
PS 4165

Mass Media And American Politics

The Ohio State University

Instructor: Jakob A. Miller

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Office: 2081 Derby Hall

Hours: Wednesday 1-3pm

Time: 8:00—9:20am

Place: Page Hall 010

“If you believe that your thoughts originate inside your brain, do you also believe that television shows are made inside your television set?” — *Warren Ellis*

Top Hat URL: <https://app.tophat.com/e/200605>

Top Hat Code: 200605

SMS Number: +1 (315) 636-0905

Course Description: We like to think of ourselves as well-informed citizens - yet almost everything we know about politics we know only secondhand. The media acts as our only window into the political world, and as such, understanding how that window works is of central importance to understanding the actions and beliefs of both our leaders and ourselves. Students will understand how modern American political messages are designed, how they influence the public, and how this changes the behavior of the political elite.

Required Materials:

1. *Media Power in Politics*, 6th Edition

Editor: Graber; **ISBN:** 9781604266108

This book is available on-line, at the campus bookstore, and on reserve at Thompson. Readings from this book are given in the calendar as C1, C2, etc. Other readings are all uploaded to Carmen. Readings must be completed prior to the start of class. You should also keep up with political news: there will be questions in class based on current events occasionally.

2. *Top Hat Enabled Device:* Top Hat is a system that lets you use your laptop, tablet, or phone to respond to in-class questions and assignments. We will use Top Hat every day for your reading quizzes and in-class participation. You can access the system at the link posted on this syllabus. You can find more information about how to use Top Hat on Carmen. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with the Top Hat system, as well as troubleshooting.

Assignments:

Participation	15%
Quizzes	15%
Paper 1	10%
Paper 2	10%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%

Participation: Class participation is both expected and required. It will primarily be measured through Top Hat questions during class. Any answer will get you points, although some questions will offer extra points for getting the right answer. This grade can be adjusted up or down by as much as a third for especially good or poor participation.

Quizzes: Every class will have a quiz over the reading(s) for that day (22, total). Quizzes will be conducted over Top Hat, so be signed in and ready at the beginning of class. Since these measure both your command of the material and how you are keeping up with the class, quizzes cannot be made up for *any* reason. To account for circumstance, your four lowest quizzes will be dropped.

Papers: There will be two papers for this class, each testing your ability to apply what you've learned. Assignment details will be handed out in class prior to the due date. Papers must be uploaded to Carmen by midnight on the due date. Late work will be docked 10 points, and work more than one week late won't be accepted — no exceptions.

Exams: There will be two exams for this class: one midterm and one final. Each will cover half the class material, and test comprehension and application. The exams will be given during regular class hours on the listed dates. Make-up exams will only be approved in light of medical or family emergencies, or University-specified events. Make-up exams must be arranged before an exam has started: they can **not** be arranged afterwards.

Course Policies and Questions:

- **Grade Appeals:** If you feel there has been an error in grading, you may submit a written (one-page, doublespaced) request within one week, detailing the error and giving evidence from class materials. After you provide this document, a decision will be made as to whether your grade will be changed. Final course grades are never negotiable — they are the product of the work you've done over the semester. Incomplete grades will never be offered in the absence of an official University request.
- **Attendance and Absence:** Attendance is not required. Substantial portions of your grade come from in-class activities, however. I don't distinguish between excused and unexcused absences: the decision to attend class or not is best made by you. Everyone will get four reading quiz grades dropped to use as you think best. If you'll have to miss more than four classes, talk to your academic advisor about other options.
- **Extra Credit:** This class participates in the Undergraduate Research Initiative. Thus, extra credit for participating in research *may* be available if we're called to participate. Extra credit will only ever be available to the entire class, never individually.
- **Top Hat:** First off, all tech support for Top Hat is done through them at support@tophat.com. If you have any technical issues, contact them directly and CC me. Below are a few common issues and some tips:
 - *I don't have a Top Hat device!* Make sure: You can use almost anything that has a web browser or can send text messages. Otherwise, the library will let you check out iPads. If all else fails, you can get a prepaid phone or Android tablet for less than you'd pay for a 'clicker'.

- *I have no idea how this works!* Watch the video posted on Carmen, or call Top Hat at 1-(888)-663-5491.
- *Where are my past quizzes?* Which ones you got right or wrong are on Top Hat. If you need details, then come into office hours: quiz questions are only available if you took the quiz, however.
- *The WiFi's out!* Use Offline Mode in the App, or switch to SMS messaging instead. Contact 8Help if it happens often.
- *I got an error message!* Switch to SMS. If that doesn't work, send a screenshot of everything to Top Hat and CC me.

- **Negotiation:** *I dont agree with some of the provisions in this syllabus. Are they negotiable?* No. By continuing as a student in this course, you are indicating that you agree with all of the terms and stipulations within this syllabus, including the course policies and procedures and all deadlines. If you have a fundamental disagreement with any element of this syllabus, or feel that you cannot meet the requirements of this course, it is strongly recommended that you select another class.
- **Accommodations:** That's a lot of scary legalese. I really want you to do well, however. After all, that's why I'm here! With that in mind, accommodations will be made whenever possible and practical. Just make sure to let me know **before** the deadline. After a deadline's passed, there's nothing I can do.

Academic Honesty:

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term academic misconduct includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct. Turnitin will be used to check all class submissions.

Accommodations for Disabled Students: Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs, as accommodations will not be provided retroactively. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohiostate.edu/>

Course Outline:

Reading assignments and lecture coverage might change as it depends on the progress of the class. However, you must keep up with the reading assignments.

TUESDAY		THURSDAY	
Jan 12th	1	14th	2
Introduction and Class Overview <i>Start Section 1</i>		History C1,3	
19th	3	21st	4
Bias Coe et al, Lichter		The Good Citizen C8, Clawson	

TUESDAY		THURSDAY	
26th	5	28th	6
Information C9, Schudson		Standards C5, Zaller	
Feb 2nd	7	4th	8
PAPER 1 DUE/Conclusion No Readings		Public Opinion/Start Section 2 C7, Zaller Ch:3&6	
9th	9	11th	10
Selection C12, Mutz and Martin		Framing C11, Chong and Druckman	
16th	11	18th	12
Priming Berger, Gerber et al.		Agenda Setting C25,28	
23rd	13	25th	14
Elite Effects C33, Clinton & Enamorado, Nyhan et al		MIDTERM EXAM In-Class	
Mar 1st	15	3rd	16
The President/Start Section 3 C19,20		Other Elites C21,35	
8th	17	10th	18
Policy C29,36		Citizens C22,24	
15th		17th	
22nd	19	24th	20
Censorship C34, King et al.		Regulation C31,32	
29th	21	31st	22
PAPER 2 DUE/Conclusion No Readings		Media and Elections/Start Section 4 C15,17,18	
Apr 5th	23	7th	24
Learning C14, Hansen and Pedersen		Manipulation C13, Druckman et al.	
12th	25	14th	26
Advertising Gilens et al, Fallis		Events C27, Sides	
19th	27	21st	28
Lies and Truth No Readings		FINAL EXAM In-Class	