

POSC 4371-101  
 Marquette University  
 Media and Politics in the United States  
 Spring 2016  
 MW 2 – 3:15

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Course Objectives:

This course will explore the role of the media in American politics, especially the influence of the media on Americans' political attitudes, beliefs, and behavior. Particular attention will be paid to the relationship between the media, the public, and government, including the formation of public policy. The course will also examine the historical evolution of the media's role in politics and theories about its current practice and influence.

Upon completing the course students will be able to identify and explain the role of the media in a democratic society. Students will also be able to identify the main theories explaining the media's influence on public opinion. In addition, students will be able to gather information from credible sources and express their ideas using clear, logical prose.

Required Books:

*Media Politics: A Citizen's Guide*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Shanto Iyengar and Jennifer A. McGrady, W.W. Norton & Company, 2007.

Other readings will be available on D2L.

Course Requirements:

10 quizzes	30%
news analysis	30
final take-home exam	25
Attendance/Participation	15

Quizzes

There will be frequent quizzes on the reading material. The cumulative weight of quizzes is VERY significant for the final grade so staying current on class readings is worthwhile. Missed quizzes cannot be made up unless you have made arrangements PRIOR to the quiz date – no exceptions. Quizzes will be a mixture of T/F and short answer. Low quiz will be dropped.

### News Analysis

Each student will be conducting a news analysis on an issue of their choice. This involves following media coverage of an issue in a variety of sources over a period of time, and writing an essay summarizing and analyzing your findings. Specific requirements will be distributed in class. Also, in addition to the hard copy of the essay that is turned in to the instructor, students are required to electronically submit their essays to D2L. The News Analysis is due Monday, November 21. Papers are marked down one letter grade for every day they are late.

### Final Examination

Students must select two essay questions from a list of several. Essay questions will be comprehensive in addressing major issues and questions covering the entire semester. Any student who has a 94 or better average at the end of the semester will be exempt from the final exam.

### Participation

Students are expected to do the readings before each class and contribute regularly to class discussion. Participation will be evaluated not simply on the quantity of class participation, but whether the participation reflects knowledge and understanding of course readings. Students are required to present one course reading during the semester. These will not be graded separately, but are considered an element of the participation grade.

### Attendance

Attendance is expected at each class, and a sign-in sheet will be provided at each class meeting. Do NOT sign in for classmates if they are absent. Signing someone else's name in their absence will be treated as academic dishonesty. If a student misses 6 or fewer classes during the semester attendance will not factor for the final grade at all. If a student misses more than 6 classes a grade of WA (Withdrawal-Excessive Absences) can be assigned.

The Marquette University Undergraduate Attendance Policy (revised in June 2011) states the following:

“Students are responsible for attending all class meetings for courses in which they are registered. Any absence, regardless of the reason, prevents students from getting the full benefit of the course and as such, no distinction is made between excused and unexcused absences, with the following exceptions:

1. Absences resulting from legal obligations (such as jury duty).
2. Absences resulting from university sanctioned activities and related travel.”

The Policy also states “the Marquette University Student Health Service does not provide documentation of illness, or of a visit to the Student Health Service. Likewise, college and other university offices (e.g., Office of the Dean, Counseling Center and Student Affairs) do not provide documentation of an absence on behalf of the student.”

In cases of excessive absences, the Marquette Undergraduate Attendance Policy will be followed. “For courses in which attendance is regularly taken, an instructor or college office may withdraw a student from a course due to excessive absences and assign a grade of WA (Withdrawn-Excessive Absences)...**Students who miss more than 6 classes in a 3 credit course that meets 50 minutes, 3 times per week, will be considered to have excessive absences and may be assigned a WA.**”

Those who are involved in university sanctioned activities should submit a schedule of anticipated absences within the first 2 weeks of class, and also come talk to the instructor well in advance of any other university sanctioned activity that will result in a missed assignment/quiz/exam.

### Academic Dishonesty

Any incidents of academic dishonesty, such as cheating, dishonest conduct, or plagiarism will be punished to the fullest extent allowed by Marquette University policy.

