

**Spring 2020**  
**Communication 4401**  
**Mass Communication and Youth**

**Professor**

Dr. Emily Moyer-Gusé

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Office Hours Friday 11:20-12:20 or by appointment

**Meeting Times and Locations**

Fridays 12:40-2:30 @ 360 Journalism Bldg.

**Required Readings**

Jennings, N. A., & Mazzarella, S. R. (2018). *20 Questions about Youth and the Media* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.).

Peter Lang.

\*Additional required readings posted on the course website.

**Course Description**

This course will provide students with an understanding of how children and adolescents interact with, interpret, and are affected by the media. We will take a developmental perspective on these issues, meaning we will focus on how young children, older children, and adolescents interpret and respond to media content differently. Major topics will include the effects of media violence, advertising, sexual content, educational, and prosocial messages. In addition, we will examine and evaluate strategies to reduce harmful media effects and enhance positive media effects on young people.

**Course Format**

Given that this is an upper level course, much of our class time will be dedicated to collective discussion. Participating in a discussion and analysis of the material enhances your understanding and helps you sharpen your critical thinking. This means that you should master the reading assignments and come to class prepared with questions, criticisms, and comments. In class, I will provide some background information and clarify portions of the readings when needed. However, I will rely on your comments and questions to guide our class discussions. As such, you should read the material with an eye for generating questions and discussion in class.

## Office Hours and Email

Email is the quickest and easiest way to obtain answers to brief questions of clarification. Please do not use email for questions that can be answered by reviewing the syllabus or other official course documents. If you have a question that cannot be answered by looking at the course syllabus or other documents on the course website, then asking me via email is appropriate. You can generally expect a response to these brief email questions or clarifications within 24 hours. If you have more involved questions, these should be reserved for a one-on-one session during office hours. If you ask a question via email that I cannot adequately answer in that format, I will remind you that you would be better served by coming to see me to discuss.

## Course Requirements

Readings: The required readings for this class are designed to be a starting point for our class discussions and activities. **Reading prior to our class meetings is required.**

Each student will be responsible for turning discussion questions during **one** of our class meetings. You will sign up for the dates on which you plan to do this. On this date you should create a list of **at least three discussion questions** raised by that day's assigned readings. You will be asked to share these questions in class in order to facilitate our group discussion. These questions *may* be related to:

- Portions of the readings you disagree with
- Broader issues raised by the readings
- Empirical and/or theoretical questions raised by the readings
- How the readings relate to or contradict previous readings
- Practical implications of the reading

Discussion questions must be typed and submitted to the Canvas Dropbox by 11:59 pm the night before the class period in which you are assigned to share your questions. Please bring a copy of your questions to class so you can share them with the class. Students will receive 1 point for each unique and relevant question they pose, one point for posing at least one of the questions during class, and one point for submitting the questions to Canvas on time (total of 5 points possible).

In Class Assignments: You will regularly be asked to complete assignments that we will use to enhance class time. Students can expect approximately 5-8 of these assignments throughout the semester. Because many of these assignments involve your participation in some discussion, group, or activity, these assignments cannot be made up outside of class. That is, you must be in class on that day in order to earn these points. However, I will drop your lowest two scores to account for situations in which you must miss a class on a day that an in-class assignment is given (this includes missing class due to illness or other commitments). **You do not need to contact me to inform me that you will (or have already) missed a class.** I will automatically drop the two lowest scores, regardless of the excuse. Each assignment has a due date listed on the syllabus and/or course website.

Online assignments: This class uses a hybrid format, meaning that some of the course material will be conducted online. The online content is designed to give you a chance to get additional information as well as apply course concepts that are covered during our in-person meetings in a real world context. Detailed information about each online assignment is provided on the course website.

Exams: There will be two exams based on the material covered in class and in the assigned readings. Throughout the semester, newer material will build on older material. Thus, the exams are inherently cumulative. For example, early in the semester we will examine developmental theory and how it affects children's interpretation of media messages. This developmental perspective will remain relevant and important later in the quarter when we study specific media topics and their effects on children and adolescents.

