
POLI 307 Politics and the Media

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point, Spring 2018

Instructor:	Dr. Saemyi Park
Class Location & Time:	CCC 224 & W 4:00PM-6:30PM
Instructor's Office:	CCC 468
Office Hours:	W 10:00AM-2:00PM & by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to provide an understanding of the role of the media in the political system. The news media are sometimes called the fourth branch of government as they become a central feature of modern representative democracy. We explore the history of news media in the United States, the evolution of federal regulations on mass media, the process of news-making and news-reporting, the relationship between news audience and news organizations, the roles of media in political campaigns, the media effects and media biases, and the emerging importance of social media in American politics.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES & ASSESSMENT

Student Learning Outcomes at the end of this course,	Course Topics	Evaluation of Outcomes
Students should be able to:	The following topics will address this outcome:	This outcome will be evaluated primarily by:
Recognize the fundamental role of the media in the U.S.	"Information, Deliberation & Democracy" "History, Ownership & Media Regulation"	Midterm examination Film Analysis Paper I
Comprehend how news organizations decide what to report and how to report	"News-Reporting & News-Making" "The Media Marketplace"	Midterm examination Film Analysis Paper I Final Paper
Analyze the interaction of the news media and politicians/campaigns	"Media and the Campaigns" "Media Coverage of Congress & the Courts"	Midterm examination Film Analysis Paper II Final Paper
Understand and explain the effects of the news media on the public	"Media Effects" "Media Bias" "Going Public"	Final examination Final paper
Identify challenges and changes in the modern information age	"Foreign Affairs Coverage" "Social Media"	Final examination Film Analysis Paper II

REQUIRED READINGS

There is no textbook for students to purchase. Readings are assigned for each week's topic. All readings will be uploaded to the course website at D2L. It is students' responsibility to complete the assigned readings BEFORE the class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

	Weight	Due Date
Midterm Exam	20%	March 21 (W)
Final Exam	20%	May 18 (F)
Film Analysis Paper I	10%	March 14 (W) by 11:59PM
Film Analysis Paper II	10%	May 2 (W) by 11:59PM
Final Paper	20%	May 16 (W) by 11:59PM
Class Activity	20%	Every class
Total:	100%	

Note: students must complete ALL the required work in order to be eligible to receive a passing grade in the course. **You do NOT have the option to "take a zero" on an assignment.** Not completing all the required work will result either in a final grade of incomplete until the work is submitted or an F for the course. You are NOT allowed to submit and complete the required course assignments late unless you receive my permission to do so. Students with serious illness or family emergencies may be considered to be given for late submission, but I will need to see an official evidence to verify the seriousness of the situation.

GRADING SCALE

Grades will be determined according to the university's standard scale. I have incredibly high standards for my grades. If you meet the basic requirements for an assignment, you will get a C. If you want a A or B, you need to go above and beyond the exact requirements for an assignment. For individual assignments, I will define the A-F grade base in the following way:

Criteria						
Outstanding	A	93-100	A-	90-92		
Above average	B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82
Average	C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72
Below average	D+	67-69	D	63-66	D-	60-62
Unsatisfactory	F	Below 60				

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

A. Exams (20% per each exam)

You have online exams in this course. The mid-term exam will be given online on March 21 (W). It will contain material covered in the first part of the course. The final exam will be given online on May 18 (F). It will NOT be cumulative, and questions will cover the second half of the course. The exam will be open at 9AM and close at 11:59PM on each scheduled date. You will be given two hours to take the test. Once you start taking the test, you are NOT allowed to take a break for return. **Because it is an online exam that is open for a day, students would not have a make-up exam opportunity for whatever reasons.** The format of exams is a combination of multiple choice and short identification questions. I will distribute a study guide a week prior to the exam day.

Note: If you are required to attend the university-sponsored activities (athletic games etc.) or if you are seriously ill and incapable of taking the exam, I may consider you to take the test early or late. However, you must provide an official document to prove your excuse and I reserve the right to determine if you will be given the make-up exam opportunity or not. Make-up exam is all short identification essays, which is a lot harder for students to do well on it. And, you will take it on the final day of class in my office (in case for the university-sponsored activities) or on the date I chose to give you.

B. Film Analysis Paper (10% per each paper)

You will analyze two documentaries shown in class in light of the lecture materials and assigned readings for this course. You are free to write on any topic related to politics and the media addressed in the documentaries, as long as they are able to incorporate and demonstrate your thorough understanding of the different assigned course readings. A separate worksheet will be distributed in class for more details. You have two weeks to complete this assignment after watching the film in class.

