## PSCI 3160.001: Mass Media in American Politics

**3 Hrs.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department of Social Sciences</th>
<th>Division of Liberal Arts and Life Sciences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Name:</td>
<td>Walt Borges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Location:</td>
<td>Founders 221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Phone:</td>
<td>972.338.1552 (I only answer and check phone messages when I am in the office. Please communicate by official university email if you want a prompt reply.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Address:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:walter.borges@untdallas.edu">walter.borges@untdallas.edu</a> (do not use Canvas for email communication)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours:</td>
<td>Office hours will be set after I have met with all of my classes. I will try to maximize my availability to students. Office hours will be posted on the course Web page. There are no dedicated hours for each class – first come is first served. Making an appointment will guarantee you access at the times that fit your schedule.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virtual Office Hours:</td>
<td>None, but you may email at any time. I will try to answer within 24 hours. On weekends, expect longer delays.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Location:</td>
<td>Founders 303</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Days &amp; Times:</td>
<td>MW 1 – 2:20 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Catalog Description:</td>
<td>An examination of the role and impact of the news media, political advertising and the professionalization of government communications on public opinion, participation, institutions and governance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prerequisites:</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Co-requisites:</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Video clip archives for the class are located at mediapolitics.stanford.edu</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Other useful sites include <a href="http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/">http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/</a> for presidential campaign ads. A range of campaign ads are available on YouTube.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students are required to keep current on public affairs.</td>
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Recommended Texts and References: None, but additional online readings linked to homework assignments and quizzes may be assigned.

Access to Learning Resources:
UNT Dallas Library:
phone: (972) 780-3625;
web: http://www.unt.edu/unt-dallas/library.htm

UNT Dallas Bookstore:
phone: (972) 780-3652;
e-mail: 1012mgr@fheg.follett.com

Course Goals or Overview:
Everything we thought we knew about conventional politics was knocked out of alignment by the 2016 presidential election campaign. Observers of the American polity knew that, since 1960, American electoral politics had been less about parties and more about candidates and their images. Yet no astute observer predicted that cynical marketing and post-truth politics would devalue news and information and raise fundamental questions about knowledge, news and democracy. And few predicted a Trump presidency. Since assuming the office, Donald Trump has radically altered the practice of presidential communications, and, many would say, not for the better. Political communications is a brave new world indeed.

This course offers students an opportunity to reconceptualize the new political landscape and identify social and new internet-based media as powerful tools in American politics. Students should emerge from the course with a deeper understanding of modern information practices in both the public and private spheres, an understanding that is increasingly necessary for citizens, but crucial for those pursuing careers in the professions and government.

This is a course about politics. Politics in a democracy requires communication between the governors and the governed, and the news media serve not just as major conduits of news and political messages, but as important analysts and interpreters of the messages sent by candidates, officeholders, special interests and the mass public. The course is designed to give you a background in the development of the press as a group of information-based institutions. The course is an investigation of the relationships of the public, press and the government through the mechanisms of campaign communications, public opinion and the dissemination of government-generated information.

What role the news media will play in the future is a larger question, and the answers are uncertain. Is the press an institution that helps the government, political parties and powerful economic interests manipulate viewers and readers, or is it a major obstacle to manipulation? Does an independent and free press help or hinder democracy in the United States and around the world?

We will examine the theoretical and actual roles played by the press in public affairs to develop understanding of current and persistent problems of press performance such as bias, independence, manipulation by government and special interests, and the quest for profits at the expense of public service. We will investigate the impact of emerging technologies – the printing press, telegraph, radio, television, Internet and smart cell phones – on the institutions of the press and on political communication. We will look at how the changing business of news media has impacted the traditional practices of news gathering and altered the definition of news. We will view substantial numbers of campaign ads, political videos and news reports in class to determine targeted audiences, approaches to political persuasion and the extent of spin. And we will examine the practices of pack/herd journalism to determine if journalistic standards are met.
Learning Objectives/Outcomes:  At the end of this course, the student will:

1. Analyze and discuss the complex communications techniques used in the current political environment, including social media.
2. Demonstrate the ability to write cogently about major issues in political communication and the business of news.
3. Define roles and processes used in the news media and government communications processes.
4. Identify past, current and future issues of political communication through private news organizations and the framing and manipulation of news by government officials.

Course Evaluation Methods

This course will utilize the following instruments to determine student grades and proficiency of the learning outcomes for the course.

