

Comm2850: Media & Citizenship

SPRING '26, ONLINE (SECTION 26816)

GEN ED THEME: "CITIZENSHIP FOR A DIVERSE AND JUST WORLD"

Professor: Scott W. Campbell, Ph.D., Professor & Rinehart Chair in Mediated Communication, School of Communication

Teaching Assistants: Yuxin Li (lead graduate TA), Carine Edorh, & Aiden Wahls

Office Hours and Contact Information

Contacts for the class: If you have questions or need to make any special arrangements, email your TA Yuxin Li at li.15058@buckeyemail.osu.edu. If Yuxin is not able to resolve your question or issue, Professor Campbell (Campbell.2844@osu.edu) will be available to help. Please use email for communication with TAs and professor. During weekdays, we normally respond to emails within a couple of days.

Office hours: Email your TA or the professor to set up an online video office hour. Because this is asynchronous online class, there is no set office hour time or place, but your instructors will be responsive and flexible with making arrangements for conducting office hours online.

Questions about the Communication Research Experience Program (C-REP): Email the C-REP coordinator (CREP@osu.edu) for questions about the program, including using the [SONA](#) online system to register for participation in studies. **You must register with the [SONA](#) online system** to receive information and opportunities about earning the required (2) C-REP credits for this course. The C-REP Student Guide is in Module 1 should have answers for all questions, so be sure to read it first.

Questions about technology:

- Help guides on the use of Carmen can be found at the [Teaching and Learning Resource Center](#)
- For computing or software issues, contact the IT Service Desk: 614-688-HELP (4357), or visit the [IT Service Desk Website](#)

Course Description

This course examines the changing landscape of citizenship in the digital media environment. It offers different perspectives on citizenship, as well as different views on the ways in which digital media (social media, smartphones, AI) present opportunities and challenges for people to be informed, engaged, and "civil" in polarized communication environments. We examine these issues locally and globally, and how citizenship is shaped by social and digital inequalities. We also consider the importance of media literacy for citizenship and how to be media literate in the digital age.

Course Format

This course is delivered online through CarmenCanvas. All required readings, lectures instruction materials, and graded components are available through a series of “modules” on CarmenCanvas (log in to the site for COMM2850 using name.# and password). Start with the first module and follow the schedule (provided below and within modules). Following the schedule is extremely important to meet deadlines to receive credit for quizzes, discussion posts, C-REP credits, and the capstone assignment. All required readings, lecture videos, slides, and course materials are available within the modules on CarmenCanvas.

Goals

Goals are in alignment with those for OSU’s College of Arts and Sciences [General Education theme of Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World](#):

1. Successful students will analyze the theme at a more advanced and in-depth level than in the Foundations component.
2. Successful students will integrate approaches to media and citizenship 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. Successful students will explore and analyze a range of perspectives on local, national, or global citizenship and apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that constitute citizenship.
4. Successful students will examine notions of justice amid difference and analyze and critique how these interact with historically and socially constructed ideas of citizenship and membership within society, both within the United States and around the world.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Successful students will be able to ...

- 1.1. Engage in critical and logical thinking about the topic or idea of the theme.
- 1.2. Engage in advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or idea of the theme.
- 2.1. Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences as they apply to the theme.
- 2.2. 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.
- 3.1. Describe and analyze a range of perspectives on what constitutes citizenship and how it differs across political, cultural, national, global, and/or historical communities.
- 3.2. Identify, reflect on, and apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for intercultural competence as a global citizen.
- 4.1. Examine, critique, and evaluate various expressions and implications of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and explore a variety of lived experiences.
- 4.2. Analyze and critique the intersection of concepts of justice, difference, citizenship, and how these interact with cultural traditions, structures of power, and/or advocacy for social change.

