Course Syllabus

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As this is an online course, I won't be providing a PDF syllabus. Instead the syllabus can be reviewed in this interactive web page.

This syllabus is an agreement between the instructor and the student. Events that transpire over the semester may require me to modify the syllabus. In the event I need to modify the syllabus, I will announce the modification via the announcements page and any changes will be noted in the change log below. However it is your responsibility to keep up to date with changes.

Table of Contents

Change Log

Any changes to the syllabus will be described here. Currently there are no changes to the syllabus since the course was first published.

Course Description

This course is designed to promote an understanding of basic mass communication practice. We will examine this from the receiving (how mass communication affects the individual and society as a whole) and production (how to design mass mediated campaigns, theories of persuasion) ends, as well as discuss the state of various mass communication industries and media. This class will be taught from a social scientific perspective, with an emphasis on communication theory. As an advanced level course, it will require a combination of active discussion, well-researched writing, and rigorous examination.

Contact and Resources

Who We Are

My name is George Pearson and I am the instructor for your course. I was originally from the UK, but moved to Columbus to complete my PhD at Ohio State five years ago. I completed my PhD this summer, so am now working as

an instructor at the university. My main research interests are in political communication and journalism and how these areas are being affected by changes to our communication systems (such as online technology, social media etc.).

My name is Min Seon Jeong (feel free to call me Min), the TA for this course. I am a doctoral candidate in the School of Communication, here at OSU. My research interest focuses on understanding how online communication (e.g. online comments, getting news via social media) influences the way people perceive and understand political information.

Contact Info

George:

Email: [pearson.325@osu.edu (mailto:pearson.325@osu.edu)](mailto:pearson.325@osu.edu)

Office: Journalism 220

Min:

Email: [jeong.266@osu.edu (mailto:jeong.266@osu.edu)](mailto:jeong.266@osu.edu)

Office: Derby Hall 3001

Open Hours

Both of us are guaranteed to be available for four hours every week where you can come to our office to discuss the class, or get in touch via CarmenZoom.

We are available by other times by appointment, and I will usually respond to any emails within a few hours if they are received 8-5 Monday-Friday.

George's Open Hours are:

Tuesdays & Thursdays: 3pm-4pm

Wednesdays 9am-11am

Min's Open Hours are:

Mondays & Tuesdays 10am-12pm

Zoom link: https://osu.zoom.us/my/comm3440min [(https://osu.zoom.us/my/comm3440min)](https://osu.zoom.us/my/comm3440min)

CarmenZoom

Office hours can be held in person of using the University's [CarmenZoom](https://osu.zoom.us/) [(https://osu.zoom.us/)](https://osu.zoom.us/) system. [You can find more on CarmenZoom here](https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmenzoom) [(https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmenzoom)](https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmenzoom) .

[CarmenZoom](https://osu.zoom.us/) [(https://osu.zoom.us/)](https://osu.zoom.us/) allows us to hold meetings remotely - similar to systems like Skype.

Contact Policy

I would like to encourage collaboration. Therefore I encourage students to use Carmen as much as possible for communication.

I will have [discussion topics](#) on Carmen where you can ask questions; whether that's clarification on class content or checking when an assignment is due. Please use these for non private matters. This is because (a) another student may provide an answer quicker than I can and (b) there is a good chance someone else may have the same question.

If you send me an email that is more appropriate for the discussion boards I will likely respond telling you to post it there instead. Obviously message me directly for personal/private issues.

I am online most of the time, so usually respond quickly (within a few hours). However, out of work hours (evenings and weekend) I may not respond immediately, so be sure not to leave messages to the last minute.

We will always aim to respond within 24 hours of receiving an email (excluding weekends). Therefore if you have sent an email that needs a response and you haven't heard back within 24 hours feel free to email us again as your first email may have been lost / not received etc.

IT Help

If you are experiencing problems with any of University IT (such as problems with email, passwords, Carmen etc.) you should contact the OSU IT Support Desk on:

614-688-HELP (4357).

Standard support hours are available at [https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours,](https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours) ⬈ [(https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours)](https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours) and support for urgent issues is available 24x7.

Please note that IT problems will generally not be considered a valid excuse for late or missed assignments. See the specific section of the syllabus below for more information.

External Resources

The Writing Center

f you need further help with your writing I strongly advise you to contact the writing center. The Writing Center offers free help with writing at any stage of the writing process. Appointments are available in-person at 4120 Smith Lab, as well as for online sessions. They also offer walk-in hours.

You do not have to bring in a piece of writing in order to schedule a writing center appointment.

You can find out more at https://cstw.osu.edu/writing-center ⬈ [(https://cstw.osu.edu/writing-center)](https://cstw.osu.edu/writing-center) .

