

**Media and Politics**  
Political Science 2450; Fall 2017  
Monday/Wednesday/Friday 10:00 – 10:50 PM  
BU 210

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Office Hours: 8:00 – 8:50 AM, MWF, and by appointment

### Course Overview

me·di·a *noun*

1. a plural of medium.
2. ( usually used with a plural verb ) the means of communication, as radio and television, newspapers, and magazines, that reach or influence people widely: The media are covering the speech tonight.

pol·i·tics *noun* ( used with a singular or plural verb )

1. the science or art of political government.
2. the practice or profession of conducting political affairs.
3. political affairs: The advocated reforms have become embroiled in politics.
4. political methods or maneuvers: We could not approve of his politics in winning passage of the bill.
5. political principles or opinions: We avoided discussion of religion and politics. His politics are his own affair.

The definitions above were found at [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com) and reflect a rote understanding of the concepts “media” and “politics.” This course is a tacit acknowledgement of the fact that while media of some sort have always been used in American political practice, in the modern era, there are a wider array of media used in more diverse ways than ever before. As our society’s use of mass media technology has evolved, so has its application in the political context.

This course addresses “media” both in its technological sense (e.g. television advertising, social media, etc.) and in its systemic sense (e.g. broadcast media companies, journalists, etc.) as they bear upon American politics.

While some course content will deal with the theory of mass communication and message dissemination, the remainder of the course will focus upon the use of media as a practical application of political will.

### Texts

The following are required texts for this course:

Iyengar, S. (2011). *Media Politics*. (2nd, Ed.) New York: W.W. Norton.

Jamieson, K.H. and Paul Waldman. (2003). *The Press Effect: Politicians, Journalists, and the Stories that Shape the Political World*. New York: Oxford.

Additionally, supplemental readings will be announced from time to time. For your convenience, these readings will be available in electronic format.

Students are expected to purchase the two texts and to remain current with all assigned readings listed in the Course Schedule (below). Current events will be used as examples as appropriate. Students should keep abreast of what is happening in American politics through reading a daily newspaper, watching television news, etc. Class discussion is required (see below). Please feel free to raise questions concerning the readings or current events. However, I reserve the right to restrict in-class discussions if necessary to meet course objectives.

## **Grading**

Grades for this course will be based on three criteria:

### 1. Presentations

- a. Each student will participate in four (4) group presentations over the course of the semester.
- b. Each presentation will be worth 75 points toward the overall course grade.
  - i. A presentation rubric will be posted online and discussed in class prior to the commencement of presentations
- c. Groups
  - i. Groups will consist of 2 - 4 students.
  - ii. Groups will be formed by online student sign-up through WyoCourses.
- d. Presentation topics will be relevant to the course topic of the week.
  - i. See tentative course schedule, below
- e. Content
  - i. Presentations will relate course concepts of the week to material the student group has found outside the assigned readings.
  - ii. Presentations will include visual aids. (e.g. slides, video, etc.)
  - iii. Presentations will include an audience participation component.
- f. Deadlines

- i. Each student *must* participate in *one* presentation during *each* of the four presentation periods
- ii. Presentation periods and their associated weeks
  1. Presentation 1 – Weeks 3, 4, and 5
  2. Presentation 2 – Weeks 6, 7, and 9
  3. Presentation 3 – Weeks 10, 11, and 12
  4. Presentation 4 – Weeks 13, 14, and 15
- iii. Failure to participate in a presentation during any of the four presentation periods will result in a grade of zero (0) for the associated assignment

2. Final Examination:

- a. A comprehensive final examinations, is worth 50 points.
- b. The final exam will be a take-home exam – on Monday, December 18, from by 12:15 pm.
- c. The exam prompt will be made available to students electronically (through WyoCourses) on the last day of instruction.
- d. Students will submit their final exam electronically (through WyoCourses). No other submission forms will be accepted.
- e. Requests for make-up exams must be made **in writing (via email)** within seven calendar days of the scheduled examination date. The written request must include the reason for missing the examination and your student identification number.
- f. Requests for make-up exams will be denied unless a valid reason is presented. Examples of valid excuses for taking an exam at an alternative time include illness, death in the family, and participation in a university-sponsored activity. Other excuses will be considered as well. Documentation for the excuse may be required. Other excuses will be considered as well but will be approved at the instructor's discretion. Documentation for the excuse may be required.
- g. University regulations concerning academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

3. Attendance:

Attendance will be taken each class period. Attendance is worth 50 points.

**Grading at a Glance**

Final grades for the course will be based on the total number of points earned on the four presentations (4 x 75 points), a final exam (50 points), and attendance (50 points):

	Number	Value	Sub-total	
Presentations	4	75	300	pts.
Final	1	50	50	pts.
Attendance			50	pts.
Course Point				
Total			400	pts.

Course grades are calculated relative to the following scale:

360 to 400 points = A  
 320 to 359 points = B  
 280 to 319 points = C  
 240 to 279 points = D  
 0 to 239 points = F

**Academic Dishonesty**

1. University regulations concerning academic dishonesty (UW Regulation 6-802) will be strictly enforced. (<http://www.uwyo.edu/generalcounsel/files/docs/uw-reg-6-802.pdf>)
2. Any and all suspicions of academic dishonesty shall be investigated in accordance with UW Regulation 6-802.
3. Evidence of academic dishonesty will result in the recommended sanction of a failing grade for the course, in accordance with UW Regulation 6-802 6.A.vi

**Reasonable Accommodation**

It is University of Wyoming policy to accommodate students, faculty, staff, and visitors with disabilities. If you have a physical, learning, sensory, or psychological disability and require accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. You will need to register with University Disability Support Services (UDSS) in the Student Educational Opportunity offices, Room 330 Knight Hall, and provide UDSS with documentation of your disability.”

**Words of Advice**

If you find yourself having difficulty identifying the important points from the readings or following lectures, please make an appointment to meet with me outside of class. Do not wait until the day of an examination or the end of the semester to tell me that you are having trouble. By then it is too late. The time to adjust your study habits is in mid-semester, not the last week of classes.

There is a strong correlation between attending class regularly and receiving a high grade in the course. Students are therefore urged to attend lecture on a regular basis. Exams are designed to draw from the readings and lectures, and students are expected to be familiar with all class material. If you miss a class, I suggest that you obtain notes from a classmate and/or discuss the lecture with me. I will be happy to discuss missed lectures but I do not permit students to copy my notes.