Expected learning outcomes will be demonstrated through the following graded components:

- Regular quizzes within the modules are used to assess knowledge and level of scholarly exploration, as well as analytic and logical thinking
- Regular discussion posts provide opportunities to internalize and apply concepts through self-reflection and self-expression
- A capstone assignment facilitates applied learning by having students integrate concepts into a practical/professional context
- Students must earn 2 C-REP credits, providing opportunities for experiential learning as a point of reflection on the research and methods underlying scholarship in this area

Credit Hours & Workload

This is a 3-credit-hour course. According to Ohio State policy, during regular, full semesters (Fall and Spring), students should expect around 3 hours per week of time spent on direct instruction (lectures, activities within lectures, posted content, discussions) in addition to 6 hours of weekly homework (reading, quizzes, assignment work, C-REP) to receive a grade of (C) average.

It is important to schedule sufficient time for doing the lecture videos as intended by Professor Campbell. Lecture videos ask students to pause for active learning exercises. Students should also regularly pause the videos as needed to take notes and refer back to readings, while replaying portions that would benefit from repeating (like asking a professor in class to repeat something). Considering the lectures align with and connect the readings, the intention is for students to do the assigned reading first and then use the reading as a resource for clarity and elaboration of points made in the lecture video.

Graded Components

- *Quizzes*: Regular quizzes within modules assess students' general understanding of the assigned readings, materials, and videos. Quizzes will involve multiple-choice responses. Students may use assigned class resources for quizzes (readings, lectures), but they may not use any resources from outside of class, including AI, or work/share with others (inside the class, online, or otherwise). Using outside materials (including AI) violates class policy for academic integrity.
- *Discussion Posts*: Within modules, students will be prompted to contribute discussion posts that foster self-reflection and application of the material.
- *Capstone Assignment*: At the end of the term, students will complete an assignment that synthesizes and incorporates concepts from the class in an applied context. Students will apply key concepts from the class to create a set of lecture slides (with supporting notes) on the topic of "Media and Citizenship at OSU." Further guidelines will be provided on Canvas.
- *Communication Research Experience Program (C-REP; 2 credits)*: Students must first register in the SONA system and participate in 2 credits worth of research studies with the Communication Research Experience Program (C-REP) for experiential learning with social science research. C-REP is designed to give students direct exposure to the topics, goals, methods, and ethical issues of communication research. Your participation in C-REP counts for 5% of your course grade (50pts out of 1,000pts possible). You can earn partial credit for partial completion, based on the number of credits completed (e.g., 25 points for 1 credit). Participation can take the form of research studies and/or alternative assignments. See the C-REP guidelines document in Module 1 for the deadline for requesting alternative assignment/participating in research.

Some other courses, including COMM 1100 and COMM 1101, require C-REP participation, and some students take these courses simultaneously. If you are enrolled in multiple courses with C-REP requirements (e.g., COMM2850 and COMM1101), you need to fulfill both requirements separately. The same C-REP participation CANNOT be counted for both courses. For each study, you will indicate what class the credit goes toward.

At least half of your credits should be completed during the first half of the semester. It is wise to complete your C-REP requirement as early as possible in the semester when demands on your time and signups for studies are the lightest. Because the number of studies may be limited, it is also wise to ask for alternative assignments early.

If you sign up for a study but do not show up, you will have to complete an alternative assignment to make up the hours you missed. You will be locked out of the C-REP [SONA](#) system until you complete the alternative assignment.

The C-REP Student Guide is in Module 1. If you have any questions, please review those materials. If you have a question not covered in the supporting materials, email the C-REP coordinator CREP@osu.edu. NOTE: Your Professor and TA are not involved in running C-REP and cannot answer questions about the operation of the program.

View the [Video Guide link](#) and use the C-REP [Answer Bot](#) for frequently asked questions.

IMPORTANT C-REP DEADLINES:

- Monday, April 20 at 9 pm: Deadline for study participation and requesting alternative assignments from the CREP coordinator.
- Monday, April 27 at 9 pm: Deadline for submitting the CREP alternative assignment to the CREP coordinator.