- **Exams** – Written tests include identification, multiple choice, short answer and essay questions, and are designed to measure knowledge of presented course material.
- **Class Participation** – Regular attendance, speaking in class discussions or asking relevant questions count towards class discussion. For each two classes you miss, you lose one participation point. Be on time and sign in to get full credit for participation. Late arrivals or frequent early departures will cost you participation points.

| Grading Matrix: |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| **Assessment**  | **Measures SLO**| **Weight (%)**  | **Aggregate**   |
| Midterm exam    | 1,2,3,4         | 20 percent      | 20%             |
| Portfolio and summaries | 1,2,3,4 | 25 percent | 45%             |
| Ad analysis / campaign communications plan | 1,2,3,4 | 30 percent | 75%             |
| Final exam      | 1,2,3,4         | 20 percent      | 95%             |
| Class participation | 1,2,3,4 | 5 percent | 100%             |

Course Outline (next page)

Reading assignments should be completed by the date listed, but if the course schedule falls off pace, as I think it will, you should adjust your reading. While there is no penalty for not doing so, the failure to read the book will catch up with you at the end of the course.

This schedule is subject to change by the instructor. Any changes to this schedule will be communicated by the instructor in class and by posting on Blackboard.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>PPt</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M Jan 14</td>
<td>General course info / Writing for this class / Syllabus review.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>W Jan 16</td>
<td>The new political environment: 2016 - ?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Canvas: Democracy &amp; Truth</td>
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<td>M Jan 21</td>
<td>No classes – MLK Birthday</td>
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<td>W Jan 23</td>
<td>Fire and Fury: Journalism, entertainment or something new? In-class discussion / Quiz</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Canvas: F&amp;F excerpt Gessen review Brooks column</td>
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<tr>
<td>M Jan 28</td>
<td>Democracy, information and media politics.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Iyengar ch 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>W Jan 30</td>
<td>Elite entitlement v. dumbass democracy? Watchdogs, gatekeepers and other mythical creatures of democracy.</td>
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<td>Iyengar ch 2: 19-28</td>
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<tr>
<td>M Feb 4</td>
<td>Modeling political communication. Roles and audiences. Political communication: Theories of the press, the public and political elites</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Canvas: Borges IESBS Zaller - How Citizens Acquire Info</td>
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<td>W Feb 6</td>
<td>Klapper, Zaller and press-centered theory</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Iyengar, ch 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>M Feb 11</td>
<td>Press centered theory</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Portfolio check (2 articles)</td>
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<tr>
<td>W Feb 13</td>
<td>A Brief History Of The Times</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Canvas: Coverage of Hitler and Mussolini / Riefenstahl and Dietrich Trump's lies Manipulation - nudge</td>
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<td>M Feb 18</td>
<td>The American press – revolutions and regulations The Age of Marketing, Advertising and Disinformation (MAD)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Canvas: Zaller - Elite domination of public opinion</td>
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<td>W Feb 20</td>
<td>New media: blogs, social networks and other internet channels.</td>
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<td>Iyengar ch 5</td>
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<td>M Feb 25</td>
<td>Campaign communication</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Iyengar ch 6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>W Feb 27</td>
<td>Parties, campaigns and news media</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Iyengar ch 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>M March 4</td>
<td>The art of spin</td>
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<tr>
<td>W March 6</td>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>M March 18</td>
<td>Audience and Ads: How to analyze campaign ads</td>
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<td>W March 20</td>
<td>More campaign ads -- Citizens United</td>
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<td>Portfolio due</td>
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<td>M March 25</td>
<td>Covering campaigns</td>
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<td>Iyengar ch 2: 45-47</td>
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<td>W March 27</td>
<td>What shapes modern reporting</td>
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<td>M April 1</td>
<td>Media systems: US and world</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Iyengar ch 2: 28-44</td>
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<td>W April 3</td>
<td>The news media marketplace</td>
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<td>Iyengar ch 3</td>
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<td>M April 7</td>
<td>Governing by media</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Iyengar ch 7</td>
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<td>W April 10</td>
<td>Congress and the news media</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Campaign ad analysis / ad campaign plan due</td>
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<tr>
<td>M April 15</td>
<td>Presidential popularity and the press</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Iyengar ch 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>W April 17</td>
<td>Presidential control</td>
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<td>M April 22</td>
<td>Conflict, indexing and proximity.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Iyengar ch 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>W April 24</td>
<td>Wars and the press</td>
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<tr>
<td>M April 29</td>
<td>The problems of media politics</td>
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<td>Canvas: Kompromat / The Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>W May 1</td>
<td>Modifying media politics</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Iyengar ch 11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Final exam</td>
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University Policies and Procedures

