COMM 7510-001: Media & Politics
University of Utah	3 Credits
Fall 2020	Monday 2:00-4:50	LNCO 2850

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Course Website: Canvas

Overview and Objectives

Broadly, this course introduces students to some of the key ideas in the study of political communication—an interdisciplinary subfield of communication and political science. It does so by way of a collaborative exercise in which we will attempt to answer this guiding question: What do foundational concepts/topics in the study of political communication look like when viewed primarily through the lens of identity? To answer this question, we consider different perspectives on identity and use these perspectives to engage five domains of inquiry that have a rich history in political communication research. We look at each domain in terms of foundational research and recent extensions. The result of this endeavor, I hope, will be an understanding of political communication that is necessarily narrower, but also deeper and richer, than would be provided in a typical survey of this area of research. To keep the scope manageable, the course focuses primarily on the U.S. political context.

The course has four primary objectives: 1) To provide students with a critical appreciation of the complex relationships that exist among U.S. politics, media, and the public, 2) to familiarize students with several of the key concepts, theories, and scholars in the field of political communication, 3) to produce, collaboratively, the beginnings of a literature review that answers our guiding question and might ultimately be publishable, and 4) to encourage students to be active and intelligent participants in democratic society.

Readings

No specific books are required for this course, though see the "book review" assignment below. All required articles and chapters will be made available on Canvas. Reading assignments are listed on the Course Calendar below. All readings should be completed by the beginning of class on the day they are listed.

Assignments

Participation. The success of this course depends on the active participation of everyone involved. Broadly, active participation includes being in class (and on time, when meeting in-person or synchronously), regularly contributing to discussion in a manner that reflects a close reading of the assigned material, and treating your classmates with respect. Engaging in

inappropriate or disrespectful behaviors during class time or in our asynchronous online interactions will not be tolerated.

More specifically, the goal of participation in this class is thorough *engagement* with course material, especially with the readings and your classmates' ideas about those readings. To explain what I mean by engagement, I quote here from Prof. Michael Wagner, University of Wisconsin: "While the ability to criticize research is an important part of your development as a scholar, it is not that difficult to do and, as such, is not a primary concern of the seminar. Our primary purpose is to engage with what we read, asking questions about the empirical and normative assumptions the research makes, how it fits with other work we are aware of, and how we might advance the production of political communication knowledge by taking what we read seriously. Put another way, and paraphrasing *Hamilton*'s George Washington, 'criticism is easy, engaging is harder.'"

This kind of engagement can be demonstrated during our in-person/online discussions, as well as in written comments posted to classmates' article summaries. I will monitor student participation and assess it as a whole at the semester's end. If you have any questions about the expectations for your participation, please do not hesitate to ask.

Identity Paper. During the first few weeks of the semester we will explore different perspectives on identity. As part of this exploration, students will (a) select a published article that offers a perspective on identity and share it with the class, and (b) write a short paper (approximately 600 words) that articulates a position on identity as it relates to political communication. This paper should not merely summarize the assigned readings. Rather, it should synthesize, engage, and extend the central ideas advanced in two or more readings, one of which must be the article that the student selected. Students should also be prepared to discuss their ideas with the rest of the class to stimulate broader discussion. Student-selected articles are due via email to Prof. Coe by September 1; papers are due via Canvas by the beginning of class time on September 7.

Book Review. Each student is responsible for selecting a book and writing a review of it (approximately 1,000 words). The book should have a copyright date of 2018 or later, be written by an academic, and be focused on issues that are relevant to course content. Students are encouraged to locate a journal to which they could submit their review. Students should also be prepared to discuss their review with the rest of the class to stimulate broader discussion. Due by the beginning of class time on November 30.

Literature Review Contributions. A primary component of this course will involve students summarizing/engaging with the readings in written form, as we together build a literature review that attempts to answer our guiding question. Students' written contributions should be posted to the discussion forum on Canvas, and will take one of two forms.

  Foundations Contributions. For each of the six "foundations" days (see Course Calendar), students will summarize/engage with one assigned article (specified by the instructor) in a discussion post of 250-350 words.

  Extensions Contributions. For each of the five "extensions" days (see Course Calendar), students will summarize/engage with an article of their choosing in a discussion post of 250-350 words. The article will not be one of the assigned readings, but rather a peer-reviewed academic journal article that the student thinks usefully complements and/or challenges the

"foundations" readings for the previous week. Students are required to attach the article to their discussion post so that other students can access it easily.
Due by the beginning of class time on the assigned day (see Course Calendar).

