



COMM 2850

Media & Citizenship

Summer 2026 (8 weeks)

3 credit hours

Online

Course overview

Instructor: Kara Fort, M.A.

Email address: fort.40@osu.edu (preferred contact method)

Phone number: (614) 407 – 6747

Office hours: Wednesdays from 11am – 1pm, or by appointment (Zoom Information on Carmen)

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Laura Bezerra Gomes

Email Address: bezerragomes.1@osu.edu

Office Hours: Thursdays from 1-3pm (Zoom Information on Carmen)

Prerequisites

Not open to students with credit for 644.

Course description

The main purpose of this course is to learn how to better consume media and participate in interactive media in a way that promotes informed, active, and responsible citizenship. Understanding how we find information, how we process this information, and how we act upon these ideas is vital to the decision making that benefits individuals and society at large. Thus, this course provides an overview of media and its role in contemporary democracies by examining how media industry works, how various media impact us, how to critically evaluate media, how to engage in media responsibility, and how we use this information to participate in the type of citizenship that suits us and our communities.

Course learning 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

How this Online course works

Mode of delivery: This course is 100% online. There are no required sessions when you must be logged in to Carmen at a scheduled time.

Pace of online activities: This course is divided into **weekly modules** that will be released each Sunday with assignments typically due the following Saturday. Students are expected to keep pace with weekly deadlines but may schedule their efforts freely within that time frame.

Credit hours and work expectations: This is a **3-credit-hour course**. According to Ohio State policy (go.osu.edu/credithours), students should expect around 3 hours per week of time spent on direct instruction (instructor content and Carmen activities, for example) in addition to 6 hours of homework (reading and assignment preparation, for example) to receive a grade of (C) average.

Attendance and participation requirements: Because this is an online course, your attendance is based on your online activity and participation. The following is a summary of students' expected participation:

- **Participating in online activities for attendance: AT LEAST ONCE PER WEEK**
You are expected to log in to the course in Carmen every week. (During most weeks you will probably log in many times.) If you have a situation that might cause you to miss an entire week of class, discuss it with me *as soon as possible*.
- **Office hours and live sessions: OPTIONAL**
All live, scheduled events for the course, including my office hours, are optional.

Course materials and technologies

Textbooks

Required

- **PDFs.** I will provide PDFs of readings in the files section of Carmen.

Course technology

Technology support

For help with your password, university email, Carmen, 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, and support for urgent issues is available 24/7.

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

Technology skills needed for this course

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen (go.osu.edu/canvasstudent)
- CarmenZoom virtual meetings (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).

Carmen access

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

- Register multiple devices in case something happens to your primary device. Visit the BuckeyePass - Adding a Device help article for step-by-step instructions (go.osu.edu/add-device).
- Request passcodes to keep as a backup authentication option. When you see the Duo login screen on your computer, click **Enter a Passcode** and then click the **Text me new codes** button that appears. This will text you ten passcodes good for 365 days that can each be used once.
- Download the Duo Mobile application (go.osu.edu/install-duo) to all of your registered devices for the ability to generate one-time codes in the event that you lose cell, data, or Wi-Fi service

If none of these options will meet the needs of your situation, you can contact the IT Service Desk at 614-688-4357(HELP) and IT support staff will work out a solution with you.

Grading and faculty response

How your grade is calculated

ASSIGNMENT CATEGORY	WEIGHTED % OF GRADE
Weekly Reading Quizzes (6 quizzes/10 pts each)	25%
Discussion Posts (6 posts/10 pts each)	25%
Reflection Essay (15 pts)	15%
Capstone Assignment (50 pts)	35%
Total	100

See course schedule below for due dates.

Descriptions of major course assignments

Weekly Reading Quizzes

Description: Each week you will be asked to answer questions about the readings and lectures from that week. Reading quizzes may not be retaken. You may not collaborate with others on your reading quizzes, though you are allowed to reference your readings and notes. There are seven assigned reading quizzes. The reading quiz with the lowest score will be automatically dropped.

Discussion Posts

Description: There are seven assigned discussion posts throughout the semester. You will be asked to apply what you have learned from your readings and materials to either an activity or reflection on an argument. You are not required to respond to any peers' posts. The lowest discussion post grade will be automatically dropped.

Reflection Essay

Description: At the end of the course, you will be asked to write a short essay reflection on what you have learned and your experience. More guidelines will be available on the Carmen page.

Capstone Assignment

Description: 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 Carmen.

Late assignments

Late submissions will be accepted with an automatic deduction of 10% per day late. Week 8 Assignments may not be turned in late.

Grading scale

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

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

- **Grading and feedback:** Weekly reading quiz grades will be posted automatically. Feedback on all other assignments should be available within 1-1.5 weeks.
- **Email:** I will reply to emails within **24 hours on days when class is in session at the university.**
- **Discussion board:** I will check and reply to messages in the discussion boards every **24 hours on school days.**

Other course policies

Discussion and communication guidelines

Communicating with the Instructor:

- **Communication Method:** Please communicate through email. Do not use Carmen messages, as messages are often deleted and therefore cannot be used as proof of a communication attempt.
- **Email Subject:** Please include “COMM 2850” in the subject of your email.

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

- **Tone and civility:** Let's maintain a supportive learning community where everyone feels safe and where people can disagree amicably. Remember that sarcasm doesn't always come across online.
- **Citing your sources:** When we have academic discussions, please cite your sources to back up what you say. For the textbook or other course materials, list at least the title and page numbers. For online sources, include a link. For essays, please cite your sources in APA format (see https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html for more information).

