POS 3235-0001 (18247), Mass Media and Politics

Spring Term 2019 Syllabus

(January 7 – April 30)

(Traditional/ Lecture Course Format)

(Tuesday & Thursday, 3:00 P.M. – 4:15 PM., HEC (0119)

(3 Credit hours)

Part 1: General Course Information.

Instructor: Alvin (AJ) Quackenbush

Email: alvin.quackenbush@ucf.edu

Office Hours: Spring 2019, Howard Phillips Hall, Room 302N

Phone: (407) 823-0012

Tuesday and Thursday, 10:50 AM. – 11:50 AM.

Political Science Department Office: Howard Phillips Hall, Room 302

Phone: (407) 823-2608

Website: http://politicalscience.cos.ucf.edu/

Required Materials:

1. "Mass Media and American Politics," Graber and Dunaway, 10th ed., ISBN: 9781506340234.

Course Description: (3 Credits)

Influence of media on campaigns, public officials, public opinion, the definition of political news, and selected public policies. Prerequisite(s): None.

Introduction:

Welcome to Media and Politics. Above all, news media has a profound influence on American society and politics. The study of American politics as it exists in the 21st century, thus, requires an examination of the role of media in framing political debate and legitimizing local, national, and international issues. Essentially, this media-focused course emphasizes the ways in which news media shape everything we know about politics. Like all journalism disciplines today, political journalism is rapidly changing with the Internet. A significant portion of the course will be dedicated to new media and how online reporting and social networking has altered the current political landscape.

Learning Outcomes and Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

• Recognize the fundamental role of media in shaping the public's perception of politicians, the government, and the political structure.

• Understand the importance of the Internet and new media in the modern information age and the profound effect it has on media coverage, campaigns, and privacy.

• Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of certain media sources and develop ways to ascertain the validity of information from media sources.

• Identify how political figures are affected by the media and ways in which political figures respond to, influence, or even manipulate news coverage.

• Critique the ways in which films and television programs establish political identity and establish a framework for societal interaction and discussion.

• Understand the differences in media coverage of the three branches of government.

• Apply different mass media theories to describe how important media issues are developed or framed.

• Understand media ownership and media regulation, as well as the diminishing freedoms of the press in our capitalist, democratic society.

Part 2: Classroom Policies.

Attendance: Regular class attendance is expected. There is a direct correlation between class attendance and overall success in the course. From time to time attendance will be taken and students who are present will receive a small amount of extra credit that will be added to their test scores. Furthermore, all instructors/faculty are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the following academic activity by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid. There will be a 10 point syllabus quiz due on Friday, January 11th during the first week of the semester to ensure student attendance in the course.

Tardiness: Students are expected to be on time for class. Students who are tardy disrupt other students and the overall learning environment, so tardiness is not acceptable. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, *etc*., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

Email: It is the policy of this professor to communicate with you via UCF email or the Webcourses message system. Failure to check for e-mail messages will not be accepted as an excuse for missed work.

Cell Phone**:** Students are required to turn off all cell phones and electronic devices before the beginning of class because they can disrupt the learning environment. This means no text messaging! If a cell phone vibrates or is audible, the student may be asked to leave for the remainder of the class. If there is an emergency situation warranting the use of a cell phone during class time, the student must notify the professor in writing prior to the beginning of class. During a testing situation, if a cell phone vibrates or is audible, the student's test or examination will be collected and the student will be asked to leave without an option for completion.

Laptop Computers: Students may use their laptop, tablet, or "mini-computer' (smart phone) during class to take notes or to access the Internet for research. A student who uses this freedom in an inappropriate fashion may be asked to leave the class for that day or to turn off their laptop or phone. Furthermore, laptop computer use is only permitted in the first five rows of the class seating. Students who wish to use a laptop in class are encouraged to arrive early to obtain a front row seat.

Part 3: Assignments.

1. Syllabus Quiz: There will be a 20 point syllabus quiz due on Friday, January 11th during the first week of the semester to ensure student attendance in the course.

2. Tests: There will be four in-class tests during the semester and your lowest test score will be dropped. The tests will consist of a variety of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer

type questions. Any student not completing a test will receive 0 of those possible points, and this will impact the final average in the course. **Late Work Policy**: The tests must be taken on or before the date indicated in the syllabus. Again, no makeup tests are available without the explicit consent of the instructor, which shall only be granted in cases of documented emergences. All make up tests will be short answer and essay format only.

