Course Description

The media world has changed greatly over the last generation—the internet, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, cable news (Fox News, MSNBC, Al-Jazeera, etc). These changes in media content and delivery have changed how individuals interact with the news and thus how politicians and other political actors interact with the public. New Media & Politics examines these changes in the media world and pays particular attention to whether these changes alter classic theories of media effects. The course focuses primarily on American politics, but will also touch on new media in comparative perspective.

Seminar Organization and Requirements

1. **Response Papers (30% of your total grade):** Each week, students will write a 2-3 page response to the week’s readings. These essays should NOT summarize the readings; instead, they should synthesize and critically respond to them. Essays can do this in a number of ways, including critiquing a study’s methodology or measurements, suggesting alternative explanations for its findings, elaborating on the implications of its findings, or suggesting future avenues of research.

   The essay should address at least three of the readings from the week, but students are encouraged to address more when possible. These essays are due the night before the class (i.e. before you got to bed on Wednesday night).

2. **Weekly Presentations (10% of your total grade):** Students will lead class discussions of the reading, with little direction by the instructor except where needed. Individual students will sign up to present the reading material on given weeks. Students should familiarize themselves with course topics so that they can sign up during class on September 4.

3. **Book Review (10% of your total grade):** Students will purchase and read one of three recent books about polarization and the media (Stroud's *Niche News*, Arceneuax & Johnson's *Changing Minds or Changing Channels?*, Levundusky's *How Partisan Media Polarize America*). Students will write a review of the book, similar to the reviews published in *Perspectives on Politics* or other political science journals.
   - Due the night of November 12

4. **Research Proposal. (40% of your total grade):** The proposal should identify an unstudied
problem in the field of media and politics, explain why it deserves attention, identify appropriate methods and measures for the project, and lay out a plan of attack.

- Research topic due October 2
- Literature summary (2 paragraph abstract of 10 sources) due October 30.
- Final proposal due December 18

5. **Attendance and Participation (10% of total grade).** Attendance at every class is expected. I will conduct these classes as seminars, which require student participation and discussion. One student will lead the discussion, but others need to join in, comment, and question and analyze the reading.

**Student Choice Weeks**

There are two weeks toward the end of the semester titled Student Choice week. My goal here is to open up these weeks to suggestions from students on topics that we could cover in the seminar. Below, I will list a couple of potential topics, but this is a chance for you to suggest a topic that 1) fits with your research agenda, 2) intrigues you as a topic, 3) and/or fits well with another course you are/have taken.

Some suggestions from me (please come up with ones that seems better/more useful to you):

- Edward Snowden and the Security State
- Corporate Media Consolidation
- Data Journalism and the Future of Media
- DailyKos.com, RedState.com, and New Media in Political Parties
- The Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA)
- Hacktivism
- Hashtivism

**Required Books**


You will also need to buy one the these three books.

Reading Assignments

- All journal articles are available via our Library. You are responsible for finding each article and reading it.
- As noted above, you should acquire the books as needed.
- Book chapters will be posted on Blackboard. I have noted these readings below.

August 28  Introduction and Welcome

September 4  Media & Democracy


- Posted on Blackboard


- Read the overview section of the report
- Feel free to skim most of the report to get a flavor of the findings.

September 11  Media Effects: Agenda Setting


September 18  Media Effects: Priming and Framing


September 25  No Class—Rosh Hashanah

October 2  Media Effects: Opinion Change


October 9  Impact of New Media


Khazraeli, Susan and Daniel Stockemer. 2013. “The Internet: A New Route to Good
Governance.” International Political Science Review. 34(5): 463-482.


October 16 Consequences of New Media


October 23 New Strategies from Politicians


October 30 Learning from the Media


November 6 Alternative Media Sources


Poell, Thomas and Erik Borra. 2011. “Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr as platforms of alternative journalism: The social media account of the 2010 Toronto G20 protests.” Journalism. 13(6): 695-713.

November 13 Media and Polarization

You will read one of the following three books.

- Stroud. Niche News
- Levundusky. How Partisan Media Polarize America
- Arceneaux & Johnson. Changing Minds or Changing Channels?


November 20 Student Choice #1

Readings TBA

November 27 No Class—Thanksgiving
**December 4 Student Choice #2**

Readings TBA

**December 11** *The Effects of New Media*


  - Posted on Blackboard


  - Posted on Blackboard