Graded Components	Points Toward Final Grade
Quizzes	500 points total (6 quizzes, and the lowest score is dropped . Remaining 5 quizzes are 100 points each)
Discussion Posts	200 points total (6 required posts, and the lowest score is dropped . Remaining 5 posts are 40 points each)
Capstone Assignment	250 points
C-REP	50 points (must complete 2 C-REP “credits”)
Total Points	1000

To obtain your final grade, we simply add all your points up at the end of the course, using 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

Course Schedule

View the lecture videos that correspond with the readings below. For each, read first, then view the lecture video. The lectures help explain and connect the readings. All readings, videos, and lecture slides are available within the Canvas modules. Be sure to follow the scheduled deadlines so you are not penalized for late work. Students have 1 week to submit late work with a letter grade (i.e., 10%) reduction in points. After 1 week, Canvas will close assignments and students will receive zero points.

Module 1 (Jan 12-23): Introduction & Basic Concepts

Week of Jan 12: Introduction and Basic Concepts

- Read the Syllabus (carefully)
- Read the C-REP Student Guide (carefully)
- What is citizenship?: Lister, R. (1997). What is citizenship? In Campling, J. (Ed.) *Citizenship: Feminist perspectives*. Palgrave, London.
- Mediated communication and its kin: Knobloch-Westerwick, S., & Westerwick, A. (2020). *Mediated communication and you*. Ch. 1

***** Discussion Post 1 for Module 1 due 1/16 *****

Week of Jan 19: Role of Media in Democracy, Media Biases, Studying Media & Citizenship

- Gershberg, Z., & Illing, S. (2023). *The paradox of democracy: Free speech, open media, and perilous persuasion*. University of Chicago Press. Introduction & Ch. 1
- Biswas, A. *The essential role of media in democracy*. School of Political Science.
- Bennett, W. L. (2009). News: The politics of illusion (8th ed). New York: Longman. Ch. 4
- Sparks, G. (2012). *Media effects research: A basic overview*. Cengage Learning. Ch. 2
- YouTube Video on [Popular vs. Scholarly Sources](#)
- APA Style Guide: From Purdue's Online Writing Lab's [Formatting and Style Guide](#), Read “[In-Text Citations: The Basics](#)” and “[Reference List: Basic Rules](#)”

***** Quiz for Module 1 due 1/23 *****

Module 2 (Jan 26-Feb 6): Being Informed

Week of Jan 26: Fake News and Misinformation

- Boyle, M. *Lippman and Dewey: Debating democracy in the age of metropolis*. The Electric Agora.
- Tandoc, Jr., E. C. (2019) The facts of fake news: A research review. *Sociology Compass*, 13.
- Wardle, C. (2018). *Fake news: It's complicated*. Medium.
- Pew Research Center (2024, Sept. 17). Social media and news fact sheet.

***** Discussion Post for Module 2 due Friday 1/30 *****

Week of Feb 2: Social Media, Algorithms, and Incidental News

- Gil de Zuniga, H. et al. (2017). Effects of the news-finds-me perception in communication: Social media use implications for news seeking and learning about politics. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 22.
- McVerry, J. F. (2024). 'News finds me' mindset may lead readers away from political, science news. Bellisario College of Communications
- Thorson, K. (2020). Attracting the news: Algorithms, platforms, and reframing incidental exposure. *Journalism*, 21(8), 1067-1082.

***** Quiz for Module 2 due Friday 2/6 *****

Module 3 (Feb 9-20): Being Engaged

Week of Feb 9: Civic engagement offline and online

- An interview with Robert Putnam about Social Capital and "Bowling Alone"
- Dubow, T. Devaux, A., & Manville, C. (2017, Aug. 7). Civic engagement: How can digital technology encourage greater engagement in civil society? *Perspective: Rand Europe*.
- Fischer, R. (2020). "The subtle ways that "clicktivism" shapes the world. BBC
- Fillet, S. (2023, June 6). Slacktivism: Legitimate action or just lazy liking? GoVocal.
- Kwak, N. et al. (2018). Perceptions of social media for political expression: Testing the slacktivism hypothesis. *Human Communication Research*, 44, 197-221.