Students with Disabilities (ADA Compliance): The University of North Texas at Dallas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations must first register with the Disability Services Office (DSO) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the DSO will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, DSO notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet/communicate with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Disability Services Office website at http://www.untdallas.edu/disability. You may also contact them by phone at 972-338-1777; by email at UNTDdisability@untdallas.edu or at Founders Hall, room 204. (UNTD Policy 7.004)

Student Course Evaluation (CoursEval): Student evaluation of teaching effectiveness is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT Dallas, providing information for the university, accreditation agencies, the state higher education agency and the instructor. A short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students. Your comments help me improve my teaching and to figure out what works for students and what doesn't. Please complete the survey when you are notified that it is available.

Assignment Policy:
1. Late assignments will be penalized up to 20 percent per day.
2. I do not accept emailed assignments. If you are unable to hand in the assignment, you may send in an email file to show you had completed the work, but if you do not present a hard copy by the next class, your grade for that assignment is zero.
3. Check out the Writing folder on Canvas. Format and citation requirements will be included on written assignments and posted on Canvas. An American Political Science Association citation sheet provides details of bibliography and citation form, and it is posted on the class pages on Blackboard under the Writing folder.

Exam Policy: Exams should be taken as scheduled. No makeup examinations will be allowed except for documented emergencies (See Student Handbook).

Academic Integrity: You are expected to abide by the University’s code of Academic Integrity policy. Any person suspected of academic dishonesty (i.e., cheating or plagiarizing) will be handled in accordance with the University's policies and procedures. Refer to the Student Code of Academic Integrity (Policy 7.002) at http://www.untdallas.edu/sites/default/files/page_level2/pdf/policy/7.002%20Code%20of%20Academic_Integrity.pdf Refer to the Student Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct at http://www.untdallas.edu/sites/default/files/page_level2/hds0041/pdf/7_001_student_code_of_conduct_may_2014.pdf. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabrication of information or citations, facilitating acts of dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. In addition, all academic work turned in for this class, including exams, papers and written assignments must include the following statement: “On my honor, I have not given, nor received, nor witnessed any unauthorized assistance that violates the UNTD Academic Integrity Policy.”

Bad Weather Policy: Campus facilities will close and operations will be suspended when adverse weather and/or safety hazards exist on the UNTD campus or if travel to the campus is deemed dangerous as the result of ice, sleet or snow. In the event of a campus closure, the Marketing and Communication Department will report closure information to all appropriate major media by 7 a.m. That department will also update the UNTD website, Facebook and Twitter with closing information as soon as it is possible. For more information please refer to http://www.untdallas.edu/police/resources/notifications
Attendance and Participation Policy:
The University attendance policy is substantially in effect for this course. Please refer to Policy 7.005 Student Attendance at http://www.untdallas.edu/hr/upol

I will monitor attendance for the first five weeks in order to identify those who may be in peril of failing the class. However, you will be treated as responsible adults for most of the semester: You miss class at your own peril, and frequent class absences will cost you participation points. Details of attendance policy will be discussed in class during the first session.

Class attendance and participation is expected because the class is designed as a shared learning experience and because essential information not in the textbook will be discussed in class. The dynamic nature of this course makes it difficult for students to make-up or to receive credit for missed classes. Attendance and participation is essential to your ability to demonstrate proficiency in the subject.

If you must miss a single, isolated class, you need not notify the instructor, but it becomes your responsibility to obtain notes of the missed class from your colleagues. I do not post the notes of my lectures. Before you ask the professor what was missed, you should have reviewed notes for the missed class.

In the case of extended absences due to illness or crises, you are expected to inform the instructor as soon as possible about the extent of your absence, preferably before the absence occurs. You may be required to produce written evidence of the reasons for your absence.

In all cases, missing exams and other assignments requires a good-faith effort on your part to inform the instructor of your absence beforehand. Unless you have a rock-solid reason for missing the test, you will not be permitted to make it up.