3. Final Examination: The final exam in this course is cumulative and the date is listed in the schedule on the course syllabus. The test will consist of a variety of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer type questions. Any student not completing the examination will receive 0 of those possible points, and this will impact the final average in the course. **Late Work Policy**: The final exam must be taken on or before the date indicated in the syllabus. Again, no makeup exams are available without the explicit consent of the instructor, which shall only be granted in cases of documented emergences. All make up exams will be short answer and essay format only.

4. Written Assignment: During the semester you will be required to write one short research paper. The assignment will be type written and will be at least 2000 words (based upon the word count in Microsoft word) not including titles and work cited. Papers that do not meet the minimum word count will be severely penalized. The paper assignment will be posted on webcourses during the semester with specific details. The due date will be included in the assignment and is listed in the course schedule at the bottom of the syllabus. Keep in mind that it is your responsibility to make sure that your paper is attached correctly. No late papers will be accepted for any reason.

   *The University Writing Center (UWC) offers writing support to students from first-year to graduate in every discipline. Below is more information about the center.

   University Writing Center
   Colbourn Hall 105
   Satellite Locations: Main Library, Rosen Library, Online
   407-823-2197

   http://uwc.cah.ucf.edu

All graded materials in this course will be returned individually only by request. You can access your scores at any time using the Grades section of Webcourses@UCF. Please note that scores returned mid-semester are unofficial grades.

Part 4: Basis for Grade.

Evaluation: Your grade will be determined by grades on a syllabus quiz, 4 Tests (your lowest test score will be dropped), 1 Written Assignment and 1 Final Examination.

1 Syllabus Quiz: 20 points, (3%)

4 Tests: 100 points each (300 total, (45%))

1 Written Assignment: 150 points, (22%)

1 Final Exam: 200 points, (30%)

670 Total Points

Grading Scale:

90 - 100 = A

80 - 89 = B

70 - 79 = C

60 - 69 = D

59 and below = F

Part 5: University Policies.

University Policies: The UCF Golden Rule Student Handbook is at http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/ and UCF policies and procedures can be found at http://policies.ucf.edu/.

Withdrawal Policy: Withdrawal for each term begins after "Late Registration and Add/Drop" ends. Students may withdraw from a class and receive the notation of "W" until the date noted in the "Academic Calendar" of the *Schedule Web Guide*. A student may withdraw from courses using myUCF at https://my.ucf.edu, or by visiting the Registrar's Office (Millican Hall 161), certain college advising offices, or a Regional Campus records office. For a complete policy more information on withdrawals please go tohttps://www.academicservices.ucf.edu/

Student Code of Classroom Conduct: UCF is dedicated not only to the advancement of knowledge and learning, but is concerned with the development of responsible personal and social conduct. By enrolling at the university, a student assumes the responsibility for becoming familiar with and abiding by the general rules of conduct. The primary responsibility for managing the classroom environment rests with the professor. Students who engage in any prohibited or unlawful acts that result in disruption of a class may be directed by the professor to leave the class. Violation of any UCF policies/procedures or classroom rules may lead to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University. Disciplinary action could include being withdrawn from the class, disciplinary warning, probation, suspension, expulsion, or other appropriate and authorized actions. So, act mature, treating others with respect, verbally or online. The UCF Student Code of Conduct is in the current Student handbook and more information can be found at http://osc.sdes.ucf.edu/.

Ethics: As reflected in the UCF creed, integrity and scholarship are core values that should guide our conduct and decisions as members of the UCF community. Plagiarism and cheating contradict these values, and so are very serious academic offenses. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the university. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the University's Rules of Conduct (see http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu/).

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism: Plagiarism and Cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an "F" for that assignment (and may, depending on the severity of the case, lead to an "F" for the entire course) and may be subject to appropriate referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. See the UCF Golden Rule for further information. I will assume for this course that you will adhere to the academic creed of this University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, don't cheat by giving answers to others or taking them from anyone else. I will also adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, so please do not ask me to change (or expect me to change) your grade illegitimately or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

Turnitin.com: In this course we may utilize turnitin.com, an automated system which instructors can use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you may be expected to submit assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as an instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process, visit http://www.turnitin.com (Links to an external site.).

Religious Observances: Students are expected to notify their instructor in advance if they intend to miss class to observe a holy day of their religious faith. For a current schedule of major religious holidays, see the Faculty Center's main web page under "Calendars," and for additional information, contact the Office of Diversity Initiatives at 407-823-6479.

