Mass Media and Politics
Poli102F
Center Hall 217B
Mondays/Wednesdays 2-4:50pm
Summer 2015

Instructor: David M. Searle
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Office Hours: Monday’s 12-2pm or by appointment

Course Description
This course focuses on the intertwining role of the mass media, politicians, and voters. We will be discussing how the media shapes policy and citizen policy preferences, how politicians use and influence the media, and how citizens influence the media and politicians. The course will also focus on the methodological difficulties in understanding the directional relationship between these three key political actors. We will be covering different theories of how the media can influence citizens as well as discussing the size of these effects. The course serves as an introduction to the influence of the media.

Readings and Attendance
Readings and attendance are mandatory. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings PRIOR to class. All readings will be available on the TED course site or through the Library’s proxy server on JSTOR.

Assignments
Midterm Exam (30%): This will be taken in-class on July 15.
Final Exam (40%): The final exam is scheduled for July 31 from 3-6pm.
In-Class Assignments (20%): All students will complete in-class assignments throughout the course.
Participation (10%): Participation in class discussions and in-class assignments are required.

Suggested Resources

Course Schedule
Class 1 (June 29): Introduction
Leighley Chapter 7
News article: http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/may/29/us-economy-shrinks-first-quarter-strong-dollar

Class 2 (July 1): Media Now and Then
Graber Chapter 4

Class 4 (July 8): Bias in the Media
Graber Chapter 12

Class 5 (July 13): Political Knowledge

Class 5 (July 13): Public Opinion
Iyengar Chapter 8 (selected pages)

Class 6 (July 15): MIDTERM EXAM

Class 7 (July 20): Advertising in Elections
Iyengar Chapter 6

Class 8 (July 22): Politicians and the Mass Media
Leighley Chapter 8

Class 9 (July 27): Do campaigns matter?

Class 10 (July 29): Mass Media and Democracy
Course Policies

Attendance and Class Readings
Attendance and all course readings are mandatory. All readings should be completed prior to the specified date. Discussion represents a large portion of the grade, completing the readings ahead of class improves the quality and substance of discussion.

Excuse Policy
Medical documentation is required and must be turned in to apply for an extension or make-up exam. Any extension or make-up exam will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Grades
Grades will be handed out in class and/or during office hours. Grades will not be communicated via email or any other type of correspondence. It is students’ responsibility to retrieve your grades. Please write your name on all assignments and exams as it is officially registered with the University, otherwise grades may not be entered correctly.

Academic Honesty
Cheating, plagiarism and other violations of academic honesty are serious offenses. Graded assignments are not collaborative efforts in this class. You must work independently on all exams and papers. Please refer to the UCSD policy on integrity of scholarship for further details. If you are caught cheating in this course (this includes plagiarism), you will be awarded a letter grade of an F and reported to appropriate authorities.