Instructor Discussion Section GSIs
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Lectures Tuesday and Thursday 10:00-11:30 296 Denn
Office Hours Wednesday 1:30-3:00 Room 238 Comm Studies, 1225 S. University

Course Description
‘The Media and Public Affairs’ is a rather bland turn of phrase for what is actually a pretty controversial phenomenon of human communication—the use of narratives and images in the mass media to persuade, brainwash, entertain, propagandize, motivate, inform and generally try to get people to think a certain way about public (and private) events. We inherited this formal course title (and it looks better on your transcript than ‘Brainwashing 361’) so we’ll go with the flow.

This intermediate course is designed to pick up where Comm 101 and 102 left off, and it is a sister-course to 381. We will take up four of the topics introduced in 101 and 102 and dig in a little deeper and also give you the chance to think about some common themes that cut across these topics. The underlying issues addressed include: political communication, news, public information campaigns, advertising entertainment and the advent of new digital media— which draws attention to technical character of the media and their various capacities to persuade and cajole.

Course Readings
Students will be expected to complete all the assigned readings. There are three required texts and a required coursepack available at Excel Test Prep 1117 S University. New and used copies of the required texts are available in quantity from amazon.com with delivery usually in a few days. There are also specialized reading assignments for each of the group project assignments.


Required Writing
Writing is an integral part of this ULWR course. Students will be required to complete various writing assignments throughout the semester, including two position papers and two group projects. Each position paper will react to a selected issue from the readings and lectures and take an advocacy position in the tradition of an op-ed piece. Details about the writing assignments will be reviewed in lectures discussed in section.

Examinations
There are two exams administered as part of regularly scheduled lecture periods. The purpose of the exams and papers is to provide students some feedback on how they are progressing and to evaluate academic achievement.

Attendance
Regular attendance is key to academic success in this course. Lectures, discussion sections, and readings are designed to complement each other. Please note that information covered only in lectures and sections will appear on the exams.

Grading
The course grade will be based on following components:

- Individual Position Paper 1: 15%
- Individual Position Paper 2: 15%
- Group Project 1: 10%
- Group Project 1: 10%
- Exam 1: 15%
- Exam 2: 25%
- Class Participation 10%

Course Policies
- If a student cannot complete an assignment or take an exam at the scheduled time, arrangements must be made in advance with the instructor. Failure to do so will result in the reduction of one grade level from the earned grade. Exemptions may be made for unusual circumstances.
- This class will follow University and LS&A guidelines concerning scholastic misconduct and grievance procedures. www.lsa.umich.edu/swc/mainmenu.html will provide further information on policies and penalties for plagiarism and academic dishonesty.
- The Department requires registered students to attend the first two lectures and the first discussion section. Students who fail to attend any of these meetings will be DROPPED from the course. This procedure will create additional room for students on the waitlist.
Course Schedule

Introduction: Models of Mass Communication

Week 1 (T)  9/2  (Introduction)
Week 1 (Th)  9/4

Topic I: The Public Sphere

Week 2 (T)  9/9
Michael Schudson *Discovering the News* (1978) entire

Week 2 (Th)  9/11

Week 3 (T)  9/16
Coursepack: George Orwell “Thought Police”
Coursepack: William Gamson “Talking Politics”

Week 3 (Th)  9/18

Week 4 (T)  9/23
Coursepack: Bruce Bimber “Information and American Politics”
Group Project 1 due in Section

Week 4 (Th)  9/25

Topic II: That’s Entertainment

Week 5 (T)  9/30

Week 5 (Th)  10/2

Week 6 (Tu)  10/7  [no lecture today]
Week 6 (Th)  10/9

Week 7 (T)  10/14
Muriel Cantor “The Hollywood TV Producer” (1971)

Week 7 (Th)  10/16

Week 8 (T)  10/21  [no lecture Fall Study Break]

Week 8 (Th)  10/23  In-class Quiz
Topic III: The Advertising Game

Week 9 (T) 10/28
Coursepack: Michael Schudson “The Advertiser’s Perspective”
Individual Position Paper 1 due in Section

Week 9 (Th) 10/30

Week 10 (T) 11/4
Coursepack: Joseph Turow “Breaking Up America”

Week 10 (Th) 11/6

Topic IV: The Digital Age

Week 11 (T) 11/11
Group Project 2 due in Section
Lawrence Lessig Code (2006) (entire)

Week 11 (Th) 11/13

Week 12 (T) 11/18

Week 12 (Th) 11/20

Week 13 (T) 11s/25
Coursepack: WR Neuman “The Logic of Electronic Integration” (1991)

***Thanksgiving Break***

Week 14 (T) 12/2
Individual Position Paper 2 due in Section

Week 14 (Th) 12/4

Week 15 (T) 12/9 In-class exam
Comm 361 Supplemental Readings for Group Projects

Group I Projects – Public Sphere Case Studies
(presentations due in section date TBA)


2. The Nazi Propaganda Machine 1933-1945

3. The Leftist Critique of the American Media System

4. The Popularity of Right-Wing Talk Radio
Group II projects – Entertainment and Advertising Case Studies
(presentations due in section date TBA)

1. The Value of Violence

2. Measuring Star Power

3. The Long Tail

4. How Effective is Advertising, Really?