

Political Science 480: Media and Politics

Chaminade University: Fall Term 2012

Instructor: Dr. Monique Mironesco

<http://chaminade.ecollege.com>

Office Hours: anytime in my Ecollege virtual office

Email: mironesc@hawaii.edu

Phone: (Cel) 754-4145

This course will serve as an analysis of the politics within various media themselves as well as an examination of the media's role in the political process and the shape of the political landscape. This will enable us to understand how each component of the course affects the others. We will not limit ourselves to one type of media, but rather examine print, radio and television media.

We will use gender, race/ethnicity, and class as lenses through which to view various media in current times. In order to do this we will not only read about the media to examine some authors' takes on media's role in the political process, but we will also immerse ourselves in media in various ways to understand how it affects all of us everyday. Therefore, it will be your responsibility during this course to listen to the radio, watch various channels on television, and read newspapers with analytical and critical eyes and ears. You will report back to the class with your observations as much as possible on the Ecollege class discussion board.

As stated above, there are two components to this course. However, instead of spending half the course focusing on media's impact on politics and the other half focusing on politics within media, we will instead play the two off of each other to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between the two. This link is what affects us daily and its examination deserves some worthy consideration.

This class should serve as a space to questions our assumptions about the various media in society as well as a new way of understanding media issues through a political perspective.

Some learning outcomes of this course are:

- Students should understand key concepts and tensions in media studies;
- Students should be able to think critically about and through these concepts;
- Students should be able to re-examine some of their assumptions about media issues;
- Students should develop empathy for, and open-mindedness about, viewpoints different and sometimes opposite to their own.

Some of the strategies used to obtain these learning outcomes are:

- Reaction journals used to facilitate inquiries into topics that are related to students' personal lives;
- Discussion board participation, Powerpoint presentations, projects; and papers;
- One midterm paper and a final paper discussed below.

Teaching-Learning Philosophy

In my experience, people learn better when they are actively engaged, rather than passively looking and listening. Therefore, this class requires students to articulate their thoughts and critiques and develop their arguments both in writing and in discussion. We will spend some class time discussing what makes for good writing. It also seems to be best when everyone in the class is aware that they are both teaching and learning. In keeping with both these ideas, the class is designed so that students have substantial input into the course content.

Course requirements:

***Attendance and participation [Questions and Responses] (15%):** Since this class is based on online discussion and scheduled student presentations, regular attendance on Ecollege, especially the discussion board, is absolutely critical to your success in this class and to the success of your fellow students. If you don't "attend," you can't participate and missing week after week of class is equivalent to missing entire chunks of the semester in an in-person class. You are expected to contribute your thoughts, reactions, questions and responses online in the class. While your questions and responses aren't graded individually, their overall quality throughout the course is taken into consideration in the tabulation of your final course grade. The questions and responses are based on the **readings**.

***Journal entries (15%):** These are your personal critical reactions to each week's **lectures** found on the course website in the document sharing tool. Please note that the lectures are not necessarily on the same topic as the readings. The journals should be one (double-spaced) typed page. These will be due once a week on Fridays by midnight. Please post these to me either as a Word attachment or cut and paste the text into the body of the message in the DROPBOX tool in Ecollege. The latter option is preferable for the journals. There is 1 point possible for each journal. You will receive 1 point if you incorporate the lecture topic with current events and/or your personal experiences in your analytical critique. You will receive ½ point if you only discuss a current event OR only provide a synopsis of the lecture, or otherwise turn in lower quality or late work. You will receive 0 points if you don't turn the assignment in at all, or if it is too short or superficial to count as a full-fledged journal.

Note: for the questions/responses and the journal assignments, you will be not only graded on quantity (ie: whether you actually turn the assignments in, but also on *quality*.)

***One midterm paper (30%):** The midterm paper will be **4-5** pages in length. This is your opportunity to show me what you have learned thus far from our critical analyses of the readings and lectures. Students will post their choices of questions during the beginning of Week 4 (by Wednesday midnight). Then, students will vote as to which question they would like to answer for the midterm paper (by Friday midnight). Please, let's not have everyone vote for their own questions since that defeats the purpose. I will then post the chosen question at the end of Week 4 and you will have until the Friday of Week 5 to return your paper to me. There will be no journals due on the Friday of Week 5. The midterm questions will be posted and voted on in the midterm question discussion board. Please continue to post your regular questions and responses under the normal weekly discussion board.

***Comprehensive final exam (40%):** This exam will be an in-person comprehensive exam given at Chaminade University on December 8, 2012. This will be the culmination of your course experience. The exam is also administered on various military bases. If you qualify to take it on base, please follow the instructions sent to you via the Evening Programs office at Chaminade. If you are off-island, you can arrange for your exam to be proctored at your location. Please contact Donna Yoshimura to make proctoring arrangements at dyoshi@chaminade.edu at least two weeks before the final date.

