Media Uses and Effects
Journalism & Mass Communication 019:090 – Fall 2011
TTh 9:30-10:20 a.m.; 100 Phillips Hall

Instructor: Prof. Julie Andsager
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Phone: 335-3428

Email: julie-andsager@uiowa.edu
Office hours: T 1:30 to 3, W 1:30 to 3, or by appt.
Website: http://icon.uiowa.edu/

Teaching assistants:

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>e-mail address</th>
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<td>3, 4</td>
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Course objectives:

- To understand historical development and context of mass communication theories and concepts.
- To understand and critique social scientific methods and perspectives.
- To understand basic statistical concepts and their appropriate application.
- To develop basic understanding of persuasion, public opinion, and media effects on audiences.
- To develop ability to make better use of media as thoughtful consumers.

Text:

*Media Effects Research: A Basic Overview (3rd edition)*
By Glenn G. Sparks (2010) – available at Beat the Bookstore (in Old Capitol Center)

Other readings and assigned materials, as noted on the schedule, are available on the Internet at the ICON website and/or in the Journalism Resource Center, located on the 3rd floor of Adler Journalism Building (Room E350).

This course fulfills the General Education Social Sciences elective. GE stated outcomes: Students will examine the strengths and weaknesses of at least one method of inquiry distinctive of the social sciences, and become familiar with its major assumptions, concepts, and ways of formulating questions. Students will learn to evaluate data, generalizations, and hypotheses in the discipline. Students will have the opportunity to practice the methods of the discipline. Students will be given practice in developing positions and supporting their ideas with evidence and reason. [Lectures, exams, discussion sections, and the two papers will develop these outcomes.]

Classroom conduct:
No inappropriate classroom behavior will be tolerated. In this class, “inappropriate behavior” includes talking on cell phones, texting, playing electronic games, surfing the Internet, and talking to other students during class. Turn off ringers and beepers (or anything else that makes noise) before the class starts. If you feel the need to sleep, update Facebook, or read the newspaper, you may as well not come to class.

Attendance is highly recommended in both the Tuesday/Thursday lecture and the Friday discussion section, as much of the material on exams will come solely from class.
**Administrative Home**
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall or see the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

**Electronic Communication**
University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences. *(Operations Manual, III.15.2. Scroll down to k.11.)*

**Academic Fraud**
Plagiarism and any other activities when students present work that is not their own are academic fraud. Academic fraud is a serious matter and is reported to the departmental DEO and to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum. Instructors and DEOs decide on appropriate consequences at the departmental level while the Associate Dean enforces additional consequences at the collegiate level. See the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

**CLAS Final Examination Policies**
Final exams may be offered only during finals week. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. Students should not ask their instructor to reschedule a final exam since the College does not permit rescheduling of a final exam once the semester has begun. Questions should be addressed to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum.

**Making a Suggestion or a Complaint**
Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit the instructor, then the course supervisor, and then the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident. See the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

**Accommodations for Disabilities**
A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet privately with the course instructor to make particular arrangements. See www.uiowa.edu/~sds/ for more information.

**Understanding Sexual Harassment**
Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

**Reacting Safely to Severe Weather**
In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Public Safety website.
Grading:

Total of 580 points possible. Grades will be based on the following:

- 400 pts – four exams, including the final (all exams are worth 100 points)
- 75 pts – original research proposal
- 50 pts – journal article assignment
- 55 pts – short essay responses in discussion sections

This course uses the +/- system. To receive a + on your grade, you must earn at least 7.5% more than the minimum for each grade. For example, a B+ requires 87.5% to 89.9% of points. The – level is for students earning less than 2.6% more than the minimum. A B- requires 80% to 82.5%. B grades fall between 82.5% and 87.5%. Do not assume grades will be rounded up or curved. Your scores on each assignment will be posted on ICON in the gradebook section. You can keep track of the points you earn toward the desired grade on the following scale:

Minimum number of points for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>565.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>536.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>522.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>507.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>478.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>464.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>449.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>420.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>406.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>391.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>362.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>348.0</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>347.9 or below</td>
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Exams:
Each exam will consist of multiple-choice and short-answer items. No make-up exams will be given without an Explanatory Statement for Absence form. Make-up exams should be taken within a week of the scheduled exam.

Exam dates are: Sept. 15, Oct. 13, Nov. 8, and Dec. 13 (the final is at 2:15 p.m., location to be announced). The first three exams are held during regular class time. These dates will not change. Mark your calendar now. The final is not comprehensive.

Exam material will come from textbook readings, lectures (including films), and discussion section. Lectures, discussion, and films will often cover material not included in the textbook.
Assignments:

The Journal Article Assignment and Original Research Proposal must be submitted in two forms:

1) **A hard copy** should be turned into your TA. **You are responsible** for ensuring that your TA receives your paper. If you leave the paper with someone other than your TA or push the paper under the office door, you should email the TA immediately to tell him or her where it is.

2) **An identical electronic copy** of the paper must be uploaded to the ICON website on or before the paper’s due date. Randomly selected hard copies will be compared to the electronic version to ensure they are, in fact, the same paper. If the hard copy doesn’t match the electronic version, it will be considered a form of academic fraud.

*Journal article assignment* – This assignment entails reading a research article about journalism and the media, then answering questions about its purpose, method, findings, and implications. For this assignment, you must read one of the research articles on the list located on ICON – “Media Uses & Effects articles.” More detailed instructions are posted on ICON. All research articles are on reserve in the Journalism Resource Center, E350 AJB.

*Original research proposal* – For this paper, you are to take a current issue in the news and determine how to conduct research on it from a theoretical perspective. (“Current,” for this assignment, means something that has happened since April 2011.) What social scientific theory/perspective might best explain either the media coverage or the potential audience interpretation? Why? What research method would you use to study this? Why? More detailed instructions are posted on ICON.