Grading

Grades will be determined on the basis of participation (20%), identity paper (10%), book review (20%), and contributions to the literature review for "foundations" (25%) and "extensions" (25%). The grading scale is as follows:

A 93 or above	B 83 – 86	C 73 – 76	D 63 – 66
A- 90 – 92	B- 80 – 82	C- 70 – 72	D- 60 – 62
B+ 87 – 89	C+ 77 – 79	D+ 67 – 69	E 59 or below

Late assignments will be dealt with at the instructor's discretion. You should notify me of any problems as soon as they occur.

COVID-19 Considerations

As a hybrid course, some of our class meetings are scheduled to meet in person (see Course Calendar below). These courses might be held synchronously via Zoom if I deem it necessary to ensure the health and safety of our class community. Based on CDC guidelines, the university requires everyone to wear face coverings (of the type specified here) in shared public spaces on campus, including our classroom. As a reminder, when I wear a face covering, I am protecting you. When you wear a face covering, you are protecting me and all of your classmates. If you forget your face covering, I will ask you to leave class to retrieve it, or I will provide you with a face covering. If you refuse to wear a face covering, I reserve the right to cancel class immediately, consistent with University policy, to ensure the safety of the other students. Your violation of the University's face covering requirement will be reported to the Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Department of Communication. If subsequent violations occur, you will be reported to the Department of Communication Chair and to the Dean of Students for a possible violation of the Student Code. Note that some students may qualify for accommodations through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you think you meet these criteria and desire an exception to the face covering policy, contact the Center for Disability and Access (CDA). Accommodations should be obtained prior to the first day of class so that I am notified by CDA of any students who are not required to wear a face covering.

Adding the Course

In most cases, the automated waitlist is used to add students to this course. In cases where that is not possible, students can request a permission code from me during the first week of class; I will provide one if circumstances allow. I do not add students after the first week of class.

Student Conduct

All students will be strictly held to the standards of conduct and academic integrity set forth in the University's Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students are advised to carefully review this code (available at http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php.

Learning Environment

One of my most important responsibilities as a professor is to provide a classroom/online environment that is conducive to learning. Part of this responsibility has to do with limiting distractions. Given this, close attention during class time is expected. If you are doing anything other than engaging in class (e.g., texting, surfing the web), you are potentially hurting the learning environment. If at any point during the semester I judge the classroom learning environment to be negatively affected by students' use of laptop computers or other personal electronics, I reserve the right to prohibit students from using such devices in class. Please also note that audio or video recording during class is not allowed without my written consent. The same is true of distributing audio or video course material that I provide online.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Consistent with the stated values of the University of Utah (see https://diversity.utah.edu), this course strives to well serve students from all backgrounds—an approach that enriches the educational experience of the entire university community. Accordingly, I will work to present materials that are respectful of diversity along the lines of, for example, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, age, religion, and socioeconomic status. Any suggestions you have along these lines are always welcome.

Names and Pronouns

The class rosters I receive provide each student's legal name and "preferred first name" (if previously entered by the student in the Student Profile section of their CIS account, which can be updated at any time). I want to refer to you by whatever name and pronoun you choose, so please feel free to alert me of any name or pronoun changes at any time.

Disability and Access

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability & Access (CDA), 162 Olpin Union Building, 801-581-5020. CDA will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to CDA.

Content Accommodation

The University recognizes that students' sincerely-held core beliefs may make it difficult for students to fulfill some requirements of some courses or majors. The University assumes no obligation to ensure that all students are able to complete any major. It is the student's obligation to determine, before the last day to drop courses without penalty, when course requirements conflict with the student's sincerely-held core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class. A student who finds this solution impracticable may request a content accommodation. If such accommodations are desired, students should carefully review the university policy (https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php) and consult with me, keeping in mind that I am unlikely to grant such requests because I carefully selected each piece of course content for its specific pedagogical value.

Campus Safety and Student Wellness

Your safety and mental health are top priorities. To report suspicious activity, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu. I know that personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, and the like can interfere with your ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness at www.wellness.utah.edu or 801-581-7776.

Addressing Sexual Misconduct

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (135 Park Building, 801-581-8365) or to the Office of the Dean of Students (270 Union Building, 801-581-7066). For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness (426 SSB, 801-581-7776). To report to the police, call the Department of Public Safety at 801-585-2677. Please note that university policy dictates that professors are "mandated reporters," meaning that if you disclose instances of sexual misconduct to me I am required to report it to the university.