Student Advocacy

If you have any external issues that may have a long-term affect on your ability to participate fully in this class or others, I advise students to contact Student Advocacy.

The Student Advocacy Center is committed to helping students navigate Ohio State's structure and to resolving issues that they encounter at the university. Their purpose is to empower students to overcome obstacles to their growth both inside and outside the classroom.

You can find out more at http://advocacy.osu.edu/

Course Materials

There is one required textbook for the course.

Bryant, J., Thompson, S., Finklea, B. (2012). *Fundamentals of Media Effects.* Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc. (print or e-book)

You can buy it from Amazon here: https://www.amazon.com/Fundamentals-Media-Effects-Jennings-Bryant/dp/1577667859/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1487365037&sr=8-1&keywords=bryant+media+effects+2012 ⬈ (https://www.amazon.com/Fundamentals-Media-Effects-Jennings-Bryant/dp/1577667859/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1487365037&sr=8-1&keywords=bryant+media+effects+2012)

I usually try to avoid having a textbook for a course, however this book does cover the course contents very well. To save you some money, second hand copies are definitely acceptable. If you get the first edition that will *probably* be fine, however, some chapter numbers may be different and things, so you may have to work to match up the chapter numbers given on the course pages to the one on the books.

There are also a number of readings for each topic provided as PDFs on the topic page. You are expected to complete the readings in advance of the week's material.

Assignments & Grading

Assignments

The whole course is graded out of 1000 points, so that each point is worth 0.1%. The grade is made up of six parts.

Discussion posts	200 points (20%)
Discussion Leading	100 points (10%)
Weekly Activities	200 points (20%)
Reading Responses	100 points (10%)
Presentation	200 points (20%)
Final Paper	200 points (20%)

Beneath is a brief description of each assignment type. However, more information can be found on the page for each assignment.

Discussion Posts

Each week, students are expected to take part in group discussions. Questions and prompts will usually be proposed by the discussion leaders based on that week's content (although if there is no discussion leader myself or Min will step in). You should aim to make at least three posts a week (although you may make more).

See the weekly timeline for more information on when the posts should be made.

While three posts is the minimum requirement students are encouraged to post more. A great deal of the learning and engagement in this class will come from these discussions with other people. Furthermore, additional posts will be taken into consideration when grading. For instance, three short responses to other people may be considered equivalent to two paragraph posts responding to others.

Your score will be updated at three points during the semester so you can see how you are doing:

- After week 6
- After week 11
- At the end of the course

Discussion Leading

Discussion leaders are responsible for guiding their group's discussions for that week. One student per group will lead the discussions each week. Everyone in your discussion group will discussion lead once. Everyone will discussion lead once over the course of the semester. Discussion leaders will also report back to the wider class the following week.

The discussion leaders perform a vital role in helping lead their groups discussions as well as reporting their group's findings to the class as a whole.

There are two parts to the discussion leader role

- Starting your group's discussions with useful prompts
- Reporting back to the class wide discussion board

More information on how to provide good discussion prompts is available on the assignment page.

Weekly Activities

Weekly activities will encourage students to engage with the weekly topic. Activities will generally be between half a page to two pages in length (see the individual assignment guidelines as assigned), double spaced, and in .doc or .pdf format. Activities are due by 11:59pm each **Friday**. Exemplary activities should: demonstrate comprehension of the theories and concepts addressed in lecture and media; provide independent thought regarding the theories, concepts, and materials provided; actively and thoughtfully reflect on the questions and prompts provided; and demonstrate an understanding of how the concept or media discussed has influenced society.

The task for the weekly activity will vary week to week, but will be posted at the same time as the content for that week.

There are 12 weekly activities to complete. Ten of these will count towards your final grade. Your lowest two grades for a weekly activity will be dropped.

Reading Responses

You are expected to do the course readings every week. However, on four occasions you will submit a brief reflection piece summarizing your thoughts on the readings. You will then post this to the relevant discussion board. You will also, for each week you submit a reading response, comment on one other submitter's post.

More information on how to write the reading responses can be found on the assignment page.

Presentations

You will record a brief video presentation on a topic of your choosing. For this topic you will seek to connect the theoretical ideas covered in the readings and videos to practical policy issues surrounding that topic.

Based on your chosen topic you will be given a scenario and asked to prepare a presentation.

Advice on how to prepare the presentation, as well as advice on presentation recording software can be found on the assignment page.

So that not everyone chooses the same topic, how many people can present on each topic is limited. With that in mind you will have to sign up in advance to present on a topic. More information can be found on the presentation assignment page.

The final essay exam will be in an essay format and will encourage students to deeply consider the effects of mass media concepts on our society. The final essay is likely to be based on a few simple prompts and allow students to draw on material from the course, specializing in areas they found most interesting.