Content Pitch: This assignment is designed to evaluate how well you can integrate developmental issues into media content made for individuals in a particular developmental "stage." In this project you will be asked to identify and execute an important "next step" needed in one of the topic areas covered in class. I am flexible regarding the format you use to turn in this project, but it must be in a format that is stable (i.e., not a live performance that is not recorded). You can use PowerPoint, poster, script, video, website, phone app, etc. Specifics of this assignment are posted on the course website but, in short, you will be asked to identify a need that children/adolescents at a particular developmental level have that your content will aim to fulfill. You will work with one or two other students and, together with your group, you will develop a product to fill this need based upon course readings and relevant developmental theory. You will have an opportunity to present your project to the class during our last week of class.

## Grading

There will NOT be opportunities for any student to re-take exams, re-complete assignments, or complete additional work in order to raise his/her grade outside what is laid out in this syllabus.

**Providing extra assignments for one student or "bumping up" a grade for one student invalidates the standards applied to the class and is unfair to every student.** For this reason, please do not ask me to reconsider your grade when the semester is over unless there has been an error in how it was calculated.

Your grade in this course is based upon the following:

Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Online Assignments	25%
In-Class Assignments	15%
Discussion Questions	5%
Content Pitch	15%

## Course Policies

**Exams:** All exams are to be taken in class on the designated exam dates. No early or late exams are allowed except in the case of an extreme emergency. In the rare event that an emergency arises, it is your responsibility to: 1) inform the professor prior to the scheduled exam time, and 2) provide the professor with written documentation of the emergency (e.g., medical note from a certified physician). Such documentation must be presented before the missed exam whenever possible (and by the next class period when this is not possible). Please note that make-up exams may be of a different format or cover course content in a different ratio than the original. Also note that if you arrive after the first person has completed/left the exam, you will not be allowed to take the exam (i.e., you will receive a zero on the exam).

**Deadlines:** I expect that all work will be turned in on time. Late work may be accepted (e.g., unless class participation was a relevant part of the assignment), however late assignments are marked down 10% per day.

**Use of Email and Canvas:** You are responsible for all information sent to you via your OSU email account and/or posted on the Canvas Website. Therefore, it is important for you to check your OSU email account regularly and be sure to purge your account of unneeded email so that new messages can get through. Similarly, check the Canvas website regularly for any updates or announcements.

## Respect for Fellow Students and Professor:

**Disruptions:** Please silence your phone during class. If you choose to come to class, you should give your full attention to any person who is speaking (e.g., the professor or another student). During class, avoid reading non-course material, using phones, sleeping, talking while others are talking, etc. Students engaging in these or other disruptive behaviors during class will be asked to leave, suffering any grade penalties that may result. Texting and email checking on your phone are disruptive to the professor and to those around you. Please excuse yourself from class if you must engage in this activity during class time.

**Technology Policy:** Students are NOT allowed to take photographs, record video, or record audio during class. ***I do not permit the use of phones in class as they introduce a variety of potential disruptions. Please excuse yourself from class if you need to attend to your phone for any reason.*** If a student disrupts the class and/or violates the technology policy, I will ask the student to stop whatever action they are engaging in or to leave the classroom.

**School of Communication Diversity Statement:** 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.

## **Academic Integrity**

All students at the Ohio State University are bound by the code of student conduct (see [http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource\\_csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp)). Any evidence of academic misconduct will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct in accordance with the Ohio State University Code of Student Conduct and the rules of faculty governance. Academic misconduct is any activity that compromises the academic integrity of the institution or subverts the educational process. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

1. Violation of course rules as contained in the course syllabus or other information provided to the student; violation of program regulations as established by departmental committees and made available to students;
2. Knowingly providing or receiving information during examinations such as course examinations and candidacy examinations; or the possession and/or use of unauthorized materials during those examinations;
3. Knowingly providing or using assistance in the laboratory, on field work, in scholarship or on a course assignment;
4. Submitting plagiarized work for an academic requirement. Plagiarism is the representation of another's work or ideas as one's own; it includes the unacknowledged word-for-word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas;
5. Submitting substantially the same work to satisfy requirements for one course or academic requirement that has been submitted in satisfaction of requirements for another course or academic requirement, without permission of the instructor of the course for which the work is being submitted or supervising authority for the academic requirement;
6. Falsification, fabrication, or dishonesty in creating or reporting laboratory results, research results, and/or any other assignments;
7. Serving as, or enlisting the assistance of a substitute for a student in the taking of examinations;
8. Alteration of grades or marks by the student in an effort to change the earned grade or credit;
9. Alteration of academically-related university forms or records, or unauthorized use of those forms or records; and
10. Engaging in activities that unfairly place other students at a disadvantage, such as taking, hiding or altering resource material, or manipulating a grading system.

