tutoring, transition services, access to the veteran's lounge, etc.). For service members, should you receive military orders during the semester or know of classes that will be missed due to service commitments, please speak with your instructor as soon as possible on possible accommodations. MVS contact information: [milvets@osu.edu](mailto:milvets@osu.edu); 614-247-VETS; [veterans.osu.edu/](https://veterans.osu.edu/); 185 Student Academic Services Building, 281 W. Lane Avenue.

## Food Security

All students should have access to adequate and healthy food. Any undergraduate or graduate student with a BuckID may confidentially use the Buckeye Food Alliance food pantries. No proof of need is required. The pantry is located in Lincoln Tower, Suite 150 (1800 Cannon Dr., Columbus, OH 43210). Check the website or call for current hours. <https://www.buckeyefoodalliance.org/>, 614-688-2508

## Course Schedule

Pop culture is an ever-evolving topic that can change at any moment. Therefore, the below schedule and content is tentative and subject to change. You will be contacted via Carmen if a reading or due date is changed.

Wk	Monday Date	Topics	Major Readings (See Carmen)	Assignments Due in that week
1	8/25/25	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Syllabus &amp; Policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction Video (F)</li> </ul>
2	9/1/25	Defining and critiquing popular culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Storey (2018). "What is popular culture?"</li> <li>Gans (1974). "The critique of mass culture"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion 1 (F M*)</li> <li>Reading Quiz 1 (F)</li> </ul>
3	9/8/25	Explaining popular culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Danesi (2019). "Explaining pop culture"</li> <li>McQuail (2010). "Mass communication and culture"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion 2 (F M)</li> <li>Reading Quiz 2 (F)</li> </ul>
4	9/15/25	Sources of popular culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Danesi (2019). "The business of pop culture"</li> <li>McQuail (2010). "Production of media culture" (<i>skim</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion 3 (F M)</li> <li>Reading Quiz 3 (F)</li> </ul>
5	9/22/25	How does popular culture spread? (pt. 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Garcia-Aviles (2020) Diffusion of Innovation</li> <li>Xu, et al. (2016). "Networked cultural diffusion..."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading Quiz 4 (F)</li> <li><b>Milestone 1 (next M)</b></li> </ul>
6	9/29/25	How does popular culture spread? (pt. 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kayahara &amp; Wellman (2007). "Searching for culture"</li> <li>Choi (2015). "2-step flow of communication..."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion 4 (F/ M)</li> <li>Reading Quiz 5 (F)</li> </ul>
7	10/6/25	Defining influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boster et al. (2011). "Identifying influence..."</li> <li>Carpenter et al., (2015). "Evidence for the validity of a social connectedness scale..."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion post 5 (F M)</li> <li>Reading Quiz 6 (F)</li> </ul>
8	10/13/25	Media Diaries & FALL BREAK		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media Diary</li> </ul>



9	10/20/25	Popularity in Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Askin &amp; Mauskapf “What makes pop culture popular...”</li> <li>• Music Industry Weekly “Bop Familiarity”</li> <li>• NPR’s Songs of Summer x 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion post 6 (F M)</li> <li>• Reading Quiz 7 (F)</li> </ul>
10	10/27/25	Popularity in Film	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Litman (1983). “Predicting success of theatrical...”</li> <li>• Lewis et al. (2019). “Are enjoyment &amp; appreciation...”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading Quiz 8 (F)</li> <li>• Discussion post 8 (F M)</li> </ul>
11	11/3/25	Choosing media (pt. 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rubin (2006). “Uses and gratifications”</li> <li>• Pappacharissi &amp; Mendelson (2011). “An exploratory study...reality tv”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading Quiz 9 (F)</li> <li>• <b>Milestone 2 (next Mon)</b></li> </ul>
12	11/10/25	Choosing media (pt. 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinecke (2016). “Mood management theory”</li> <li>• Eden (2020). “Appreciation &amp; Eudaimonic media”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion post 9 (F M)</li> <li>• Reading Quiz 10 (F)</li> </ul>
13	11/17/25	Does popular media reflect society?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smith, et al. (2016). “Inequality in 700 popular films”</li> <li>• Schug, et al. (2017). “Gendered race in mass media...”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion post 10 (F M)</li> <li>• Reading Quiz 11 (F)</li> </ul>
14	11/24/25	Paper workshopping & THANKSGIVING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Read your feedback and continue independent research</i></li> </ul>	
15	12/1/25	Parasocial interactions & relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Klimmt, et al. (2006). “Parasocial Interactions &amp; Relationships.”</li> <li>• Hoffner &amp; Bond (2022). “Parasocial relationships, social media, &amp; well-being”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion 11 (F only, no replies)</li> <li>• Reading Quiz 12 (F)</li> </ul>
16	12/8/25	Grab bag week!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBA</li> </ul>	
17	12/15/25	(Exam Week)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Final Term Paper (M)</b></li> <li>• SEI eval</li> </ul>

\* Deadlines: F M = post Friday, reply following Monday (if Monday is a university holiday, M deadlines are shifted to Tuesday)