POL 326-01: Media and Politics, Fall 2018
Prerequisites Required: POLI 101 or Permission from Instructor
Mon/Wed/Fri 1pm-1:50 pm, Maybank Hall Room 111
Professor: Karyn Amira, amiraka@cofc.edu
Office: Poli Sci. Dept. Room 301, Office Hours: M/W 2-4

Course Description and Student Learning Outcomes: This course is designed to familiarize students with the history, function and impact of media in American politics. The objectives of this course are for students to be able to (1) analyze the influence of mass media on political institutions and the public (2) critically examine the concepts of objectivity and bias (3) demonstrate the ability to assess diverse perspectives on the importance of media and its role in democracies. These learning outcomes will be assessed in the assignment on framing, the response papers and the final compare and contrast term paper. Much of the course has been updated to accommodate the shocks to the media brought on by the 2016 election.

Attendance and Participation Policy: Attendance and participation counts towards 20% of your grade. THAT MEANS THIS IS A DISCUSSION BASED CLASS. Attendance will be recorded in the beginning of the course, per the school’s policy.

Readings and Reading Responses: Most days have readings but some do not. Make sure to check the week’s reading schedule. Readings (all of which are posted to Oaks) will come from a mix of online articles, books chapters and scholarly journals. There is no textbook because citizens in the real world don’t get their news and information from textbooks. It is crucial that you come to class having read the assigned materials and prepared to discuss them. Before reading anything, note the date it was published and who wrote it. Google the author and media outlet it came from. This will get you into the habit of critically examining sources.
All students must write three reading responses, each worth 10 points. You may write a response to any of the readings with an asterisk * next to them. Responses are to ensure that students are doing the readings and thinking critically about them. Each response must be 3-5 pages double spaced. See separate instructions.

Term Paper: Students will write term paper in which they compare and contrast two different news sources (to be cleared by me in advance) and their coverage of President Trump. You will follow these sources throughout the semester. More detailed instructions will be presented in the first few weeks of class. This final paper is due in class and online on the last day we meet.

Grading Scale for Final Semester Grades
100-94 A  79-77 C+  63-60 D-
93-90 A-  76-74 C  59-0 F
89-87 B+  73-70 C-  69-67 D+
86-84 B  67-64 D

Grading Breakdown:
15 points – Framing Assignment
20 points – Participation & Attendance
30 points – Response papers (3 papers, 10 points each)
35 points - Compare and Contrast Paper
Late Assignments, Incompletes, Extensions and Make-Up Exams: Late assignments will be docked 5 percent per day (half letter grade), for each day that a project is late (including weekends). I will not grant incompletes in the course, except in cases of emergency or where university policy applies. Doctor’s notes are expected for medical excuses if you are turning in an assignment late. PLEASE NOTE THAT GIVING ME A DOCTORS NOTE SAYING YOU CAME TO THE DOCTOR THE DAY THE ASSIGNMENT WAS DUE IS NOT AN EXCUSE. Your medical situation must overlap with the assignment in a meaningful way.

Office Hours: Having trouble? Have questions? Come on by. I promise it will be helpful. Email me to schedule a time to meet.

Laptop Policy: No laptops in class. *Groooannnn*. Trust me, you will learn more.

Syllabus Policy: I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus if necessary.

Course Evaluation Statement: You will have the opportunity to evaluate the course towards the end of the semester through an online evaluation system.

Extra Credit: Students will have the opportunity to earn 2 points of extra credit by attending on campus events listed on OAKS. More details to come.
ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Wed Aug 22 Introduction and Course Overview
  • No reading

Friday Aug 24 Understanding the American Political System and the 2016 Election
  • As Journalists Face Constant Attacks from the White House, Teaching News Literacy Gets Harder: https://www.chronicle.com/article/As-Journalists-Face-Constant/244167
  • The Onion: Let Me Explain why Miley Cyrus was our Top News Story This Morning: http://www.theonion.com/blogpost/let-me-explain-why-miley-cyrus-vma-performance-was-33632

Monday Aug 27 History of the Media, Modes of Communication I
  • No reading

*Wed Aug 29 Modes of Communication II and Functions of the Media
  • Call-In Political Talk Radio: A Report from the Annenberg Public Policy Center.
    o Read the Executive Summary, Political Talk Radio and its Audiences.
    o Skim the Content and Audiences of Political Talk Radio, Mainstream Print Media's Portrayal of Political Talk Radio
  • Listen to the first 25 minutes of the Rush Limbaugh Show: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NzZqs6_bRA
  • The Voices in Blue America’s Head: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/22/magazine/the-voices-in-blue-americas-head.html

*Friday Aug 31 Models of the Media, Ownership and Regulation I

Monday Sept 3 Ownership and Regulation II, Gatekeeping I
  • No reading

*Wed Sept 5 Gatekeeping II
  • Stuart Soroka, “Gatekeeping Function” (this is a real academic study)

Friday Sept 7- PROFESSOR OUT OF TOWN- NO CLASS

Monday Sept 10 Informational Bias I
  • The Case Against the Media by the Media: http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2016/07/case-against-media.html

Wed Sept 12 Informational Bias II and Ideological/Partisan Bias I: How We Study It
  • No reading
*Friday Sept 14 Ideological and Partisan Bias II: What Studies Show
  • Reading TBD

*Monday Sept 17 Ideological and Partisan Bias III: Third Parties
  • Virginia’s Invisible Candidate: News Coverage of the Virginia 2013 Gubernatorial Campaign (real academic study)

*Wed Sept 19 Ideological and Partisan Bias IV
  • Herman and Chomsky, “Manufacturing Consent” Preface and Chapter 1