Note: It isn't fair for some people to have more time to turn in assignments than others. If your paper is late, there will be three points deducted from your grade EACH DAY that it is late. It is very easy to go from an A to a B to a C very quickly. Therefore, I strongly encourage you to turn your papers in on time.

Note: Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. Taking credit for someone else's work is a grave ethical offense. It is especially tempting to engage in this practice as busy/overworked students, but *don't*. After reading your short journals throughout the semester, I become quite proficient at discerning your writing from someone else's. If I do find that you are engaging in this practice, you will receive an "F" for that assignment and be placed on probation in my course, where I will keep a sharp eye on your further work. Therefore, please cite your sources in an appropriate way, (see the citation for the required texts below as an example) and if you have any questions you can either ask me, refer to your library, or to any style manual you have available.

Note: Any class is like a marathon. If you don't run the entire race, you don't get a finisher's t-shirt. The same goes for this class. If you don't do all the work, and don't attend class online, you can't expect to get a passing grade.

Required Readings:

McChesney, Robert. 2008. *The Political Economy of Media: Enduring Issues, Emerging Dilemmas*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Course Schedule: This schedule is not set in stone. With class consensus, we may alter it to fit our needs.

Week 1: Introductions and Historical Perspectives on Journalism

Reading: McChesney, Chapters 1-3

Monday, October 1

Introductions – Please post your introduction to the Welcome and Introductions Discussion Board

Wednesday, October 3

Question due to Week 1 Discussion board by midnight

Friday, October 5

Response due to Week 1 discussion board

Journals due by midnight – post to dropbox tool

Week 2: How to Think about Journalism

Reading: McChesney, Chapters 5 and 11

Wednesday, October 10

Question due to Week 2 Discussion board by midnight

Friday, October 12

Response due to Week 2 discussion board

Journals due by midnight – post to dropbox tool

Week 3: The Media Marketplace

Reading: McChesney, Chapters 13 and 14

Wednesday, October 17

Question due to Week 3 Discussion board by midnight

Friday, October 19

Response due to Week 3 discussion board

Journals due by midnight – post to dropbox tool

Week 4: The Decline of Adversarial Journalism/ News Gathering and News Making

Reading: McChesney, Chapter 4

Wednesday, October 24

Question due to Week 4 Discussion board by midnight

Please post midterm paper topic suggestions by midnight

Friday, October 26

Response due to Week 4 discussion board

Journals due by midnight – post to dropbox tool

Please vote on your choice of midterm paper topic by midnight

Week 5: Media Influence and Class

Reading: McChesney, Chapter 10

Wednesday, October 31

Question due to Week 5 Discussion board by midnight

Friday, November 2

Response due to Week 5 discussion board

MIDTERM PAPERS due by midnight – post to dropbox tool – **No journals due**

Week 6: Ownership, Regulation and Guidance of the Media

Reading: McChesney, Chapter 15

Wednesday, November 7

Question due to Week 6 Discussion board by midnight

Friday, November 9

Response due to Week 6 Discussion board by midnight

Journals due by midnight – post to dropbox tool

Week 7: The Internet and US Communications

Reading: McChesney, Chapter 16

Wednesday, November 14

Question due to Week 7 Discussion board by midnight

Friday, November 16

Response due to Week 7 discussion board

Journals due by midnight – post to dropbox tool

Week 8: Political Advertising/The Rise of New Media

Reading: See article on Political Advertising in the Document Sharing tool and McChesney Chapter 18

Wednesday, November 21

Question due to Week 8 Discussion board by midnight

Friday, November 23

Response due to Week 8 discussion board

Journals due by midnight – post to dropbox tool

Week 9: Solutions to Media Crises

Reading: See Montgomery Chapter in Document Sharing tool and McChesney Chapter 23

Wednesday, November 28

Question due to Week 9 Discussion board by midnight

Friday, November 30

Response due to Week 9 discussion board

Journals due by midnight – post to laulima weekly assignment tool

Week 10: No Lecture this week

Reading: <http://www.pbs.org/mediashift/2006/09/your-guide-to-citizen-journalism270.html>

(Use the CTRL + click key to access the reading)

Wednesday, December 5

Question due to Week 10 Discussion board by midnight

Friday, December 7

Response due to Week 10 Discussion board by midnight

NO Journals due this week

COMPREHENSIVE FINAL ESSAY EXAM – At main campus, the in person final will be held December 8, 2012. Location TBA. Please schedule via Proctor U or by calling Evening Programs office at Chaminade/emailing Donna Yoshimura at dyoshi@chaminade.edu