## **Accommodations**

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact me to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. At the appointment we can discuss the course format and explore possible accommodations. I rely on the Office for Disability Services for assistance in verifying the need for the accommodation and developing accommodation strategies. The office can be contacted at 614-292-3307 and is located in room 150 Pomerene Hall.

## Lecture Schedule & Readings\*

Date	Topic	Reading
F 1/10	Course Overview & Intro; Youth Media Habits	Textbook: Chapter 3
Online #1                      Media Diary                      Due Thursday 1/16		
F 1/17	Discuss Media Diary; Doing research with children: Unique issues	Textbook: Chapter 5 Textbook: Chapter 6
F 1/24	Developmental Theory: Media effects at different ages	Textbook: Chapter 4
Online #2                      Developmental Media Analysis                      Due Thursday 1/30		
F 1/31	Children & Advertising	Textbook: Chapter 7 Textbook: Chapter 18 Austin, et al. (2006). Benefits and costs of Channel One in a middle school setting and the role of media-literacy training. <i>Pediatrics</i> , 117, e423-e433.
Online #3                      Advertising comprehension analysis; Captive Audience                      Due Thursday 2/6		
F 2/7	Educational/prosocial media	Rasmussen, et al. (2016). Relation between active mediation, exposure to Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood, and US preschoolers' social and emotional development. Radesky, J. S., & Christakis, D. A. (2016). Increased screen time: Implications for early childhood development and behavior. <i>Childhood Development &amp; Behavior</i> , 63(5).
Online #4                      Educational media analysis                      Due Thursday 2/13		

F	2/14	Sex & Relationships	<i>Sex, Sexuality, and the Media</i>
<b>F</b>	<b>2/21</b>	<b>Exam #1</b>	
F	2/28	Media and stereotypes	<p>Coyne, et al. (2016). Pretty as a princess: Longitudinal effects of engagement with Disney princesses on gender stereotypes, body esteem, and prosocial behavior. <i>Child Development</i>, 1-17.</p> <p>Smith, S. L., &amp; Choueiti, M. <i>Gender inequality in cinematic content? Females on screen &amp; behind-the-camera in top-grossing 2008 films</i>.</p> <p>Martins, N., &amp; Harrison, K. (2012). Racial and gender differences in the relationship between children's television use and self-esteem: A longitudinal panel study. <i>Communication Research</i>, 39, 338-357.</p>
Online #5		Mickey Mouse Monopoly	Due Thursday 3/5
F	3/6	Violence & Fear	<p>Textbook: Chapter 8</p> <p>Harrison, K. (1999). Tales from the screen: Enduring fright reactions to scary media. <i>Media Psychology</i>.</p>
F	3/13	OSU Spring Break: No Class Meeting	
F	3/20	Food & Body	<p>Perloff, R. M. (2014). Social media effects on young women's body image concerns: Theoretical perspectives and an agenda for research. <i>Sex Roles</i>, 71, 363-377.</p> <p>Harrison, K. &amp; Hefner, V. (2014). Virtually perfect: Image retouching and adolescent body image. <i>Media Psychology</i>, 17, 134-153.</p>

Online #6	Food marketing Ted Talk	Due Thursday 3/26
F 3/27	Teens, media, social media, mental health and well-being	<p>Vossen, H. G. M., &amp; Valkenburg, P. M. (2016). Do social media foster or curtail adolescents' empathy? A longitudinal study. <i>Computers in Human Behavior</i>, 63, 118-124.</p> <p>Hoge, E., Bickham, D., &amp; Cantor, J. (2017). Digital Media, Anxiety, and depression in children. <i>Pediatrics</i>, 140.</p>
Online #7	Generation Like	Due Thursday 4/2
F 4/3	Media & Family Relationships; Media literacy	<p>Textbook: Chapter 13 (ML)</p> <p>Textbook: Chapter 16</p> <p>Kildare, C. A., &amp; Middlemiss, W. (2017). Impact of parents mobile device use on parent-child interaction: A literature review. <i>Computers in Human Behavior</i>, 75, 579-593.</p>
Online #8	Media Protective Strategy Analysis	Due Thursday 4/9
F 4/10	<b>Exam 2</b>	
F 4/17	Content Pitch—Student Presentations	

\*Course Schedule subject to change. Please see posted version on Canvas for most up-to-date information. Announcements will be made in class regarding any changes.