Further information on the final essay exam will be posted nearer the time.

Grading

All grades are final. I do not review grades. The only exception to this is in the event of an obvious error on our part (for instance you were given a zero but did in fact hand in the assignment).

We will always aim to grade assignments quickly. Generally you can expect any assignment to be graded within a week. However, on occasion extraneous circumstances may mean there are further delays. If there are any delays in getting assignments graded I will seek to let students know.

Last Assignments Policy

I am very aware that things come up that can lead to assignments being late. I try hard to develop policies for late assignments that are both fair but also accommodating to wider issues that may affect students being able to complete assignments.

Because of this, I have different late policies for different assignments. The late policies for each assignment type are below:

Discussion Posts & Discussion Leading

Both the discussion posts and discussion leading sections rely on inter-student cooperation. As of such late posting doesn't only effect you, but also other students in your group. Therefore, there is no grace period for late postings of discussion posts or discussion leading. Those posted late will be graded as 0. That said, for the Discussion Posts you do not need to take part every week to earn full marks (see the Discussion Posts section on Carmen for more information). If you are unable to do the discussion posts and especially if you are unable to do the discussion leading you should email the instructor. This email should be sent in advance of missing the deadline, not after. Only valid excuses (such as family emergencies, medical reasons etc.) will be accepted.

Weekly Activities

The weekly activities offer the most flexibility in terms of deadlines. On two occasions throughout the course you can take a one week grace period on handing in your weekly activity late, meaning you would have to the following Friday to complete the activity. You can take these at any time and you do not need to provide any reason. (Simply stating you are taking the grace period is that all that is required). The only requirement is that once you hand in the assignment you email Min to state you are taking the grace period (and so that she knows the assignment is there to be graded). Weekly activities that are late and are not taken as part of the two grace period options will be graded as 0.

Presentations and Final Essays

Presentations and Final Essays do not contain any specific grace period. If you are unable to make the deadline for either of these projects you should email the instructor as soon as possible. <u>This email should be sent in advance of the deadline</u>, not after. Extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis. I am often willing to grant a small extension (e.g. one day) for a variety of reasons, however you will need to discuss any extension with my in advance. In deciding whether to award an extension I will take into account a number of things including: the validity of the excuse; any previously missed assignments and reasonings behind them; your standing in the course; and your manner. <u>Paper that are late and do not have a valid extension will be graded as a 0.</u>

Course Policies

IT Policy

Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for ensuring they have the technology necessary to complete the course. If you are experiencing any technical difficulties with University software and websites (e.g. Carmen, Buckeyemail etc.) you should contact the IT Service Desk as soon as possible. If you are having problems with external services, such as the Zoom or video editing software, you should contact me as soon as possible.

If you experience any problems with any OSU IT services, you should also check the system status page on the OCIO website (https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/system_status ⤢ (https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/system_status)) which logs any widespread existing problems with OSU IT services.

Technical problems will not generally be considered a valid excuse for non-participation or missing a deadline, unless there is an acknowledged problem with the IT systems by the OCIO that would reasonably affect people's ability to complete the work, or if you have raised an ongoing ticket with IT Services (I will expect proof of this ticket, and I may contact IT services to ensure the situation is ongoing).

Avoiding Technology Disasters

This course, like the communication industry as a whole, relies heavily on access to computers, specific software, and the Internet.

At some point during the semester you will likely have a problem with technology. Your laptop will crash; your iPad battery will die; a recording you make will disappear; you will accidentally delete a file; the wireless will go down at a crucial time.

These, however, are inevitabilities of life, not emergencies. Technology problems are not excuses for unfinished or late work. Bad things may happen, but you can protect yourself by doing the following:

- Plan ahead: A deadline is the last minute to turn in material. You can start - and finish - early. Particularly if challenging resources are required, or you know it will be time consuming to finish this project you should avoid leaving things too late.
- Save work early and often: Think how much work you do in 10 minutes. I recommend autosaving every 2 minutes.
- Make regular backups of files in a different location: Between Box, Google Drive, Dropbox and others, you have ample places to store and back up your materials. Use them. (Also, as a student of OSU you have unlimited free

storage via [Buckeye Box](http://box.osu.edu) ⬈ (http://box.osu.edu) . This is a great resource - it has saved me from technology disasters in the past, and I use it to backup all my university files.

- Save drafts: When editing, set aside originals and work with a copy.
- Practice safe computing: On your personal computer, install and use software to control viruses and malware

Participation Expectations

Because this is a distance-education course, there are not set meeting times for our lectures and discussions. To achieve learning success, you will need to make a regular effort to login and contribute to the class throughout the week.