Course Calendar

Please note that this schedule is tentative; any changes will be announced in class or online. Readings for each day are listed according to the order in which I suggest you read them.

Aug. 24	Course Introduction	*Online, via Zoom*
Bennett, W. L., & Pfetsch, B. (2018). Rethinking political communication in a time of disrupted public spheres. *Journal of Communication*, *68*, 243-253.		
Aug. 31	**Perspectives on Identity I**	*Online, Async.*
Hornsey, M. J. (2008). Social identity theory and self-categorization theory: A historical review. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, *2*, 204-222.		
Mason, L. (2018). *Uncivil agreement: How politics became our identity*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 1: Identity-based democracy (pp. 1-16).		
Cho, S., Crenshaw, K. W., & McCall, L. (2013). Toward a field of intersectionality studies: Theory, applications, and praxis. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, *38*, 785-810.		
Chávez, K. R. (2012). Doing intersectionality: Power, privilege, and identities in political activist communities. In N. Bardhan & M. P. Orbe (Eds.), *Identity research and communication: Intercultural reflections and future directions* (pp. 21-32). Lanham, MD: Lexington.		
Coe, K., & Griffin, R. A. (2020). Marginalized identity invocation online: The case of President Donald Trump on Twitter. *Social Media and Society*, *6*(1), 1-12.		
Kreiss, D., Lawrence, R. G., & McGregor, S. C. (2020). Political identity ownership: Symbolic contests to represent members of the public. *Social Media and Society*, *6*(2), 1-5.		
Sep. 7	**Perspectives on Identity II**	*No class; Holiday*
Readings selected by students (see Canvas); Identity paper due via Canvas		
Sep. 14	**News Norms – Foundations**	*Online, Async.*
Entman, R. M. (2004). *Projections of power: Framing news, public opinion, and U.S. foreign policy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 1: Projecting power in the news (pp. 1-28).		
Bennett, W. L., Lawrence, R. G., & Livingston, S. (2007). *When the press fails: Political power and the news media from Iraq to Katrina*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 3: None dare call it torture: Abu Ghraib and the inner workings of press dependence (pp. 72-107).		
Baym, G. (2005). The Daily Show: Discursive integration and the reinvention of political journalism. *Political Communication*, *22*, 259-276.		
Chadwick, A. (2017). *The hybrid media system: Politics and power* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press. Chapter 8: Hybrid norms in news and journalism (pp. 184-216).		
Meeks, L. (2012). Is she "man enough"? Women candidates, executive political offices, and news coverage. *Journal of Communication*, *62*, 175-193.		
Dimitrova, D. V., & Kostadinova, P. (2013). Identifying antecedents of the strategic game frame: A longitudinal analysis. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *90*, 75-88.		

Sep. 21	News Norms – Extensions	*Online, via Zoom*
Conway-Silva, B. A., Filer, C. R., Kenski, K., & Tsetsi, E. (2018). Reassessing Twitter's agenda-building power: An analysis of intermedia agenda-setting effects during the 2016 presidential primary season. *Social Science Computer Review*, *36*, 469-483.		
Wells, C., Shah, D., Lukito, J., Pelled, A., Pevehouse, J. C., & Yang, J. (2020). Trump, Twitter, and news media responsiveness: A media systems approach. *New Media & Society*, *22*, 659-682.		
Entman, R. M., & Usher, N. (2018). Framing in a fractured democracy: Impacts of digital technology on ideology, power and cascading network activation. *Journal of Communication*, *68*, 298-308.		
Xia, Y., Robinson, S., Zahay, M., & Freelon, D. (2020). The evolving journalistic roles on social media: Exploring "engagement" as relationship-building between journalists and citizens. *Journalism Practice, 14*, 556-573.		
Sep. 28	**Effects – Foundations I**	*Online, Async.*
Scheufele, D. A., & Tewksbury, D. (2007). Framing, agenda setting, and priming: The evolution of three media effects models. *Journal of Communication, 57*, 9–20.		
Searles, K., & Smith, G. (2016). Who's the boss? Setting the agenda in a fragmented media environment. *International Journal of Communication*, *10*, 22.		
Borah, P. (2011). Conceptual issues in framing theory: A systematic examination of a decade's literature. *Journal of Communication*, *61*, 246-263.		
Rodriguez, L., & Dimitrova, D. V. (2011). The levels of visual framing. *Journal of Visual Literacy*, *30*, 48-65.		
Valentino, N. A., Hutchings, V. L., & White, I. K. (2002). Cues that matter: How political ads prime racial attitudes during campaigns. *American Political Science Review, 96*, 75-90.		
Cacciatore, M. A., Scheufele, D. A., & Iyengar, S. (2016). The end of framing as we know it… and the future of media effects. *Mass Communication and Society*, *19*, 7-23.		
Oct. 5	**Effects – Foundations II**	*Online, Async.*
Young, D. G. (2004). Late-night comedy in election 2000: Its influence on candidate trait ratings and the moderating effects of political knowledge and partisanship. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, *48*, 1-22.		
Mutz, D. C., & Nir, L. (2010). Not necessarily the news: Does fictional television influence real-world policy preferences? *Mass Communication and Society*, *13*, 196-217.		
Otto, L. P., Lecheler, S., & Schuck, A. R. (2020). Is context the key? The (non-)differential effects of mediated incivility in three European countries. *Political Communication*, *37*, 88-107.		
Warner, B. R., McKinney, M. S., Bramlett, J. C., Jennings, F. J., & Funk, M. E. (2020). Reconsidering partisanship as a constraint on the persuasive effects of debates. *Communication Monographs*, *87*, 137-157.		
Bennett, W. L., & Iyengar, S. (2008). A new era of minimal effects? The changing foundations of political communication. *Journal of Communication*, 58, 707–731.		