C. Class Activity (20%)

In every class, you will be assigned class activity after we discuss the topic and cover the readings. Activities include small group discussion, debate, news ombudsman role-play, the one-minute paper, the press conference simulation, and more. Your contribution and completion to each activity will be graded. Please be aware that there will be no make-up opportunity for the missed class activity unless you are excused for the legitimate reasons. Students with serious illness or family emergencies may be considered to be given, but I will need to see an official evidence to verify the seriousness of the situation. Please remember that students are NOT allowed to have more than one make-up opportunity for the missed class activity. Because we meet only once per week, it is your own benefits to attend every class so that you can get the best out of it.

D. Final Paper (20%)

You will write a 3-4 page paper (1,500-2,000 words; single-spaced) comparing and contrasting news content across organizations. In this paper, you will describe the characterizations of news organizations, differences and similarities in news coverages, media biases in each outlet, and the possible impact of these stories to public opinion. A good paper makes a close connection to course materials. Incorporation of class materials into your paper is a key for this assignment. A separate worksheet will be distributed in class.

COURSE POLICIES

A. Readings

Students are required to complete each week's required readings BEFORE that lecture. You need to bring assigned readings and lecture notes to each class.

B. D2L

I maintain a page for this course at the D2L site. The site contains copies of some of the material distributed in class (this syllabus, for example), outlines of class material, the separate worksheet for the group oral presentation, and many more. You must check this site before every class.

C. Lectures

Before we begin a topic in class, I will post an outline of the lecture material on the course website. The outline for a topic will remain on the website for a day or two after we finish a topic and will then be removed. The outlines give you the framework of the lecture but do not give you the entire script. If you wish, you can print these outlines and bring them with you to class to use as a base for note taking. You will learn and remember better when you write things down yourself. Regarding note taking, make sure you take notes that will be meaningful to you later when you are reviewing your notes, rather than focusing only on transcribing the slides verbatim.

D. Office Hours

Feel free to drop by during my office hours or make an appointment to see me. I WELCOME students.

E. Attendance Policy

We only meet once per week. Thus, regular and prompt attendance, active participation, and mature attentiveness during meetings are MANDATORY. I will NOT distribute lecture notes via

e-mail for students who miss a lecture. The student is responsible for finding out what he/she missed and obtaining class notes or assignments from someone else in the class. **A student who has FOUR or MORE absences will automatically receive an “F” for the course for inadequate class attendance.**

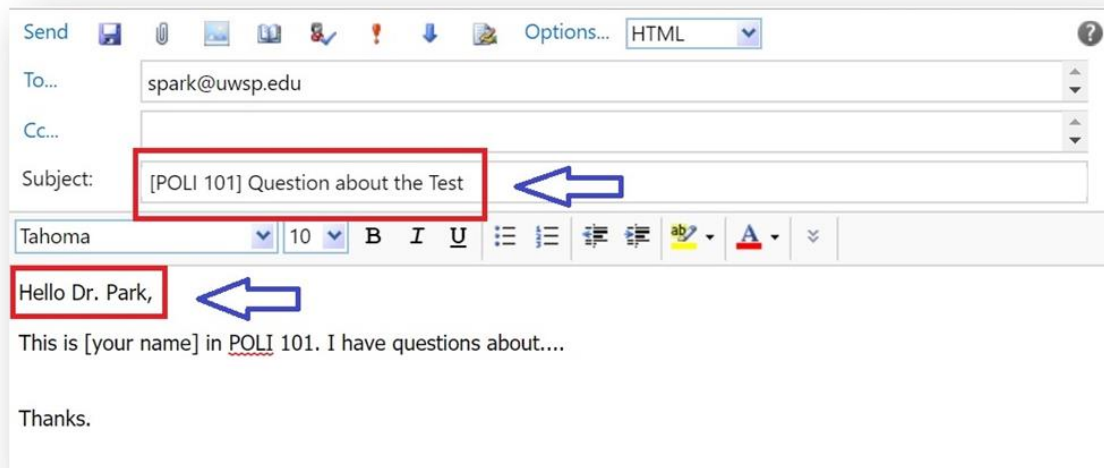
It is also expected that you will be on time for class. Three tardies are the equivalent of one absence. In the unlikely event that you are late for class, it is YOUR responsibility to let me know that you came in immediately after class. Otherwise, your tardy will be recorded as an absence. It is also your responsibility to keep track of how many absences and tardies you have accumulated. The instructor reserves the right to determine whether an absence should be recoded depending upon the amount of time a student is present during a class meeting. This policy will be revised as needed.

Excusable Exceptions

- Documented participated in school-sponsored activities
- Religious holiday
- Note: *evidence/document is required to submit at the beginning of the semester.*

F. Email Communication

Email is a convenient way to continue contact between professor and student outside of class. Email is best for 1-2 sentence responses, and conceptual questions do not lend themselves well to email. If you have any questions regarding your papers, please visit my office hours for in-depth consultation. I will NOT consult on your written assignment via email. While students should take advantage of this email communication opportunity with me, you should also do so in a professional manner. I will NOT reply to emails that do not include a salutation (“Dear Prof. ...” or “Hello Dr. ...”).



I will also NOT respond to emails that ask for answers to questions that can easily be found on the syllabus or the lecture notes. If you have a question regarding lectures or assigned material that you just cannot seem to master, then ask a question in class, or come to me during office hours. I will only respond to questions about coursework or academic requirements, and I will not respond to questions of a personal nature. I will be able to respond your email during weekdays (not weekend), but please email me again if you do not receive my response within 48 hours.

G. Honesty:

Any instance of academic misconduct will be taken seriously and may result in failure of the course. Misconduct will result in notification to the Dean of Students. If you are having a problem, it is much better to talk to me about it. Do not struggle by yourself. I want you to learn and do well in this course, not punish you with a lower grade. Talk to me if you are having a problem so I can try to help you work out a solution.

H. Ground Rules

This course is open to a variety of ways of interpreting history, theories, and policies. Students are encouraged to share their questions and ideas in lecture. Since there will be differences and disagreements, students are expected to show respect to the comments and positions of fellow students and me. Also, using a cell phone, iPad, or laptop is NOT allowed in class.

The Course Calendar

(Topics, readings, and schedule subject to announced change by instructor.)

Topic	Tentative Dates	
Introduction	1/24	
Information, Deliberation, and Democracy	1/31	
History, Ownership, and Media Regulation	2/7	
News-Making & News-Reporting	2/14	
The Media Marketplace	2/21	
Film Presentation I	2/28	Deadline: March 14 (W)
Media and the Campaigns	3/7	
Media Coverage of Congress and the Courts	3/14	
Midterm Exam	3/21	
Spring Break (No Class)	3/28	
Foreign Affairs Coverage	4/4	
Going Public: Governing through the Media	4/11	
Film Presentation II	4/18	Deadline: May 2 (W)
Media Effects	4/25	
Media Bias	5/2	
Social Media	5/9	
Final Paper	5/16	
Final Exam	5/18	

The List of Assigned Readings

Information, Deliberation, and Democracy

- Benjamin Page, "Public Deliberation and Democracy" in *Who Deliberates: Mass Media in Modern Democracy*
- Robert Entman, "The Dilemma of Journalism: Democracy without Citizens" in *Democracy without Citizens: Media and the Decay of American Politics*

History, Ownership, and Media Regulation

- Doris Graber and Johanna Dunaway, "Ownership, Regulations and Guidance of Media" and "Press Freedom and the Law" in *Mass Media and American Politics*

News-Making & News-Reporting

- Doris Graber and Johanna Dunaway, "News-Making and News-Reporting Routines" in *Mass Media and American Politics*

The Media Marketplace: Where Americans Get the News

- Shanto Iyengar, "The Media Marketplace: Where Americans Get the News" in *Media Politics: A Citizen's Guide*
- Pew Research Center, "State of the New Media: Data and Trends about Key Sectors in the U.S. News Media Industry." [[Link](#) at D2L]

Media and the Campaigns

- Shanto Iyengar, "Campaigning through the Media" in *Media Politics: A Citizen's Guide*
- TBA

Media Coverage of Congress and the Courts

- Doris Graber and Johanna Dunaway, "Media Coverage of Congress and the Courts" in *Mass Media and American Politics*

Foreign Affairs Coverage

- Doris Graber and Johanna Dunaway, "Foreign Affairs Coverage" in *Mass Media and American Politics*
- TBA

Going Public: Governing through the Media

- Shanto Iyengar, "Going Public" and "The Consequences of Going Public" in *Media Politics: A Citizen's Guide*

Media Effects

- Dietram Scheufele and David Tewksbury (2007) "Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects Models," *Journal of Communication* 57, 920
- Iyengar and Simon (1993), "News Coverage of the Gulf Crisis and the Public Opinion: A Study of Agenda-Setting, Priming, and Framing," *Communication Research*

Media Bias

- Coe et al (2008), "Hostile News: Partisan Use and Perceptions of Cable News Programming" *Journal of communication* 58, 2
- Iyengar and Hahn (2009), "Red Media, Blue Media: Evidence of Ideological Selectivity in Media Use" *Journal of Communication* 57, 19

Social Media

- Hunt Allcott and Matthew Gentzkow (2017) "Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 31(2)
- NPR "Did Social Media Ruin Election 2016?" [[Link](#)@D2L]