Diversity/Tolerance Policy: Students are encouraged to contribute their perspectives and insights to class discussions. However, offensive and inappropriate language (swearing) and remarks offensive to others of particular nationalities, ethnic groups, sexual preferences, religious groups, genders, or other ascribed statuses will not be tolerated. Disruptions which violate the Code of Student Conduct will be referred to the Dean of Students as the instructor deems appropriate. (UNTD Policy 7.001)

CLASS-SPECIFIC POLICIES:

- **Do not attempt to communicate with the professor through the Canvas mail function.** I do not check it and I will not respond. Communicate through my official university e-mail listed at the top of this syllabus. I communicate with you by responding to whatever e-mail address you use to send your message. General notices are posted as announcements on Canvas and/or as email to your official university address. Failure to check your email is no excuse for missing changes in test dates or assignments.

- **Students are expected to attend class,** since much of the material is not drawn from the text or readings. Most students discover this about the time of the first midterm. The university wants instructors to take attendance (see above), so you are required to sign an attendance sheet with your initials. After the first five weeks of the course, students who have missed two classes or more will be contacted by Student Services about those absences. Attendance does not enhance your grade, but failure to attend will lead to lower grades as much of the course material is not in the books.

- **For each two absences, you will lose one point off your participation grade, which is five percent of your final grade.** If you show up to class late, do not expect to have the opportunity to sign the attendance sheet. Your attendance is required at the start of class, so plan accordingly.

- **If you enter late, you are expected to do so as unobtrusively and quietly as possible** Entering class late is sometimes unavoidable. Please take a seat on the fringes of the class and do not disrupt the lecture by taking a front row seat. Do not attempt to hand in homework while the lecture is going on. If you must leave class, do so quietly.

- **Cell phones must be turned off unless they are being used to record the class or presentations.** Texting, tweeting and other uses are not permitted. If I determine you are using your phone for purposes other than class, you will be required to keep the phone turned off for all future classes. See below.
Students who are found to be using their computers for activities other than note-taking will be banned from using the computer in class for any purpose. Computers are a useful tool for taking notes in class, but these machines are often used for a number of other purposes such as emailing, web-surfing, game-playing etc. Note-taking on a computer is permitted in class, but secondary uses are not. See above. If we should have a guest speaker, everyone will go computer-free for that session.

Read the assigned material before class. The readings have two purposes. First, the text serves to refresh your memory of those distant government classes you once took in middle and high school. Second, the text will introduce you to the themes of collective action dilemmas and principal-agent problems that are endemic to representative democracies. Other readings and assignments will address specific political behavior characteristics, policy problems, and procedural anomalies that are not addressed in the text, so make sure you complete those on time.

Participate frequently in discussions in class or ask relevant questions. Participation will make the instructor's calls on borderline grades easier to make. If you don't want to share your opinion, that's okay, but be prepared to ask a few questions. Don't worry about appearing uninformed or unaware: I was a reporter for 25 years and I know it is better to ask the obvious or dumb question than to assume you know the answer. The failure to ask the obvious question is often why journalists get things wrong.

There are no 'right' answers to many of the issues we will discuss, and you will not be graded on your opinions. However, please take into account that opinions supported by facts are more persuasive than opinions supported by more opinions. Make your arguments accordingly.

Flaming or intimidating fellow students will not be tolerated. Students are expected to be considerate of others. This means silencing cell phones, arriving on time, not leaving early and being respectful of others during discussion and debate. Opinions and arguments are fair game; the speaker is not. Listening courteously is a real world skill, and I have a commitment to civil discourse that I will enforce.

Do not regard lectures, outlines or readings as substitutes for being in class. But you will find that much of what I explain and emphasize is not laid out in detail in the outline.
APPENDIX A

Following the news

As noted above, I am requiring students in this class to become conversant on the national and state level policy issues of the day. This requires students to listen to, to view and to read articles, video and sound bites from news organizations that cover public affairs. (E and TMZ are not news in that sense; neither is The Daily Show or Colbert Report.)

Following the news is a skill that is acquired through practice. To meet the requirements of this course:

1) students should follow the news daily through radio, TV, newspapers and internet news sources. At least one source should be checked daily, but it would be wise to read or listen to a number of sources that cover the news from different perspectives. That means you may want to check out Fox News or MSNBC occasionally, even though most of us would consider these to have evident biases in their presentation of the news.

2) students should understand the difference between reporting and punditry. Reporting is essentially the gathering and presentation of new information in cultural and political contexts. Punditry is analysis and interpretation based on preferences and political perspectives in order to achieve ideological or entertainment purposes. Many people choose their news sources because the source reinforces the person’s preferences and prejudices. Students in this course will do better to look at sources that get the facts right rather than share the student’s political perspective. Students should not substitute punditry for reporting as a source of information.