*Friday Sept 21 The Other Side of Bias: False Balance

*Monday Sept 24 Media Effects: Framing
  • Nelson, Clawson, Oxley, “Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Conflict” (real academic study)

Wed Sept 26 Media Effects: Agenda Setting
  • No reading

Friday Sept 28 Media Effects: Priming

*Monday Oct 1 Elections I: Primaries
  • The Gamble- Chapters 1 and 3

*Wed Oct 3 Elections II: Primaries continued
  • The Gamble- Chapter 5 (listed as 2 parts in OAKS. Read both of them)
  • How the Media Covered the 2012 Primary Campaign
    http://www.journalism.org/analysis_report/frames_campaign_coverage

*Friday Oct 5 Elections III: Primary 2016
  • How the Media Covered the 2016 Presidential Primary: http://shorensteincenter.org/pre-primary-news-coverage-2016-trump-clinton-sanders/

*Monday Oct 8 Elections IV: General Elections
  • The Gamble- Chapter 7
**Wed Oct 10** **Elections V: General Elections 2016 Trump v. Clinton**

- **FRAMING ASSIGNMENT DUE TODAY**

**Friday Oct 12** **Political Ads I**

- *Stephen Ansolabehere et al, “Do TV Attack Ads Subvert the Political Process?”*

**Monday Oct 15** **Political Ads II**

- *Goldstein and Ridout: Measuring the Effect of Political Ads (til pg. 215)*

**Wed Oct 17** **Institutions: The Presidency I**

- No reading

**Friday Oct 19** **Institutions: The Presidency II**

- McClellan, “Deniability” (McClellan was G.W. Bush’s White House Press Secretary)

**Monday Oct 22** **Institutions: The Presidency III- Trump**


**Wednesday Oct 24** **Institutions III: Congress and the Supreme Court**


**Friday Oct 26** **Reporting Extraordinary Events**

- *The Media Fall Into a Pattern with Coverage of Mass Shootings: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/media-fall-into-pattern-with-coverage-of-mass-shootings/2015/12/03/ab5001e6-9a09-11e5-94f0-9ecaff906ef3_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/media-fall-into-pattern-with-coverage-of-mass-shootings/2015/12/03/ab5001e6-9a09-11e5-94f0-9ecaff906ef3_story.html)*

**Monday Oct 29** **Foreign Policy and Events**

- No reading

**Wednesday Oct 31** **Foreign Policy: Iraq War Case Study**

- McClellan, “Selling the War”
*Friday Nov 2 Media Systems in Other Countries: China
  • Gary King, Pan and Roberts, “Censored” real academic study

Monday Nov 5 FALL BREAK- NO CLASS

Wed Nov 7 Muckraking
  • Appuzo & Goldman, “With CIA Help, NYPD Moves Covertly In Muslim Areas”

Friday Nov 9 Filler Day
  • I am leaving one filler day in case we want to delve deeper into a topic we’ve been covering or vote on an additional topic.

*Monday Nov 12 Social Media I: Major Moments
  • Why Twitter is the Medium of the Movement:
    http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1905125,00.html
  • Iran’s Twitter Revolution was Exaggerated:
    http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jun/09/iran-twitter-revolution-protests
  • Watch the Kony 2012 video here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4MnpzG5Sqc and then read this:

*Wed Nov 14 Social Media II: Elections
  • Juliet Eilperin: “Here’s how the First President of the Social Media Age…”

Friday Nov 16 Social Media III: Other Forms of Politics
  • No reading

*Monday Nov 19 Social Media IV: Polarization Effects
  • Reading TBD

Wed Nov 21 THANKSGIVING- NO CLASS
Friday Nov 23 THANKSGIVING- NO CLASS

*Monday Nov 26 “Fake News”
  • How Fake News Goes Viral: A Case Study
  • Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election
*Wed Nov 28 “Fake News” II

- Don’t Ban Alex Jones: https://www.nationalreview.com/2018/08/alex-jones-social-media-ban-threatens-free-speech/

Friday Nov 30 Humor and Politics I

- Baym, “The Daily Show and the Reinvention of Political Journalism”
- Charlie Hebdo’s Defiant Muhammad Cover Fuels Debate on Free Speech: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/14/world/europe/new-charlie-hebdo-has-muhammad-cartoon.html?_r=0

Monday Dec 3 Humor and Politics II and Class Wrap-Up

- FINAL PAPER DUE TODAY

COURSE POLICIES

Disabilities Accommodation Statement:

1. Any student eligible for and needing accommodations because of a disability is requested to speak with me during the first two weeks of class or as soon as the student has been approved for services so that reasonable accommodations can be arranged.

2. The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should apply for services at the Center for Disability Services/SNAP located on the first floor of the Lightsey Center, Suite 104. Students approved for accommodations are responsible for notifying me as soon as possible and for contacting me one week before accommodation is needed.

3. This College abides by section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you have a documented disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see an administrator at the Center of Disability Services/SNAP, (843) 953-1431 or me so that such accommodation may be arranged.

Academic Honesty Statement:

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are related more to a misunderstanding will handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student’s file.
Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student's transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The F is permanent. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration--working together without permission-- is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others’ exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance.

Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at: http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honorsystem/studenthandbook/index.php

Center for Student Learning

I encourage you to utilize the Center for Student Learning’s (CSL) academic support services for assistance in study strategies, speaking & writing skills, and course content. They offer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, study skills appointments, and workshops. Students of all abilities have become more successful using these programs throughout their academic career and the services are available to you at no additional cost. For more information regarding these services please visit the CSL website at http://csl.cofc.edu or call (843)953-5635.