Psychology Applied to the Media
PSY 349
T-TH 11:30-12:45 (ASH 2120)

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phone -- 331-2938
Office Location: ASH
Office Hours -- T & TH (1:00-2:00) or by appointment


Additional readings will be on e-reserve:

In this course we will examine the psychology behind the relationship between the individual and the media. We will explore whether and how the media influences people’s perceptions of themselves, others, and the world in which they live. Yet, the relationship between the media and its audience is by no means unidirectional, the audience has a profound effect on the media. Consequently, we will also discuss how people influence what is presented in the media.

1) **YOU MUST TAKE NOTES DURING CLASS.**

2) There will be three exams in the course with the last of the three being **cumulative.** **PLEASE BE CLEAR ON THE FACT THAT I DO NOT GIVE OUT REVIEW SHEETS.**

Exams will consist of multiple-choice, short answer and essay questions. The essay questions will require you to show that you understand a particular concept(s) or reading and discuss the concept(s) in relation to other course material. For the final exam, there will be a take-home essay to complete and an in-class portion that will consist of multiple choice and short-answer items.

**LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY = HIGH**

3) Global Warming Paper: You are required to write **one** 2-3 page, double-spaced, paper over the course of the semester. The paper will entail your doing a search for 20 articles, books, and or opinion pieces in national, international, and local papers, magazines, and websites dealing with the issue of global warming. You should randomly select 10 sources that argue global warming is real and a result of human behavior and 10 that argue global warming is either not real or is not a result of human behavior. Discuss what you have found using **three readings, concepts and/or theories** discussed in this class.
It would be advantageous for you to read the Hoggan and Littlemore chapters that are on e-reserve prior to beginning the project so that you have a context in which to put the project in.

Thus, the paper is divided into two sections. The first section deals with comparing how proponents from each side of the issue use the concepts/theories that you have chosen to make their case to the audience (and therefore either reinforce existing beliefs or alter the audience’s attitude). As noted in the previous paragraph, this section should be two to three pages in length. A good way to begin your discussion of each concept is to communicate that you know what the concept/theory is that you are about to discuss; then discuss the percentage of those from each side who tend to use the concept in question. After this discussion, you can then give an example, or two, from each side. Make sure the example(s) truly exemplifies the concept in question.

The second section of the paper is a spreadsheet that consists of each of the 20 sources that you have used. It should consist of the title of the source in question, the author, your assessment of the author’s/source’s credibility and the reasoning behind your assessment, and the position that the author takes. You should see this section as one that allows you to demonstrate, and me to assess, your critical thinking skills. I want you to investigate who the source is and what gives the source the right to be considered as one that should be speaking on the issue. Here, you need to assess whether the communicator has anything to gain by taking the position, whether the communicator is biased or not, whether the source is knowledgeable or not. You should think of yourself as an investigative journalist, or a scientist, when working on this section. See the last page of the syllabus for an example of this section.

Each section is worth 15 points, and thus, each is equally important in deciding your final grade for the paper.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY = MODERATE

4) Thought Paper: In completing this paper you are required to listen to eight past or current episodes of the Diane Rhem show. The show is on NPR and can be streamed for free. The show consists of a group of panelists who discuss current national and international issues. The paper entails your discussing your current level of knowledge about national and international issues and where this knowledge has come from. In discussing this you should incorporate relevant course material from the lectures, the readings and the films. Then, after listening to the eight episodes, you should complete the second section of the paper. In this section, you should address how your knowledge regarding national and/or international issues has or has not changed. You should discuss the factors in the show that were significant in either changing, or maintaining, your knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes and relate this process to the course material (for example, you might discuss the Zaller readings, different ways of gaining knowledge about the world, persuasion, propaganda, etc.)
The paper should be no longer than 2.5 pages in length.

**LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY = EASY**

6) Quizzes: There will be three quizzes given over the course of the semester. Each quiz will be worth 10 points and will consist of multiple-choice questions. The quizzes will be announced at least two days before being given.

**LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY = MODERATE**

7) **DO NOT BRING ANY FORM OF COMPUTER TO CLASS.**

8) **CELL PHONES MUST BE TURNED OFF DURING CLASS. EVERY THIRD TIME THE CLASS IS INTERRUPTED BY A CELL PHONE RINGING OR I AM DISTRACTED BY SOMEONE TEXTING, I HAVE THE OPTION OF GIVING THE CLASS A SNAP QUIZ.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought Paper</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Warming Paper</td>
<td>30 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>70 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, the total number of points in the course is 260.

Grade Distribution:

- **A** -- 100-94%
- **A-** -- 93.9-90%
- **B+** -- 89.9-87%
- **B** -- 86.9-83%
- **B-** -- 82.9-80%
- **C+** -- 79.9-77%
- **C** -- 76.9-73%
- **C-** -- 72.9-70%
- **D+** -- 69.9-67%
- **D** -- 66.9-63%
- **D-** -- 62.9-60%
- **F** -- 59.9-->

1/6 – 1/8  Introduction, Theoretical Approaches
1/13 – 1/15  Theoretical Approaches/Models

**Readings (Complete by 1/15)**

1) **Introduction and Ch. 1 in McChesney: Rich Media, Poor Democracy**


1/20 -- 1/22 Film: The Corporation and Discussion
1/27 -- 1/29 Discussion
2/3 -- 2/5 Methodologies
2/10 Methodologies
2/12 *** EXAM 1 ***
2/17 – 2/19 Attitudes

Readings (Complete by 2/17)
1) Zaller, J. (1997) *A Model of Communication Effects at the Outbreak of the Gulf War*
2/22 THOUGHT PAPER DUE BY 5pm via Blackboard
2/24 – 2/26 Attitudes and Persuasion

Readings (Complete by 2/29)
2) Hoggan and Littlemore (2009) *Climate Cover-up: The Crusade to Deny Global Warming.* (Ch. 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7; pgs 23-87)

3/1 – 3/8 SPRING BREAK
3/6 LAST DAY TO DROP WITH A GRADE OF “W”
3/10 – 3/12 Persuasion
3/17 – 3/19 Propaganda

Film: *PsyWar*

3/19 GLOBAL WARMING PAPER DUE
3/24 – 3/26 Propaganda

Readings (Complete by 3/24)
1) Behind TV Analysts, Pentagon’s Hidden Hand (New York Times)
3) Pratkanis & Aronson (pgs 261-268)

3/31 – 4/2  PsyWar Discussion

4/2  *** Exam 2***

4/7 – 4/9  News

Readings (Complete by 4/9)


2) Akre, J. (2002) The Fox, the Hounds, and the Sacred Cows

3) Ch. 5 in Rowse: Drive-By Journalism

4/10  Take-home portion of final exam will be posted on Blackboard.

4/14 – 4/16  Film: Bill Moyers Journal: Buying the War

4/18  Take-home portion of final exam posted on Blackboard by 12 NOON

4/21  *** Final Exam (Cumulative) (4:00-5:50)
Example of one form that spread sheet for paper can take. Note this is not the only format and information that you can use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article/ Source Title:</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Credentials/ Credibility</th>
<th>Position For or Against Global Warming:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Naturalnews.com</td>
<td>Dr. David Gutierrez</td>
<td>Clinical Oncologist In California. Although he does have advanced training in Medicine he appears to not have an environmental education background from his listed resume. Not the best source for information on global warming.</td>
<td>For Global Warming. The article uses peripheral routes to persuasion stating various “predicted” changes in the climate of the U.S. No objective data presented. Again appeals to fears of widespread consequences for our actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalnews.com</td>
<td>Jerome Douglas Citizen Op- Ed writer for naturalnews.com</td>
<td>Op-Ed writer for Naturalnews.com Journalism background</td>
<td>For Global Warming and believes that it will lead to widespread drought and famine over the next century. Again appeals to fears and implies end of life as we know it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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