Teaching Assistants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Email address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>B. K. Kim</td>
<td>E337 AJB</td>
<td><a href="mailto:byungwook-kim@uiowa.edu">byungwook-kim@uiowa.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4, 5, 6</td>
<td>Subin Paul</td>
<td>E333 AJB</td>
<td><a href="mailto:subin-paul@uiowa.edu">subin-paul@uiowa.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7, 8, 9</td>
<td>Abby Rinaldi</td>
<td>E335 AJB</td>
<td><a href="mailto:abby-rinaldi@uiowa.edu">abby-rinaldi@uiowa.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Objectives

- To understand the 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 a basic understanding of the effects of media on the public.
- To develop the ability to make better use of media as thoughtful consumers.

Text

*Media Effects Research: A Basic Overview (5th edition)*
By Glenn G. Sparks (2016) – available at Iowa Book; also available online to rent or as an e-book

Other readings and assigned materials, including Discussion readings, are available on the ICON website. A copy of the textbook can be borrowed for two hours from the Journalism Resource Center, located on the 3rd floor of Adler Journalism Building (Room E350). All lecture readings should be completed before Tuesday’s lecture. Discussion readings should be completed before your Discussion Section.

SJMC Learning Outcomes

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is committed to your academic and professional success. In line with this commitment, we have identified learning outcomes that every student should obtain by the time they earn a JMC degree. You can find more information about these learning outcomes here on the SJMC Website.

This course contributes to these learning outcomes by helping you understand how media messages influence their audiences. Achieving these outcomes means the ability to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the basic tenets of media literacy and how media literacy relates to your personal media habits and professional development.
- Analyze and interpret media messages through an understanding of media practices and institutions.

This course fulfills the General Education Social Sciences elective. GE stated outcomes are: 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 arguments and supporting their ideas with evidence and reason. Lectures, exams, discussion sections, and the two written assignments will develop these outcomes.

Class Rules and Conduct

Please be respectful of the professor and your fellow students. Please do not use cell phones, check social media, surf the internet, or talk to other students during class. Put any device that makes noise on SILENT.
Attendance is required in both the Tuesday/Thursday lectures and the discussion section, as much of the material on exams will come solely from class. **You must be present during lecture to get credit for Reaction Papers. You must be present during discussion to get credit for your weekly Discussion Section Response.**

**Grading**
Total of 620 points possible. Grades will be based on the following:

- 400 pts – four exams, including the final (all exams are worth 100 points)
- 100 pts – original research proposal
- 50 pts – media journal assignment
- 45 pts – discussion section responses
- 25 pts – instant reaction papers

Grades will not be curved. Your scores on each assignment will be posted on the ICON page for your discussion section in the Gradebook section. You can keep track of the points you earn toward the desired grade on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97.5-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92.5-97.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87.5-89.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82.5-87.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77.5-79.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>72.5-77.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67.5-69.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>62.5-67.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59.9% or below</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Grade Inquiries**
If you have questions or concerns about a DSR or paper grade, please speak with your TA in person during office hours **within two weeks of receiving the grade**. If you feel like the situation has not been resolved after this conversation, please see Professor Young during office hours **within two weeks of your meeting with the TA** to discuss the situation and grade. Grade inquiries must happen in person and within the time frame specified. These conversations will not happen over email.

**Exams**
Each exam will consist of multiple-choice and short-answer items. Exam material will come from textbook readings, lectures (including videos), and discussion section. Lectures and discussion will often cover material not included in the textbook. The final is not comprehensive. Vacation plans, long weekends, and other absences not related to illness or emergencies do not qualify as excused absences for exams. If you must miss an exam due to an emergency or illness, you must contact Professor Young via email prior to the exam. Make-up exams must be taken within a week of the scheduled exam. **Exams will not be handed back in class, but you can view your exam during Professor Young’s office hours or by appointment.**

**Exam dates are:**
September 13 (Thursday), October 11 (Thursday), November 6 (Tuesday), and the date for the final exam will be announced by the end of October. The first three exams are held during regular class time. **These dates will not change. Mark your calendar now.**

**Assignments**
All assignments must be uploaded to the ICON website on or before the due date. All papers must include your name, the date, and your section number. All written work must be submitted in Microsoft Word document or PDF format. **No other formats will be accepted (i.e., no Pages format).**

*Media journal assignment* – For this assignment, you will record your personal media use and write a short paper discussing possible media effects in your life and other connections to concepts discussed in class. More detailed instructions will be posted on ICON.

*Original research proposal* – For this assignment, you are to take a current issue in the news and suggest how to conduct research on it from a theoretical perspective. What social scientific theory might best explain either the media content or the potential audience interpretation? Why? What research method would you use to study this? Why? More detailed instructions will be posted on ICON.
Discussion Section Responses (DSRs) – Most weeks, your TA will post a two-part question about the next week’s readings, including the Discussion reading. You are to answer the question and post your answer to ICON before the next week’s section. The purpose of this is to encourage you to do the readings and prepare in advance for discussion. More details on DSRs will be included on your discussion section syllabus. DSRs will have two parts: (1) a closed-ended question about a concept or theory from the reading and (2) an open-ended question asking you to give your thoughts about the reading. Both parts must be completed, and correct, for the full 5 points. **You must be present in discussion to get credit for your DSR, but we will drop your lowest scoring DSR.**

Reaction Papers – Throughout the semester, you will be asked to write down your immediate reactions to concepts or theories discussed in lecture. You will be given sufficient time to write your reaction papers. There will be a total of 6 reaction papers (5 points each) throughout the semester. We will drop your lowest scoring paper. **Reaction papers will not be announced in advance and cannot be made up.** You are welcome to use laptops, tablets, or other computing devices to write your instant reaction papers and upload them directly to your Discussion Section ICON page.