### **Grading Scale:**

93-100	A
88-92	A/B
83-87	B
78-82	B/C
73-77	C
69-72	C/D
61-68	D
60 and below	F

### Course Schedule

Wed., Jan. 20 – Course Introduction

Mon., Jan. 25 – Overview of Media and Politics in the U.S.  
*Media Politics*, “Image is Everything” Ch. 1

### **Topic 1 –The Press and the Democratic Process**

Wed., Jan. 27 – The Role of the Media in Politics  
*Media Politics*, “The Press and the Democratic Process” Ch. 2 pp. 19-28  
The Political Medium Shapes the Message,” Jeremy Mayer (D2L)

#### **Quiz #1**

Mon, Feb. 1 – Media Ownership and Regulation  
*Media Politics*, “The Press and the Democratic Process” Ch. 2 pp. 28-47  
“The Wall Street Journal under Rupert Murdoch,” 7/20/11 <http://www.journalism.org/2011/07/20/wall-street-journal-under-rupert-murdoch/>  
“Net Neutrality Prevails in Contentious FCC Vote,” *Scientific American*, 2/26/15  
<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/net-neutrality-prevails-in-contentious-fcc-vote/>  
“Fairness Doctrine: History and Constitutional issues,” Congressional Research Service, 2011 (D2L)  
Federal Communications Commission Ruling on Equal Time Rule, 5/8/2014 (D2L)  
“Conclusion: Confronting Market Failure,” *America’s Battle for Media Democracy: The Triumph of Corporate Libertarianism and the Future of Media Reform*, Victor Pickard, 2014 (D2L)

Wed., Feb. 3 - Press Freedom

- “Terrorism, Censorship, and the First Amendment,” (D2L)
- “Julian Assange and the New Wave,” *The Economist*, 7/2011 (D2L)
- “Government Phone Surveillance for Dummies,” *The Atlantic*, June 2013 (D2L)
- “Legislative Protection of News Sources: the Constitution Privilege and its Limits,” *Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press* (D2L)

## Media Effects Research and Theory

Mon, Feb. 8 – News and Public Opinion

- Media Politics*, “News and Public Opinion” Ch. 8
- “Models of Media Influence” (D2L)
- “What you know depends on what you watch: Current events knowledge across popular news sources,” Fairleigh Dickinson University, 2012 <http://publicmind.fdu.edu/2012/confirmed/>
- Quiz #2**

Wed., Feb. 10 – Media Consumption and Knowledge

- “The Daily Show Effect: Candidate Evaluations, Efficacy, and American Youth,” *American Politics Research*, Baumgartner and Morris, 2006 (D2L)
- “Say it With Pictures,” *Annals AAPSS*, Doris Graber, 1996 (D2L)
- “Not All News Sources Are Equally Informative: A Cross-National Analysis of Political Knowledge in Europe,” Martin Fraile and Shanto Iyengar, *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 2014 (D2L)

Mon., Feb. 15 - The Media and the Public: Two Views

- From *The Phantom Public*, Walter Lippmann, 1925 (D2L)
- “Early History of Propaganda,” Noam Chomsky, 1991 (D2L)
- News Analysis Topic Due**

Wed., Feb. 17 - Propaganda v. Public Information

- U.S. government video on nuclear disaster – in class
- Quiz #3**

Mon., Feb. 22 - Elites and the Media

- “The Question of the Elite Domination of Public Opinion,” John Zaller (D2L)
- “Political Extremism is Supported by an Illusion of Understanding,” Fernbach, et al, *Psychological Science*, 2013 (D2L)
- “When Scientists Politicize Science,” *Cato*, Roger A. Pielke, Jr., Spring 2006
- “Communicating Science in Politicized Environments,” *National Academy of Sciences*, Arthur Lupia, 8/12/2013 (D2L)

## Topic 3 – The News Process

Wed., Feb. 24 - - Where Americans get the News

- Media Politics*, “The Media Marketplace” Ch. 3, pp. 51-64
- <http://www.journalism.org/2015/06/01/millennials-political-news/>
- <http://www.wired.com/2015/07/facebook-twitter-really-people-get-news/>
- <http://www.journalism.org/2015/04/29/state-of-the-news-media-2015/>

Mon., Feb. 29 – What gets Reported

*Media Politics* Ch. 3, pp. 65-89

“A \$34 Million Waste of the Taxpayers’ Money in Afghanistan,” NPR -

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2013/07/11/201195870/a-34-million-waste-of-the-taxpayers-money-in-afghanistan> - listen to audio before class

“Big Fee’s for the Big Easy’s Poorest Defendants,” *National Public Radio*, 5/20/14

<http://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=314293287> (we’ll listen in class.)