*Discussion section responses* – Each week, your TA will present a short essay question about the next week’s readings. You are to write a short response – **which must be typed** – and bring it to the next week’s discussion section. Your response should include an original example of the phenomenon in question. The purpose of this is to encourage you to do the readings and prepare in advance for discussion. More details on these and how points are allotted will be included on your discussion section syllabus and posted on ICON.

*Lecture notes*:
The outline of the week’s lecture notes will be posted on ICON by 3 p.m. the following Monday and remain posted until the next Monday. The outline will not contain all information discussed in the classroom, however, so you should not assume that skipping the lectures will allow you to earn a desirable grade on exams. The notes are posted merely for your convenience. You are encouraged to check your own notes against the posted outline to be sure you are getting the main points. You must retrieve the notes within the week they are posted – after they are removed, they will not be e-mailed or otherwise provided.
Tentative schedule:

Check our site on ICON for updates and changes to the schedule below. Read the assignments before the classes each week.

Aug. 23-25 Chapter 1 – scientific approaches

Aug. 30-Sept. 1 Chapter 2 – research methods

Sept. 6-8 continue Chapter 2; Chapter 3 – history of media effects

Sept. 13 diffusion of innovations – reading on reserve at Resource Center and on ICON;
Sept. 15 Exam 1 – chapters 1-3; diffusion reading, lecture/discussion

Sept. 20-22 Chapter 9 – news and political content
journal article assignment due in discussion section, Sept. 23

Sept. 27-29 agenda setting reading; attitudes – on reserve at Resource Center / ICON

Oct. 4-6 Chapter 8 – persuasive effects

Oct. 11 Chapter 4 – time spent with media
Oct. 13 Exam 2 – chapters 4, 8, 9; agenda setting reading, persuasion reading, lecture/discussion

Oct. 18-20 Chapter 5 – violence

Oct. 25-27 effects of media on eating disorders and body image reading; growing up with TV: cultivation processes reading -- on reserve at Resource Center / ICON

Nov. 1-3 Chapter 10 - stereotypes

Nov. 8 Exam 3 – chapters 5, 10; body image reading, cultivation reading, lecture/discussion

Nov. 10 Chapter 6 – sexual content

Nov. 15-17 Chapter 7 – emotion
Original research proposal due in discussion section, Nov. 18

Nov. 22-24 no class – Thanksgiving break

Nov. 29-Dec. 1 Chapter 11 – new technologies

Dec. 6-8 Chapter 12 – McLuhan

Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2:15 p.m. – Exam 4: location to be announced
Exam 4 – chapters 6, 7, 11, 12; lecture/discussion
The Iowa Dozen

The UI School of Journalism and Mass Communication believes that the following knowledge and skills are essential for our majors. We will be incorporating many of these throughout this course, especially those marked by *.

We learn...
- to write correctly and clearly
- to conduct research and gather information responsibly*
- to edit and evaluate carefully
- to use media technologies thoughtfully
- to apply statistical concepts appropriately*

We value...
- First Amendment principles for all individuals and groups
- a diverse global community
- creativity and independence
- truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity*

We explore...
- mass communication theories and concepts*
- media institutions and practices*
- the role of media in shaping cultures

Resources for Students

Writing Center 110 English-Philosophy Building, 335-0188

Speaking Center 12 English-Philosophy Building, 335-0205

Mathematics Tutorial Laboratory 314 MacLean Hall, 335-0810

Tutor Referral Service Campus Information Center, Iowa Memorial Union, 335-3055
Overview
The discussion section is designed to provide students with an opportunity to broaden the understanding of the main ideas and concepts covered in the lecture, textbook, and other readings. The students are encouraged to ask questions pertaining to the lecture and the readings assigned for the week. The students are encouraged to express their own ideas and understanding of the concepts in an open and dialogical communication environment. The discussion section is also the forum for talking about the assignments and reviewing for the tests.

Weekly assignments for the discussion section
In the discussion section TAs will give a short answer question (answer of about 40 words) on the next week’s topic as an assignment that will be due as a hard copy in the next week’s discussion class. The students are not expected to give perfect answers to the questions. Instead, the objective is to make students think critically about the next week’s subject matter. Responses must be typed. These assignments will be taken as a record of your participation in the discussion section. A maximum of five points will be awarded for turning in each weekly assignment and will be used to calculate the final short essay response grade (maximum 55 points).

Attendance policy
Excused absences for legitimate reasons have to be communicated in advance to the TA. An Explanatory Statement for Absence form should be completed and turned in to your TA within a week of the absence.

Instructions for turning in the article review and the original research proposal
1. The papers have to be turned in on the due date at the beginning of the discussion class. By that time, the electronic file of the paper should be uploaded to ICON in the Discussion Section’s site.
2. If the student is unable to attend the class on the day the papers are due for reasons such as a medical emergency or university-sponsored activities, a hard copy of the assignment should be given to the department secretary in the main office (E305 AJB) to be placed in the TA’s mailbox. Do NOT leave papers under office doors or give them to someone in the TA’s office.
3. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the TA has received the assignment on time. If a student believes his/her paper has been lost during the grading process, the electronic submission to ICON is the proof that the paper was turned in. Excuses for missing papers will not be entertained.

Iowa Dozen
We learn…
- to write correctly and clearly
- to conduct research and gather information responsibly
- to edit and evaluate carefully
- to use media technologies thoughtfully
- to apply statistical concepts appropriately

We value…
- First Amendment principles for all individuals and groups
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We explore…
- mass communication theories and concepts
- media institutions and practices
- the role of media in shaping cultures