UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

POLITICS AND MEDIA
POL 4460G/9766B

Spring 2015

Wednesday: 11:30 – 1:30
Room: SH 3355
Office Hours: Thurs 11:00 – 12:00
Or by appointment

Instructor: Prof. Marta Dyczok
Office: SSC Room 4414
tel: 661-2111 x84982
e-mail: mdyczok@uwo.ca

Course Description

Does the government control the media—or do the media control the government? Do the news media educate or manipulate the citizenry? Much of what we know about politics, political leaders, party politics, or public policy comes from the media - television, radio, newspapers, and the internet. This course looks at the relationship between politics and media, explores how media, civic engagements, and politics are intertwined. It notes how constantly changing technology affects media systems and thus democracy, drawing on examples from around the world. The joint graduate/4th year undergraduate course will be conducted in seminar format and meet weekly.

Undergraduate Assignments

Seminar Participation 20%
Seminar Presentation 20%
Media Monitoring 10%
Research Paper 25%
Exam 25%

Graduate Assignments

Seminar Participation 20%
Seminar Presentation 20%
Media Monitoring 10%
Research Paper 50%

Readings

Textbook


Additional readings may be suggested during the course.
COURSE SCHEDULE

I. INTRODUCTION

Week 1. Introduction
(14 January 2015)

Required


Recommended


II. REPRESENTING POLITICS

Week 2. Political Bias
(21 January 2015)

Required

McCombs, Maxwell E. *Setting The Agenda: The Mass Media And Public Opinion* (Polity, 2004), Chapter 1
Street, *Mass media...* Chs 1 and 2

Week 3. Politics and Entertainment
(28 January 2015)

Required

Van Zoonen, Lisbeth, *Entertaining the Citizen* (Landham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield, 2005), Chapter 1, pp. 1-18
Week 4. Media Effects  
(4 February 2015) RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSAL DUE

Required


Street, *Mass media… Ch 4*

III. THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF MEDIA

Week 5. State Control and State Propaganda  
(11 February 2015)

Required


Street, *Mass media… Ch 5*

18 February 2015 NO CLASS READING WEEK

Week 6. Conglomerate Control  
(25 February 2015)

Required


Street, *Mass media… Ch 6*
Week 7. Watchdogs or Lapdogs?
(4 March 2015)

Required

Davies, Nicholas. Flat Earth News (London: Chatto & Windus, 2008), Chapter 1
Street, Mass media… Ch 7

Week 8. Globalization and the Webs of Power
(11 March 2015)

Required

Street, Mass media… Ch 8

IV. MASS MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY

Week 9. Transforming Political Communication?
(18 March 2015)

Required

Street, Mass media… Ch 9
Week 10. New Media, New Politics?
(25 March 2015)
Required


Street, Mass media... Ch 10

Recommended


Week 11. Power and Mass Media
(1 April 2015) RESEARCH PAPER DUE
Required

Curran, James, Media and Power (New York and London: Routledge, 2002) on-line
Street, Mass media... Ch 11

Week 12. A Free Press?
(8 April 2015)

Required

Street, Mass media... Ch 12, Conclusion