Course Accessibility: It is my goal that this class be an accessible and welcoming experience for all students, including those with disabilities that may impact learning in this class. If anyone believes the design of this course poses barriers to effectively participating and/or demonstrating learning in this course, please meet with me (with or without a Student Accessibility Services (SAS) accommodation letter) to discuss reasonable options or adjustments. During our discussion, I may suggest the possibility/necessity of your contacting SAS (Ferrell Commons 185; 407-823-2371; sas@ucf.edu) to talk about academic accommodations. You are welcome to talk to me at any point in the semester about course design concerns, but it is always best if we can talk at least one week prior to the need for any modifications.

In-Class Recording Policy: Outside of the notetaking and recording services offered by Student Accessibility Services, the creation of an audio or video recording of all or part of a class for personal use is allowed *only* with the advance and explicit written consent of the instructor. Such

recordings are only acceptable in the context of personal, private studying and notetaking and are not authorized to be shared with *anyone* without the separate written approval of the instructor.

Deployed Active Duty Military Students**:** Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

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

Part 6: Campus Safety Statement.

Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise during class, everyone needs to work together. Students should be aware of their surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- In case of an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.
- Every UCF classroom contains an emergency procedure guide posted on a wall near the door. Students should make a note of the guide's physical location and review the online version at <http://emergency.ucf.edu/emergency_guide.html>.
- Students should know the evacuation routes from each of their classrooms and have a plan for finding safety in case of an emergency.
- If there is a medical emergency during class, students may need to access a first-aid kit or AED (Automated External Defibrillator). To learn where those are located, see <http://www.ehs.ucf.edu/AEDlocations-UCF> (click on link from menu on left).
- To stay informed about emergency situations, students can sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to <https://my.ucf.edu> and logging in. Click on "Student Self Service" located on the left side of the screen in the toolbar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on the Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert", fill out the information, including e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK."
- Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class.
- To learn about how to manage an active-shooter situation on campus or elsewhere, consider viewing this video (<https://youtu.be/NIKYajEx4pk>).

Part 7: Course Schedule.

Spring 2019, January 7 – April 30, Traditional Course Format

Course Schedule: (UCF Calendars are at http://calendar.ucf.edu/2019/spring)

All the dates and assignments listed below are tentative and can be changed at the discretion of the professor with proper notification via UCF email.

Week 1: (January 7 - 13), **Drop Refund Deadline January 10.**

Syllabus Quiz due by 5:00 pm, on Friday, January 11.

Chapter 1, Media Power and Government Control.

Week 2: (January 14 – 20)

Chapter 2, Ownership, Regulation, and Guidance of Media.

Week 3: (January 21 – 27), **Holiday- January 21 – MLK.**

Chapter 3, Press Freedom and the Law.

Week 4: (January 28 – February 3)

Chapter 4, Media and Politics in the Changing Media Landscape.

Test 1: Thursday, January 31. Chapters 1 – 4.

Week 5: (February 4 – 10)

Chapter 5, News-Making and News-Reporting Routines.

Week 6: (February 11 – 17)

Chapter 6, The Media as Policy Makers.

Week 7: (February 18 – 24)

Chapter 7, The Struggle for Control: News from the Presidency.

Week 8: (February 25 – March 3)

Test 2: Tuesday, February 26. Chapters 5 – 7.

Chapter 8, Media Coverage of Congress and the Courts.

Week 9: (March 4 – 10)

Chapter 9, State and Local News.

Week 10: (March 11 – 17), **Spring Break.**

Week 11: (March 18 – 24), **March 20 - Withdrawal deadline.**

Chapter 10, Foreign Affairs Coverage.

Week 12: (March 25 – 31)

Test 3: Tuesday, March 26. Chapters 8 – 10.

Chapter 11, Media Influence on Attitudes and Behavior.

Week 13: (April 1 - 7)

Chapter 12, Elections in the Digital Era.

Written Assignment 2: Due Sunday, April 7.

Week 14: (April 8 - 14)

Chapter 13, Incivility, Negativity, and Bias in the Media.

Week 15: (April 15 – 21)

Chapter 14, Current Trends and Future Generations.

Test 4: Thursday, April 18. Chapters 11 – 14.

Week 16: (April 22 – 30), **Study Day- 4/23 – no classes.**

Final Examination: Thursday, April 25, 1:00 P.M. – 3:50 P.M. Chapters 1 – 14.