If you are present for all discussion sections and turn in all DSRs AND you are present and turn in all six reaction papers, you will receive 5 points extra credit at the end of the semester.

Lecture notes
The outline of the week’s lectures will be posted on ICON by the following Monday and remain posted for a week. The outline will not contain all information discussed in the lecture, however, so you should not assume that skipping the lectures will allow you to earn a desirable grade on exams. You must retrieve the notes within the week they are posted – after they are removed, they will not be e-mailed or otherwise provided. **The lecture notes will serve as your study guide for exams, so be sure to download them each week.**

_Tentative schedule:_
Check our site on ICON for updates the schedule below. Read the assigned reading **before** the classes each week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments Due Dates and Exams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>What are Media Effects?</td>
<td>Sparks, Chapter 1</td>
<td>Section: DSR (completed in class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8/21 &amp; 8/23)</td>
<td>How Do We Study Them?</td>
<td>No Discussion Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Social Scientific Research</td>
<td>Sparks, Chapter 2</td>
<td>Section: DSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8/28 &amp; 8/30)</td>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>Discussion reading: On ICON</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>History of Media Effects</td>
<td>Sparks, Chapter 3</td>
<td>Section: Media Journal Assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9/4 &amp; 9/6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>No Discussion Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Diffusion of Innovations</td>
<td>On ICON Bryant, J. &amp; Thompson, S. (2002). <em>Fundamentals of media effects</em>, pp. 113-126.</td>
<td><strong>Thursday, 9/13 Lecture:</strong> Exam 1 - Chapters 1-3; diffusion reading, lecture/discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9/11 &amp; 9/13)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion reading: On ICON</td>
<td>Section: DSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>News and Political Content</td>
<td>Sparks, Chapter 9</td>
<td>Section: DSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9/18 &amp; 9/20)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion reading: On ICON</td>
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| Week 6  
(9/25 & 9/27) | Agenda Setting and Gatekeeping | On ICON:  
Discussion reading: On ICON | Section: DSR |
|---|---|---|
| Week 7  
(10/2 & 10/4) | Persuasive Media Effects | Sparks, Chapter 8  
*No Discussion Reading* | Friday 10/5  
**Media Journal Assignment Due** |
| Week 8  
(10/9 & 10/11) | Time Spent with Media | Sparks, Chapter 4  
Discussion reading: On ICON | Thursday 10/11 Lecture:  
**Exam 2** - Chapters 4,8,9; agenda setting reading, gatekeeping reading, lecture/discussion  
Section: DSR |
| Week 9  
(10/16 & 10/18) | Violence in the Media | Sparks, Chapter 5  
Discussion reading: On ICON | Section: DSR  
**Original Research Proposal Assigned** |
| Week 10  
(10/23 & 10/25) | Media Effects on Body Image | On ICON:  
Discussion reading: On ICON | Section: DSR |
| Week 11  
(10/30 & 11/1) | Stereotypes in the Media | Sparks, Chapter 10  
Discussion reading: On ICON | Section: DSR |
| Week 12  
(11/6 & 11/8) | Sex in the Media | Sparks, Chapter 6  
*No Discussion Reading* | Tuesday 11/6 Lecture:  
**Exam 3** - chapters 5 & 10; body image reading, cultivation reading, lecture/discussion |
| Week 13  
(11/13 & 11/15) | Media and Our Emotions | Sparks, Chapter 7  
*No Discussion Reading* | Friday 11/16  
**Original Research Proposal Due**  
**No Discussion Section this week; Happy Thanksgiving!** |

*Week 14 Thanksgiving Break – no class (11/20 & 11/22)*
The Iowa Dozen

The University of Iowa 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

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: Policies and Resources

Administrative Home

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the administrative home of this course and governs its add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other policies. These policies vary by college (https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook).
Electronic Communication
Students are responsible for official correspondences sent to their UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for all communication within UI (Operations Manual, III.15.2).

Accommodations for Disabilities
UI is committed to an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (such as mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related condition) by registering with Student Disability Services (SDS). The student should then discuss accommodations with the course instructor (https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/).

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom
UI is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, racial, religious or other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University’s Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity at diversity@uiowa.edu or diversity.uiowa.edu.

Academic Integrity
All undergraduates enrolled in courses offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College's Code of Academic Honesty. Misconduct is reported to the College, resulting in suspension or other sanctions, with sanctions communicated with the student through the UI email address.

CLAS Final Examination Policies
The final exam schedule for each semester is announced around the fifth week of classes; students are responsible for knowing the date, time, and place of a final exam. Students should not make travel plans until knowing this final exam information. No exams of any kind are allowed the week before finals. (https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-examination-policies.)

Making a Complaint
Students with a complaint should first visit with the instructor or course supervisor and then with the departmental executive officer (DEO), also known as the Chair. Students may then bring the concern to CLAS (https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities).

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 Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

*These CLAS policy and procedural statements have been summarized from the web pages of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the University of Iowa Operations Manual.*