“Infant Mortality Rates heading in Wrong Direction,” Karen Herzog, *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 6/3/14 (D2L)

“Now we know who tried to gut Open Records Law,” George Stanley, *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 8/1/15 (D2L)

#### **Quiz #4**

Wed., Mar. 2 - Indexing the News

*Media Politics*, “Reporters, Official Sources, and the Decline of Adversarial Journalism”

Ch. 4, pp. 93-98

Mon., Mar. 7 – National Security Media Coverage and Official Journalism

*Media Politics*, Ch. 4 pp. 99-111

“The Real War will never get on Television,” (D2L)

“Bradley Manning: Patriotic Whistle-Blower or American Traitor,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, 6/15/13 (D2L)

“Snowden and a Muzzled Free Press,” *CNN*, 7/3/13 (D2L)

#### **Quiz #5**

Wed., Mar. 9 - Modern Journalism as a Profession

“What about the New? An Interest in the Public,” *Will the Last Reporter Please Turn out the Lights: The Collapse of Journalism and what can be done to fix it*,” Michael J. Copps, 2011 (D2L)

“A Surfeit of Crises: Circulation, Revenue, Attention, Authority, and Deference,” *Will the Last Reporter Please Turn out the Lights: The Collapse of Journalism and what can be done to fix it*,” Todd Gitlin, 2009 (D2L)

Speaker, TBA

#### **List of Articles for News Analysis Due**

Mon., Mar. 14 - - Movie “Network”

Wed., Mar. 16 - - - Movie “Network”

#### **Quiz #6**

**MARCH 17 – 28, NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK**

### **Topic 4 – Campaigning through the Media**

Wed., Mar. 30 - Strategies for Managing the Press

*Media Politics*, “Campaigning through the Media” Ch. 6 pp. 148-159

*Media Politics*, “New Media, New Forms of Campaigning,” Ch. 5

Mon., Apr. 4 – Advertising

*Media Politics*, Ch. 6 pp. 160-180

“In Defense of Negativity,” John Geer (D2L)

**Quiz #7**

Wed., Apr. 6 - Campaign Finance

*Media Politics*, “Campaigning through the Media” Ch.6 pp. 181-186

“Outside Group Campaign Advertising – The Money behind the Advertising Story,” League of Women Voters (D2L)

Trevor Potter on The Colbert Report – video in class

**News Analysis Due**

Mon., Apr. 11 – Candidates and Communication Skills

*Media Politics*, Campaigning through the Media,” Ch. 6 pp. 186-190

“McKinley’s Front Porch Campaign,” William Harpine (D2L)

**Quiz #8**

Wed., Apr. 13 - Do Campaigns Matter?

*Media Politics*, “Campaigns that Matter” Ch. 9

Campaign Ad Day!

## **Topic 5 – Governing through the Media**

Mon., Apr. 18 - Going Public

*Media Politics*, “Going Public” Ch. 7, pp. 195-222

“House GOP August Plan: Hate on Washington,” *Roll Call*, 7/22/13 (D2L)

“Democrats, too, Plan to Slam Washington in August,” *Roll Call*, 7/30/13 (D2L)

“The Presidential Spectacle,” *The Presidency and the Political System*, Bruce Miroff (D2L)

“Managing the Message,” *Managing the President’s Message: The White House Communications Operation*, Martha Joynt Kumar, 2010 (D2L)

Wed., Apr. 20 – The Consequences of Going Public

*Media Politics* Ch. 10

“Going Public in Perspective: What should the President do?” *On Deaf Ears: The Limits of the Bully Pulpit*, George C. Edwards III, 2003 (D2L)

**Quiz #9**

Mon., Apr. 25 - Blurring the Line between Media and Policymakers

“Beyond TV Analysts: Pentagon’s Hidden Hand,” David Barstow, *NYT*, 4/20/2008 (D2L)

“One Man’s Military-Industrial-Media Complex,” David Barstow, *NYT*, 11/30/2008 (D2L)

“NBC Report on *NY Times*’ five Pulitzers Ignores Military Analysts Report,” *MediaMatters.org*, 4/21/2009 (D2L)

Wed., Apr. 27 – “The Control Room” documentary in class

Mon., May 2 – “The Control Room” documentary in class

“Questioning the Al Jazeera Effect” (D2L)

**Quiz #10**

Wed., May 4 - Evaluating Media Politics  
*Media Politics* Ch. 11 in its entirety

**TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM DUE IN WWP 484 ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 11 AT 1 PM**