3) students should understand the difference between lucrative entertainment and costly coverage. Many talk show hosts and pundits would rather be controversial than thoughtful or perceptive. Drama and controversy attract a larger audience, and thus bring in more advertising dollars for the media business. Students may wonder why ‘analysts’ on shows and the internet often seem to find no agreement on the way forward. This is because they are chosen to contradict and yell at each other without listening in order to increase ratings and readership. Similarly, Lindsey Lohan’s latest escapade or interview is of no value to this class. Focus on the biggest political and policy stories.

With these ideas in mind, here are some premier news organizations you may want to follow. All have websites. Those with limited free access are starred (*).

RADIO
National Public Radio (NPR)

TV and VIDEO
CBS (national and local)
NBC (national and local)
ABC (national and local)
Fox (national and local)
PBS (national only)
CNN (national only)
MSNBC (national only)
CSPAN 1 and 2 (Congress)

N.B. National TV networks maintain websites but do not cover complex stories or those with weak video potential. For the purposes of this class, the major stories we are interested in should be reported on these sites.

NEWSPAPERS/INTERNET
New York Times* (5 articles a month/ front page headline view is free)
Washington Post* (20 articles a month/ front page headline view is free)
The Guardian – USA edition (this UK newspaper website often puts its American competitors to shame)
The Texas Tribune (online state news – this is the best single source for Texas news, with links to local coverage)
The Associated Press (the free Android cell phone app now provides many in-depth articles, a real change from the headline news offered in the past)
Reuters (economic news)
APPENDIX B

Portfolio assignment

I. During the course of the semester, students will diversify their readings and develop research skills by collecting eight news, academic or video items to create a portfolio. The items must be about democratic theory and its challenges.

The items may be in-depth articles from newspapers, online news sites, academic journals, and magazines. There may be other types of items that are similar but not listed here. Check with the professor if you have something unusual.

You may not use material reviewed in class or in the class outline. Part of this assignment is to explore new ground on your own.

The items do not need to be recent. For example, you could read a chapter from Walter Lippman's 1922 classic Public Opinion or an article not covered in class from a media critic. The impact of the article -- i.e. the explanation of how the article supplements your knowledge of media politics or political communication -- is the important part. II. For each of these items, the student will write a brief, single-spaced summary of 1) what the article says, and 2) what it tells us about the news media's impacts on politics. This can be as short as a couple of paragraphs, one explaining the gist of the item, the other explaining its impact. These brief summaries should not exceed more than a page, although you are free to write more if you need to make a number of different points.

II. Portfolio entries and comments should be kept in a loose-leaf binder or a presentation folder and indexed. I would prefer you use tabbed dividers to separate the entries. Each article and comment should have your name on it and be numbered according to an index for your portfolio. Portfolios should have:

- a title page with your name
- an index page
- a bibliography properly formatted (see the Canvas Writing folder) and ordered alphabetically. You will lose points for sloppy or inappropriate formatting or for simply listing URLs instead of the proper reverence information. Your references should be directions to the print version of the articles if they are available. See below.
- eight sections, one for each article you are reviewing. The summary/review with your name and the correct citation should come first, then the article.

Please do not simply put the items in a pocket folder where they will fall out and mix with papers from other classes that are in my possession.

III. You should try to read diverse and substantial articles from journals and books rather than brief descriptive newspaper articles. I would suggest that no more than two of the articles should be from the newspapers. I also suggest that you include up to three articles on planning media campaigns. This will help you with the campaign memo, but if you go beyond three on a single topic, it will cost you scope points.

IV. GRADING
Scope of reading (Was it different from the other articles in your portfolio?) 20 percent
Quality (descriptive articles and simple news articles lose points here) 30 percent
Summary 50 percent
Formats for the campaign ad memo and other assignments

- Use Times New Roman 12-point or 11-point type.
- Use 1-inch margins
- Name and assignment information should go on a title page. Other pages should be numbered.
- Papers should be written in complete sentences and paragraphs. Bullet points allowed only for short lists.
- Use proper reference form (author, year of publication, title, publication information). In-text citation to the references should be used, i.e. (author year).
- All papers should be stapled together. Paper clips are insufficient. Unstapled papers incur a 30 percent penalty.