***** Discussion Post for Module 3 due Friday 2/13 *****

Week of Feb 16: Media, protest, and social justice movements

- Zuckerman, E. (2014). New media, new civics? *Policy & Internet*, 6(2), 151-168.
- Neumeyer, C. & Stald, G. (2014). The mobile phone in street protest. Texting, tweeting, tracking, and tracing. *Mobile Media & Society*, 2(2), 117-133.
- Tufekci, Z. & Wilson, C. (2012). Social media and the decision to participate in political protest: Observations from Tahrir Square. *Journal of Communication*, 62(2), 363-379.
- Tufekci, Z. (2020, June 24). Do protests even work? It sometimes takes a decade to find out. *The Atlantic*.

***** Quiz for Module 3 due Friday 2/20 *****

Module 4 (Feb 23-Mar 6): Civic Discourse & Civility

Week of Feb 23: Civic Discourse (part 1)

- Read "[What is Civil Discourse?](#)" and then read about the "[4Cs of Civil Discourse](#)" from OSU's Civil Discourse for Citizenship Program.
- Mutz, D. C. (2002). Cross-cutting social networks: Testing democratic theory in practice. *The American Political Science Review*, 96(1), 111-126.
- Mutz, D. C. (2002). The consequences of cross-cutting networks for political participation. *American Journal of Political Science*, 10(1), 838-855.

***** Discussion Post for Module 4 due Friday 2/27 *****

Week of March 2: Civic Discourse (part 2)

- Papacharissi, Z. (2004). Democracy online: Civility, politeness, and the democratic potential of online political discussion groups. *New Media & Society*, 6(2), 259-283.

- Yildirim, P., & Zhang, Z. J. (2022). How social media firms moderate their content. University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School.
- Darbinyan, R. (2022). The growing role of AI in content moderation. Forbes.

***** Quiz for Module 4 due Friday 3/6 *****

Module 5 (Mar 9-27): Media Literacy & Media Mindfulness

Week of March 9: Media Literacy & Media Mindfulness

- Potter, W. J. (2016). Media literacy (8th ed.). *Chapter 2*
- Potter, W. J. (2016). Media literacy (8th ed.). *Chapter 15*
- Campbell, S. W., & Gershberg., Z. (2022). *The case for media mindfulness*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA.

***** Discussion Post for Module 5 due Friday 3/13 *****

Week of March 23 (after Spring Break): Media Literacies in the Digital Age: Algorithms and Hybrid Spaces

- Rogow, F. (2024, April 10). Media literacy for students in a digital age. *Carnegie Corporation of New York*.
- Hargittai et al. 2020. Black Box Measures? How to study people's algorithm skills. *Information, Communication, & Society*, 23(5), 764-775.
- Dogruel, P. M., & Joeckel, S. (2022). Development and validation of an algorithm literacy scale for internet users. *Communication Methods and Measures*, 16(2), 115-133.
- de Souza e Silva, A., Campbell, S. W., & Ling, R. (2024). Hybrid Spaces revisited: From concept toward theory. *Communication Theory*.

***** Quiz for Module 5 due Friday 3/27 *****

Module 6 (Mar 30-Apr 10): Media Inequalities & Divides

Week of March 30: Media and Social Divides: Uneven Conditions Globally and Locally

- Hargittai, E. (2003). The digital divide and what to do about it. In (C. Jones, Ed.) *New Economy Handbook* (pp. 821-832). Elsevier Science.
- Gitau, S., Marsden, G., & Donner, J. (2010). After access — Challenges facing mobile-only internet users in the developing world. *Proceedings of the 28th international conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, pp. 2603-2606.
- Brown, K., Campbell, S. W., & Ling R. (2011). Mobile phones bridging the digital divide for teens in the US? *Future Internet*, 3, 144, 158.
- Marler, W. (2019). Accumulating phones: Aid and adaptation in phone access for the urban poor. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 7(2), 155-174.