Professionalism

You must ensure that the work you submit is correct and accessible. Submitting the wrong link, submitting to the wrong location, submitting files that are corrupt, the wrong version, the wrong format, missing components, the wrong file type, etc. is unprofessional. It is your responsibility to check the integrity of your work immediately following submission. If we cannot access your submission, you forfeit all points for your submission.

Grade Appeals

You may send an email to Kara Fort to instigate a grade appeal within 1 week after the grade has been posted. I will respond to appeal requests within 3 business days. An appeal is a formal process with explicit rules. Appeals can result in an unchanged grade, a higher grade, or a lower grade. If you wish to appeal a grade, email Kara that you wish to appeal and then await further instructions.

Missing Work & Making Up Assignments

If you become seriously ill or something happens to you that prevents you from participating in the course (e.g., mental illness or a friend's mental illness, taking care of an immediate family member, childbirth, etc.), please let me know as soon as possible, preferably before the assignment deadline so that we can negotiate a timeline to turn in your work.

Academic integrity policy

Written assignments: Your written assignments, including discussion posts, should be your own original work. In formal assignments, you should follow **APA** style to cite the ideas and words of your research sources. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your assignments before you turn them in--but no one else should revise or rewrite your work.

Reusing past work: In general, you are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you've explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me.

Falsifying research or results: All research you will conduct in this course is intended to be a learning experience; you should never feel tempted to make your results or your library research look more successful than it was.

Using AI or other resources: In general, using software, artificial intelligence, websites, or other tools to automatically generate answers to questions, ideas, sentences, or other portions of class assignments, quizzes, exams, or other submitted work will not be permitted in this course, unless otherwise noted. If I suspect that you have used AI, I will report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.

Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>

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 (go.osu.edu/coam)
- *Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity* (go.osu.edu/ten-suggestions)

Student Services and Advising

University Student Services can be accessed through BuckeyeLink. More information is available here: <https://contactbuckeyelink.osu.edu/>

Advising resources for students are available here: <http://advising.osu.edu>

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

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

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 Greenville and the forced removal of tribes through the Indian Removal Act of 1830. I/We want to honor the resiliency of these tribal nations and recognize the historical contexts that has and continues to affect the Indigenous peoples of this land.

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

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

Your mental health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learn, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. No matter where you are

engaged in distance learning, The Ohio State University's Student Life Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) is here to support you. If you find yourself feeling isolated, anxious or overwhelmed, on-demand resources are available at go.osu.edu/ccsondemand. 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. The Ohio State Wellness app is also a great resource available at go.osu.edu/wellnessapp.

Accessibility accommodations for students with disabilities

Requesting accommodations

The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions, please let me know 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; 614-292-3307; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th 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 \(go.osu.edu/canvas-accessibility\)](https://go.osu.edu/canvas-accessibility)
- Streaming audio and video
- CarmenZoom accessibility (go.osu.edu/zoom-accessibility)
- Collaborative course tools

Course schedule

Course schedule is subject to change. Refer to the Carmen course for up-to-date assignment due dates.

Week	Dates	Topics	Lectures & Reading	Assignments
1	05/11 – 05/16	Media, Democracy, & Citizenship	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Syllabus 2) Week 1 Lectures 3) Liptak, 2003 4) Pew Americans' Complicated Relationship with News 	All due 05/16 at 11:59pm: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Week 1 Reading Quiz 2) Week 1 Discussion Post
2	05/17 – 05/23	Media Economics, Media Law, & Journalism Practices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Week 2 Lectures 2) Dodds et al., 2026 3) Canella, 2023 4) Pew Local News Fact Sheet 	Due 05/23 at 11:59pm: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Week 2 Reading Quiz 2) Week 2 Discussion Post
3	05/24 – 05/30	Media Literacy & Misinformation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Week 3 Lectures 2) Hall Jamieson & Albarracín, 2020 3) Guess et al., 2019 4) Adler Berg et al., 2026 	All due 05/30 at 11:59pm: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Week 3 Reading Quiz 2) Week 3 Discussion Post
4	05/31 – 06/06	Social & Entertainment Media	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Week 4 Lectures 2) Bakshy et al., 2015 3) Gil de Zuñiga et al., 2019 4) Delli Carpini, SAGE Handbook chapter 5) Pew What News do Americans Seek Out... 	All due 06/06 at 11:59pm: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Week 4 Reading Quiz 2) Week 4 Discussion Post
5	06/07 – 06/13	Media & Polarization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Week 5 Lectures 2) González-Bailón et al., 2023 3) Benkler, 2020 	All due 06/13 at 11:59pm: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Week 5 Reading Quiz 2) Week 5 Discussion Post
6	06/14 – 06/20	Civic/Civil Discourse	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Week 6 Lectures 2) Muddiman et al., 2022 3) Mutz & Reeves, 2005 4) Pew Social Media is Seen as Good for Democracy... 	Due 06/20 at 11:59pm: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Week 6 Reading Quiz 2) Week 6 Discussion Post
7	06/21 – 06/27	Civic Engagement, Social Justice Movements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Week 7 Lecture 2) Hampton et al., 2017 3) Tufekci, 2014 	All due 06/27 at 11:59pm: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Week 7 Reading Quiz 2) Week 7 Discussion Post

Week	Dates	Topics	Lectures & Reading	Assignments
			4) Pew Americans think social media can help build movements... 5) US Census Bureau US Volunteerism Rebounding After the COVID-19 Pandemic	
8	06/28 – 07/02	Finals	No additional lecture or reading	Due 07/02 at 11:59pm: (Cannot be turned in late) 1) Capstone Assignment 2) Reflection Paper