Course Description: This course takes a broad view assessment of the historic interaction between the US news media and the American political system. After looking at the theoretical role of the media in the American democracy, the course will also address the following themes: how the media influences politics; the American media in comparative perspective; the historical development of the American media with special focus on its influence on iconic historic moments; the political economy of the media; party polarization and the media; the media and foreign policy; the new media and politics; fake news and the future of the media in 21st century politics.

Highly Recommended: Daily reading of one of the following: on the left: New York Times, Washington Post; on the right Wall Street Journal, Fox News, Breitbart. Also highly recommended is any political comedy you can find.

Attendance: All students are permitted 2 unexcused absences. Unexcused absences in excess of the two allotted will result in failure of the course. The course is a seminar course and thus will focus around class discussion. Attendance subsequently is crucial to the functioning of the class.

Class Participation: Students are expected to come to class prepared and ready to discuss the assigned readings. Students will not be docked for their lack of participation but will be rewarded for their thoughtful and active contributions to class discussion. Class participation will make up 10% of your grade.

Course Requirements: In order to attain a passing grade for the class, all students must attend class regularly; participate in class discussion; complete one 5-7 page paper on the media’s influence on a particular issue (of your choice); and complete two take home exams.

Grade Breakdown

Paper (detailed instructions forthcoming) – 20%
First Take Home Exam 30%
Second Take Home Exam 40%
Class Participation 10%
Course Schedule/ Reading Assignments:

**Week 1 – Definitions and Concepts**

**Monday, August 28 - Introduction – Go over syllabus/ expectations**

**Wednesday, August 30**


**Friday, September 1 – Class Canceled – Attending Conference**

**Week 2 – Definitions/ Concepts continued**

**Monday, September 4 – Labor Day – No Class**

**Wednesday, September 6**


**Week 2 (cont’d) – How Media Influences Politics**

*What the media choose and how they choose to report it*

**Friday, September 8 –**

Bennett, “Ch. 5: How Journalists Report the News”

**Week 3 - Agenda setting and Selection Bias and Priming**

**Monday, September 11 –**

Wednesday, September 13-

Bennett, “Ch. 6: Inside the Profession: Objectivity and the Political Authority Bias”

Friday, September 15


Week 4- News Media in Comparative Perspective

Monday, September 18 –

Daniel Hallin and Robert Giles, “Presses and Democracies” – Chapter 1 in The Press – Geneva Overholser

Wednesday, September 20


Friday, September 22 (Paper Assignment Due)


Week 4- Government and Media

Monday September 25 –


Wednesday, September 27


Friday, September 29


Week 5 – Political Economy of the media and does it matter

Monday, October 2
Bennett, The Political Economy of the News – Chapter 7 in The Politics of Illusion

**Wednesday, October 4**


**Friday, October 6**


**Week 6: - History of Media**

**Monday, October 9**


**Wednesday, October 11**


**Friday, October 13**

Alexis de Tocqueville in Key Readings in Journalism

**Week 7 - Monday, October 16**

The Legacy of Roosevelt’s Press Relations – Chapter 12 in FDR and the News Media

**Wednesday, October 18**

Aniko Bodroghkozy, “Network News in the Civil Rights Years. The Chosen Instrument of the Revolution” – Chapter 1 in Equal Time: Television and the Civil Rights Movement

**Friday, October 20**
Melvin Small, “The Media and Oppositional Movements” Chapter 2 in Covering Dissent: The Media and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement

**Week 8 - Monday, October 23**


**Emergence of TV**

**Wednesday, October 25**

Iyengar, Shanto - Is anyone responsible: how television frames political issues

**Friday, October 27**


**Week 9 - Party Polarization and the growth of partisan media**

**Monday, October 30**

Mark Prior, “Media and Political Polarization” (2013)

**Wednesday, November 1**

Natalie Jomini Stroud, “Polarization and Partisan Selective Exposure”

**Friday, November 3**

Bryan Hardin Thrift, “Conservative bias: how Jesse Helms pioneered the rise of rightwing media and realigned the Republican Party”

**Week 10 - Media and Foreign Policy**

**Monday, November 6**

Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky. “Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media” in Key Readings in Journalism

**Recommended**: Eric Herring and Piers Robinson, “Too Polemical or Too Critical? Chomsky on the study of the news media and US foreign policy”

**Wednesday, November 8**
Piers Robinson, “Theorizing the Influence of Media on World Politics: Models of Media Influence on Foreign Policy”

Friday, November 10


*Week 11 - Emergence new media –*

*Monday, November 13*

Citizen journalism/online journalism

Matthew Hindman, “Blogs: The New Media Elite”

*Social Media*

*Wednesday, November 15*

Cindy Vincent and Sarah Straub, “Redefining Politics: How are Social Media Changing the Political Game,” in Social Media and Politics: A New Way to Participate in the Political Process; ed. Glen W. Richardson

*Friday, November 17*

Bernadette Barker-Plummer and David Barker-Plummer. “Hashtag feminism, digital media, and new dynamics of social change: a case study of #YesAllWomen” in Social Media and Politics: A New Way to Participate in the Political Process; ed. Glen W. Richardson

*Week 12 - Monday, November 20*


*Wednesday, November 22*


*Friday, November 24 – No Class – Thanksgiving*

*Week 13 - Monday, November 27*
**New Media v. Old Media**

Natalie Fenton “Drowning or Waving? New Media, Journalism and Democracy”
https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/15016502/drowning_or_waving.pdf

Sachin Kamdar. “5 Differences between Old and New Media”
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sachin-kamdar/5-differences-between-old_b_9670634.html

**Wednesday, November 29**

**Fake News**

Ellen Hunt. “What is Fake News? How to Spot It and What You Can Do to Stop It”
https://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/dec/18/what-is-fake-news-pizzagate

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/0/fake-news-origins-grew-2016/

**Friday, December 1**

Hunt Allcott and Matthew Gentzkow “Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election” Journal of Economic Perspectives; Vol. 31; No. 2; Spring 2017: 211-236

**Week 14 – Future of media and its role in the American democratic process**

**Monday December 4**


**Wednesday, December 5**


**Friday, December 8**

Review