***** Discussion Post for Module 6 due Friday 4/3 *****

Week of April 6: Media and Political Divides: Polarized Citizenship

- Keeter, S. (2015). Political polarization and the American public. Pew Research Center.
- Russel, A. (2024). Political polarization is not unique to the U.S., but its causes are. *Letter & Science: US Davis*.
- Iyengar, S., et al. (2019). The origins and consequences of affective polarization in the United States. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 22, 1290146.

- Krupnikov, Y., & Ryan, J. (2022). Chapter 7 from their book “The Other Divide” (“A New Form of Self-Expression”)

***** Quiz for Module 6 due Friday 4/10 *****

Module 7 (Apr 13-27): Capstone Assignment

For the capstone assignment, students will apply key concepts from the class to create a lecture on the topic of “Media and Citizenship at OSU.” Students will be asked to design a set of lecture slides with corresponding lecture notes. Students will not be asked to record the actual lecture, just to provide the materials for it. Further guidelines will be provided on Canvas.

***** Capstone Assignment due Friday 4/27 *****

(Capstone assignment cannot be late, so that we have enough time to include it in final grade)

C-REP Deadlines:

- o Monday, **April 20 at 9 pm**: Deadline for study participation and requesting alternative assignments from the CREP coordinator.
- o Monday, **April 27 at 9 pm**: Deadline for submitting the CREP alternative assignment to the CREP coordinator.

Late Work

Quizzes and discussion posts can be submitted late within one week for a 10% grade reduction, unless there is a documented emergency or official accommodation arranged with the TA. **Quizzes and discussion posts will close on Canvas one week after the deadline, and students will then receive zero points**. Students must work with their TA to coordinate documentation or make arrangement in advance about deadline conflicts. Let your TA know as soon as possible to make arrangements. **Don’t wait until the last minute to do quizzes or discussion posts, as technical problems can occur that will not be an acceptable excuse for late work.**

“Incomplete” grades are an option for students who have completed most of the course (more than 50%) but experience a serious life-changing circumstance in which they cannot complete the class on time. Students who qualify for an “Incomplete” receive up to 6 weeks after the semester ends to finish the class. If you think you may have a qualifying event, please email your TA to make arrangements.

Grade Disputes

Any dispute about a grade must be taken up with your TA **within one week of the grade posting**, so please keep track of your grades and check them when you see an announcement. If you are disputing a grade, you must prepare a document, going point-by-point explaining why you think your work deserves 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. Please submit your grade dispute first to your TA. If your dispute is ongoing after this, you may contact the professor. If you have talked with both the TA and the professor and still want to pursue a grade dispute, see the [university's Complaint, Grievance, and Appeal Procedures](#)

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 quizzes and assignments. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee ([Faculty Rule 3335-5-48.7 \(B\)](#)). For additional information, see the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

There has been a significant increase in the popularity and availability of a variety of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, including ChatGPT and others. These tools will help shape the future of work, research and technology but when used to replace class work and thinking, they can stand in conflict with academic integrity at Ohio State. To be clear, use of these generative AI tools is not allowed during quizzes this course. You should be integrating information directly from the provided sources. And whenever you use text verbatim from any source, acknowledge that the words are not your own.

Disability Services

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 your TA know immediately to privately discuss options, and the Professor is also available if needed. To establish reasonable accommodations, you may be requested to register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with your TA as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations, so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion.

In cases where prolonged 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; 614-292-3307; or slds.osu.edu.

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 [Office of Institutional Equity](#).
(Policy: [Religious Holidays, Holy Days and Observances](#))

Mental Health

If you or someone you know are suffering or struggling with mental health, 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). 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 24/7 by dialing 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

Sexual Misconduct & Relationship Violence

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses are 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 at titleix@osu.edu.