As a rule you can expect to need to login <u>at least</u> three times a week. You will also need to be sure you are spacing out your visits to the site (for instance, you will not be able to complete all of your work on a Friday only).

The advantage of an online class is that you can have some flexibility in when you complete the course work. Some may prefer to get the majority of work done in the evenings, some will prefer to work in the mornings. Others may prefer to login for three longer sessions each week, others may choose to chip away at the workload in smaller portions throughout the week. Online classes allow you to work with the material at times that suit your strengths and schedule. The only requirement is that you are able to contribute to the class throughout the week.

If you have a situation that might cause you to miss an entire week of class, discuss it with me *as soon as possible.* Video lectures will be posted at least one full week before that topic is covered in class (I aim to have them up many weeks in advance).

Discussion and Communication Guidelines

When communicating with eachother please ensure you are courteous and respectful to others.
While there is no need to be overly formal during class discussions, you should still aim to write using good grammar, spelling etc. Be sure to maintain a supporting learning community where everyone feels safe and where people can disagree amicably.

Academic Integrity

Your assignments and contributions to the class should be your own original work. 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.

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.

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/ ⬈ (http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/)

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 ⬈ (http://titleix.osu.edu) or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at titleix@osu.edu (mailto:titleix@osu.edu)

Diversity

The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

Requesting Accommodations

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know via email immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu ; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu ⬈ (http://slds.osu.edu) ; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Mental Health Statement

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

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

Course Schedule

Weekly Timeline

This section is designed to give you an idea as to what you will need to do each week and by what date. As a large amount of this class depends on class interaction it is important that people are able to take part in discussions at approximately the same time, and so that contributions aren't left to the very end of the week.

Since discussion leading carries additional responsibilities I have included a separate column for discussion leaders. Obviously these are deadlines that must be met, however most of these tasks can be done considerable time in advance.

Deadline	Discussion Participants	Discussion Leaders	Everyone
By the start of the week		Have reviewed the relevant week's materials, readings and videos.	
Monday	Have reviewed the relevant week's materials, readings and videos	Post discussion prompts by 5pm	
Tuesday	Have made your first post in response to the discussion prompt	Continue to monitor group discussion and respond to group members as necessary	
Wednesday	Respond to other discussion forum posts	(Same as above)	(If relevant) submit the reading response
Thursday	(Same as above)	(Same as above)	
Friday		Discussion leaders post a summary of the group's discussion on the discussion leading thread for that week	Complete the weekly activity
Following Monday		Respond to other discussion leader posts on the discussion leading thread	

Week-by-Week Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to the course & setup

Week 2: Introduction to mass communication

Week 3: History of mass communication

Week 4: Media and the law

Week 5: Entertainment media (media violence)

Week 6: Entertainment media (selective exposure)

Week 7: Children and mass communication

Week 8 & 9: Health and mass communication

Week 10: Sports and mass communication

Week 11: Political communication and public opinion

Week 12: Journalism and news

Week 13: Video games

Week 14: Future of mass communication

Week 15: Class review

Week 16: Class review

Course Summary:

Date		Details	
Fri Aug 30, 2019	📝	Weekly Activity 1: Leisure Time Statistics (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209265)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Sep 6, 2019	📝	Weekly Activity 2: War of the Worlds (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209266)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Sep 13, 2019	📝	Weekly Activity 3: Media Law (TBW) (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209267)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Sep 20, 2019	📝	Weekly Activity 4: Depictions of Reality (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209268)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Sep 27, 2019	📝	Weekly Activity 5: Selective Exposure (TBW) (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209269)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Oct 4, 2019	📝	Weekly Activity 6: Educational Children's Programming (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209270)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Oct 11, 2019	📝	Weekly Activity 7: Sports (TBW) (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209274)	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	
Fri Oct 25, 2019	📝 Weekly Activity 8: Health (TBW) (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209271)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Nov 1, 2019	📝 Weekly Activity 9: Public Opinion (TBW) (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209272)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Nov 8, 2019	📝 Weekly Activity 10: Critiquing News Broadcasts (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209273)	due by 11:59pm
	📝 Weekly Activity 11: Critically Evaluating Video Games (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209275)	due by 11:59pm
Mon Dec 2, 2019	📝 Weekly Activity 12: Future Careers (TBW) (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209276)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Dec 8, 2019	📝 Final Paper (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209289)	due by 11:59pm
	📝 Discussion Leading (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209264)	
	📝 Presentation (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209277)	
	📝 Reading Response 1 (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209281)	
	📝 Reading Response 2 (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209282)	
	📝 Reading Response 3 (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209283)	
	📝 Reading Response 4 (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209284)	
	📝 Reading Response 5 (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209285)	
	📝 Weekly Discussions (https://osu.instructure.com/courses/64608/assignments/1209262)	