Ad Analysis and Campaign Memo

The paper assigned in this class is designed to actively teach analytical and communication skills that often are demanded in a media-rich work environment. The memo that you will write has two parts and should be a minimum of 10 full pages double-spaced, with a target length of 12 pages.

The memo should:

- Meet all format requirements listed in the at the top of the appendix.
- Contain a properly formatted bibliography or reference page listing all appropriate sources that are referenced in the text using in-text citation (see the Canvas Writing folder for instructions and examples). The minimum number of sources is nine, and they may be split between the ad analysis and the campaign plan. At least four should be ads cited in part 1.
- Be written in an effective memo form, i.e. for each part:
  - State the problem, puzzle or policy you are addressing;
  - State your proposed solution or plan;
  - Present your assumptions and argument, supporting each point with factual evidence, not the opinions of others (Recall that I am grading you, not the cited authors);
  - Justify your plan by explaining why you recommend each proposal. Remember that timing is important.

Grading: The term paper will be evaluated 80 percent on content and 20 percent on writing. I suggest that you try to finish a draft by end of March so that you can spend the next 10 days working with the Writing Center to perfect your prose and argument.

PROMPT

You are a consultant with W.E.B. Lyon Communications, a Dallas-based public relations and political communications firm. The principals have assigned you to help Texas state senator Sanctimonious Twaddle determine the advertising strategies for his campaign to become the state's next U.S. senator in 2020. Assume that Twaddle already has local but not statewide name recognition. He has served as for six years (he is in his second term) in the Texas state senate, but has never held statewide office. He is now seeking national office.

Twaddle has come to you with a couple ideas but mostly he wants to evaluate the relative value of using guns in his campaign advertising. He believes this is the latest trend for candidates in both parties, and he thinks being pro-gun is the way to go.
Writing The Memo

Intro
Address the memo to Twaddle and concisely state the problem and your proposed solutions in the first paragraph. Be aware that memos are an effective way to communicate for people pressed for time, and do not overstate your case or go in for cheap flattery. Yeah, I know, I’ve had several students tell me that’s how you get ahead in Dallas. I think not.

Part 1
Write a memo analyzing the use of guns in ads for a potential Republican US Senate candidate. Cite at least four ads. Make sure they and their URLs are properly cited in the references list. (Set up the question and get right to the analysis without defending a thesis. Don’t make long summary statements. Be specific in your analysis. Include a specific recommendation on whether to run a gun ad or not. Be terse.

For example, here are a few links to get you started. Don't forget the Dale Peterson ad you saw in class. It is perfectly fine to use just these ads for the analysis, but do not forget to cite them properly.

Joe Manchin, D – West Virginia (2010)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIJORBRpOPM

Jodi Ernst, R-Iowa (2014)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I3mG9fNOZp4

Will Brooke, R-Alabama (2014)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0I2z9cCC9zs

Estakio Beltran, D-Washington (2014)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cuFdkSt8-8o

You should:
- Explain to Twaddle whether he should he use guns in ads, given the nature of his audience(s).
- Specify which audiences each ad targets (some seek multiple audiences) and what other audiences might be offended.
- Recommend whether a gun ad is more valuable in a primary campaign or a general election campaign and why that is (we are assuming a March primary and an early November election).

Part 2
In the same memo, suggest a comprehensive ad campaign strategy for both the primary (March 2020) and general election (November 2020). You should address:
- A schedule for the timing of different types of ads (get-to-know-me, image, substance, and negative) in terms of days prior to the primary and general elections (i.e. seven days out, 30 days out);
- A prioritized list of issues (at least three) Twaddle's campaign should address in both the primary and general election, linked to the audiences that a Texas Republican needs to address in each election (in other words, you have two lists and they should not be identical);
- Which issues the candidate needs to avoid in each election;
- Issues of national importance that may concern a Texas audience, and.
- The use or avoidance of negative advertising, and its timing if employed.


**References:** All ads mentioned should be cited by URL in the reference list so that I can view them if necessary. All quotes and other citations should be cited in a separate reference list (titled "References") that is alphabetized by author. Use in-text citations to refer to referenced materials included in the reference list.

*You may collaborate in the discussion of ideas, but not in writing the papers. The ideas in the outline and writing of the paper must be your own work.*
Remove this page, write your questions, sign and return by third day of class (June 4).

I have read and reviewed the syllabus and I understand that I am responsible for understanding the policies of the course.

__________________________________ Student signature

__________________________________ Student ID number

__________________________________ Date signed

I have the following questions about the course syllabus and policies: