SYLLABUS
Mass Media & Politics
University of Central Florida
SPRING 2015

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Office Location: Outside Hall-CB1-120

Class Meets: Tuesday/Thursday 3pm-4:15pm
Room: CB1-120
Course: POS 3235

POS 3235 COURSE DESCRIPTION

Influence of media on campaigns, public officials, public opinion, the definition of political news, and selected public policies. **Course Credit Hours: 3 ~ Pre-requisites: POS 2041or CI**

MAJOR TOPICS/CONCEPTS/SKILLS/ISSUES

- Evolution of the Media in Politics
- Print, Broadcast, Cable, Satellite, and Internet/Social Media
- News: Journalism, Entertainment, Conflict, Investigative
- Agenda Setting
- Media Coverage of Campaigns and Elections
- The Media: Foreign Policy Initiatives and Coverage of War
- Government in the Sunshine
- Constitutional Protection of a Free Press, Federal Communications Commission
- Government's Use of the Media
- Censorship: Prior Restraint and Free Speech Protection

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS & REGULARLY RESEARCHED WEBSITES

Darrell M. West. 2013. Air Wars 1952-2012. 6th Edition. CQ Press
ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, Fox News, CNN, Washington Post, Washington Times, New York Times, New York Post, Drudge Report, Orlando Sentinel, WESH, WKMG, WFTV, FOX35, Huffington Post, Rush Limbaugh

STUDENT PREPARATION & EVALUATION

Students who enroll in this course are expected to demonstrate maturity, responsibility, professionalism, respect for differing viewpoints, and a general understanding of the relationship between government and the media.

Class meetings will follow a combination lecture/discussion format. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss assigned reading from the text reading and to meet other course requirements outlined in your syllabus. Lectures, discussions, and guest speaker presentations will not always parallel text material. Exam material will include subjects covered in class as well as text reading assignments which may not be covered in class.

Class attendance and participation will impact your final grade. The evaluation method: ***Meaningful Participation in each class***=Excellent/Above Average; ***Occasional Participation***=Average; ***Little or No Participation*=**Below Average/Failing. Participation grades will be assigned based on the student's contributions throughout the semester.

Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide notification from the **Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)** and discuss specific needs with the instructor, ***during the first two weeks of class***.

Audio/Video recording of any portion of the class and/or posting of comments made by students and the instructor is strictly prohibited and will be considered a violation of privacy rights. This includes social media websites, including but not limited to: YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Blogs, and news media.

UCF *KNIGHTS E-MAIL* COMMUNICATION, CLASS ANNOUNCEMENTS

UCF uses e-mail as the official means of notifying students of important university business. Every student must register for, and maintain a Knights E-mail account at *http://www.knightsemail.ucf.edu* and check it regularly. Throughout the semester, I will send important information to your assigned Knights E-mail account.

I will not discuss or share any class or grade information through the Internet unless you send a specific written request to me through your UCF account. I will only discuss course content and performance through your assigned UCF student account. Non-UCF based e-mails are automatically deleted without being read.

UCF does not accept responsibility if official communication fails to reach a student who has not registered for, or maintained and checked on a regular basis, their Knights E-Mail account.

ATTENDANCE POLICY-*UNEXCUSED ABSENCES*

Attendance is expected and will contribute to course grades. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. Five (5) points will be deducted from the attendance grade for ***each*** scheduled class that is missed throughout the semester. Students who arrive late to class or leave before class is dismissed will be counted as absent. ***Students who arrive late or are absent on the day a guest speaker is in class will lose ten (10) points.***

ATTENDANCE-*QUIZZES & WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS*

Students may be given unannounced quizzes and written assignments that will not be given on a make-up basis. **If you are not in class on the day a quiz or written assignment is given, you will receive a zero (0) for that quiz.**

Late papers are not accepted. **Quiz/Papers not turned in by the deadline will earn a zero (0) grade.**

If you believe that you might be sick the day your paper is due, experience printer problems, or encounter traffic problems, it is your responsibility to turn your paper in early, prior to the deadline.

Electronic submissions are not accepted and will be deleted. Papers may not be turned in by other students.

ATTENDANCE-*CELLULAR PHONES, PAGERS, AND IPOD POLICY*

All iPods, iPads, iPhones, cellular phones, pagers, and electronic recording devices must be turned off or placed on a silent mode and out of sight during class. **If you leave during class to answer a silent page or call please do not return as these interruptions are rude and disruptive to the learning process.** Students who fail to comply with this rule will be asked to leave the classroom, receiving a grade of "0" toward their participation grade. If there is an emergency situation warranting the silent mode use of a cell phone during class, notify me in writing prior to class.

STUDENT CONDUCT & ACADEMIC BEHAVIOR STANDARDS

Students are subject to federal and state laws and local ordinances as well as regulations prescribed by the University of Central Florida and the Florida Board of Governors. The breach or violation of any of these laws or regulations may result in disciplinary action. Detailed conduct regulations and procedures are presented in *The Golden Rule*.

The University of Central Florida is committed to a policy of honesty in academic affairs. Conduct that comprises a breach of this policy may result in academic action and/or disciplinary action. Academic action affects student assignments, examinations or grades. Disciplinary action affects student enrollment status. Examples of conduct for which students may be subject to academic and/or disciplinary penalties including expulsion are:

~Cheating, whereby non-permissible written, visual, electronic or oral assistance including that obtained from another student is utilized on examinations, course assignments, or projects. The unauthorized possession or use of examination or course related material shall also constitute cheating.

~Plagiarism, whereby another's work is used or appropriated without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own. Any student failing to properly credit ideas or materials taken from another has plagiarized.

~Commercial Use of Academic Material: Selling notes, handouts, etc. without authorization or using them for any commercial purpose without the express written permission of the University and the Instructor is a violation of this rule.

Note: A student who has assisted another in any of the aforementioned breach of standards shall be considered equally culpable. In cases of cheating or plagiarism, the instructor may take appropriate academic action ranging from loss of credit for a specific assignment, examination, or project to removal from the course with a grade of "F."

Note: The primary responsibility for managing the classroom environment rests with the professor.

Students who display disruptive behavior that detracts from the learning experience of other students will be asked to leave the classroom.

GUEST SPEAKER SERIES

Students will have an opportunity to enhance their knowledge of the relationship between the mass media and government by listening to professionals who will share their experiences and by asking questions of our guest speakers. Students are expected to show respect to guest speakers. ***Class etiquette when Guest Speakers are present will play a major role in your Attendance/Participation grade***.

VIDEO SERIES

Students will view actual news events highlighting historical moments in politics between 1960 and 2009 and how the media covered those events, including: Presidential campaigns and elections, the Civil Rights Movement, 9/11, Foreign Policy, Scandal, Political assassinations, the Iraq War, and NASA.

EXAMS

Another portion of the course grade will be determined by the student's performance on four exams (3 regular exams and 1 Final Exam). Each exam will consist of term/concept identification and essay topics. The exam schedule can be found on the tentative assignment sheet. Students will take exams in the classroom. Graded Exams will be returned during class. The Final Exam will cover Unit 4 material and will also be a comprehensive evaluation of each student's knowledge and understanding of the course. Any student not taking the final exam will earn a final grade of "F".

There will be no early exams allowed unless arrangements are made with the instructor at least one week prior to the scheduled exam. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor if a medical emergency situation or family death arises ***prior to an exam***. Failure to notify the instructor **prior** to the missed exam will result in a zero (0) grade on the exam. **There will be no make-up exams given if proper documentation of the above situation is not provided.** Make-up exams will be given at the instructor's convenience. **There will be no make-up Final Exams**.

In addition to the cellular phone/pager attendance policy, STUDENTS WHO BRING THEIR CELLULAR PHONES and/or PAGERS TO CLASS ON EXAM DAY AND OPENLY DISPLAY THEM DURING THE EXAM WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE THE ROOM. IN ADDITION, A GRADE OF "0" WILL BE ASSIGNED FOR THAT SCHEDULED EXAM. Students who bring their cellular phones and/or pagers to class on exam dates must turn them off and keep them out of sight during the exam.

COURSE GRADES

Final Course grades will be determined by:

-Attendance/Participation/Guest Speaker series (25%)
-Quizzes/Written Assignments (25%)
-Mid Term Exam (25%)
-Final Exam (25%)

The average will be evaluated on the following scale:

92 - 100 = A
90 - 91 = A-
88 - 89 = B+
82 - 87 = B
80 - 81 = B-
78 - 79 = C+
72 - 77 = C
70 - 71 = C-
68 - 69 = D+
62 - 67 = D
60 - 61 = D-
0 - 59 = F

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Students may withdraw from a class and receive the notation of "W" until the date noted in the "Academic Calendar" online at *http://www.registrar.ucf.edu/calendar/academic*. A student may withdraw from courses using myUCF at *https://my.ucf.edu*, or by visiting the Registrar's Office (MH 161), certain college advising offices, or a Regional Campus records office. Students seeking to withdraw in person must sign the request and must provide photo identification. The official date of withdrawal is the date the University receives the withdrawal request. Withdrawing from classes may have financial aid, NCAA eligibility or international visa consequences. Students should seek appropriate advisement prior to withdrawing from a class. The **Withdrawal Deadline** is: **MARCH 24, 2015.**

A student is not automatically withdrawn from a class for not attending, nor can an instructor withdraw a student from a class. No withdrawal is permitted after the deadline except in extraordinary circumstances. Unsatisfactory academic performance is not an acceptable reason for withdrawal after the deadline.

OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday/Thursday: 2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Student area outside CB1-120
Tuesday/Thursday: 5:45 p.m. – 6:15 p.m. Student area outside CB1-120

Changes in the syllabus and/or schedule may be made at anytime during the term by announcement of the professor. It is your responsibility to stay informed of any changes.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

CLASS	TOPIC	RESEARCH TO BE CONDUCTED
1/13		Class introduction-Overview of Semester
& 1/15	Casey Anthony/George Zimmerman	Guilty? Not Guilty? Tried & convicted in the Media, acquitted by jury
1/20	Race	Students are required to research how the Media covers race issues and
& 1/22	Gay Rights	Gay Rights-Tolerance versus Free Speech Rights
1/27	Immigration	Illegal Immigration, Fed/State Responsibility, Amnesty, Political
& 1/29		Motivation by Democrats and Republicans, Voting Rights-Electorate
2/3	2nd Amendment	School, Mall, Government Installations, Chicago shootings
& 2/5	Abortion	From "Murder" to "A Woman's Right To Choose" to Kermit Gosnell
2/10		**Unit 1 Exam-Race, Immigration, 2nd Amendment, Abortion, Gay**
& 2/12		**Rights**
	Terrorism	What is the role of Media and Government? ISIS and Current Events
	Video Presentation	***A Day In The Life of 9/11-CBS News: 60 Minutes II***
2/17		***No Class - Students are encouraged to research upcoming topics***
& 2/19	*Video Presentation*	***Democracy Under Pressure: Mass Media & Politics 1960-2008***
2/24	War	Afghanistan and Iraq-Presidents Bush & Obama
& 2/26	*Guest Speaker*	**Greg Dawson: Hiding In The Spotlight**
3/3	Foreign Policy	Media coverage and influence in Foreign Policy decisions
& 3/5		Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Russia, Ukraine, Crimea, Central America
		Unit 2 Exam - Covers Terrorism, War, and Foreign Policy
3/10		***Spring Break Holiday – No classes***
& 3/12		
3/17	*Election Campaign Unit*	**Air Wars 1952-2012** (**Darrell West textbook**)
& 3/19		
3/24	Scandal	Richard Nixon, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama
& 3/26	Vice Presidents	Quayle, Gore, Cheney, and Biden
3/31	Affordable Care Act-ObamaCare	Should the Federal Government mandate the purchase of insurance?
& 4/2		
4/7	State & Local News Coverage	Do local government leaders get the same scrutiny as state and national
& 4/9		leaders? Taxes, Schools-Common Core, Crime
4/14	Kirkwood, Ferguson, Orlando	Does the Media have an obligation to serve as a watchdog for minority
& 4/16		areas that are targeted for Eminent Domain for public venues.
4/21	*Video Presentation*	**Investigative News Reporting of State & Local Government**
& 4/23		
4/30		***Final Exam-Covers Elections, ObamaCare, State & Local Issues***
		THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2015 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.