Holbert, R. L., Garrett, R. K., & Gleason, L. S. (2010). A new era of minimal effects? A response to Bennett and Iyengar. *Journal of Communication*, *60*, 15-34.		
Oct. 12	**Effects – Extensions**	*Online, via Zoom*
Wamble, J. J., & Laird, C. N. (2018). The power of post-racial: An exploration of post-racial rhetoric's influence on candidate evaluations. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*. Online first.		
Feezell, J. T., Glazier, R. A., & Boydstun, A. E. (2019). Framing, identity, and responsibility: Do episodic vs. thematic framing effects vary by target population? *Politics, Groups, and Identities*. Online first.		
Bradshaw, S., & Kenski, K. (2019). Social identity and group emotion: Media effects and support for military intervention. *International Journal of Communication*, *13*, 2535–2555.		
Ramasubramanian, S., & Banjo, O. O. (2020). Critical media effects framework: Bridging critical cultural communication and media effects through power, intersectionality, context, and agency. *Journal of Communication*, *70*, 379-400.		
Oct. 19	**News Use – Foundations**	*Online, Async.*
Prior, M. (2007). Post-broadcast democracy: How media choice increases inequality in political involvement and polarizes elections. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1: Introduction (pp. 1-26).		
Stroud, N. J. (2011). Niche news: The politics of news choice. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. Chapter 3: Using niche news (pp. 41-86).		
Thorson, K., & Wells, C. (2016). Curated flows: A framework for mapping media exposure in the digital age. *Communication Theory*, *26*, 309-328.		
Dunaway, J., Searles, K., Sui, M., & Paul, N. (2018). News attention in a mobile era. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *23*, 107-124.		
Beam, M. A., Child, J. T., Hutchens, M. J., & Hmielowski, J. D. (2018). Context collapse and privacy management: Diversity in Facebook friends increases online news reading and sharing. *New Media & Society*, *20*, 2296-2314.		
Stroud, N. J., Feldman, L., Wojcieszak, M., & Bimber, B. (2019). The consequences of forced versus selected political media exposure. *Human Communication Research*, *45*, 27-51.		
Oct. 26	**News Use – Extensions**	*Online, via Zoom*
Van Aelst, P., Strömbäck, J., Aalberg, T., Esser, F., De Vreese, C., et al. (2017). Political communication in a high-choice media environment: A challenge for democracy? *Annals of the International Communication Association*, *41*, 3-27.		
Darr, J. P., & Dunaway, J. L. (2018). Resurgent mass partisanship revisited: The role of media choice in clarifying elite ideology. *American Politics Research*, *46*, 943-970.		
Edgerly, S., & Vraga, E. K. (2020). Deciding what's news: News-ness as an audience concept for the hybrid media environment. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*. Online first.		
McGregor, S. C. (2020). "Taking the temperature of the room": How political campaigns use social media to understand and represent public opinion. *Public Opinion Quarterly*. Online first.		

Nov. 2	Participation – Foundations	*Online, Async.*
Xenos, M., & Moy, P. (2007). Direct and differential effects of the Internet on political and civic engagement. *Journal of Communication*, *57*, 704-718.		
Gil de Zúñiga, H., Veenstra, A., Vraga, E., & Shah, D. (2010). Digital democracy: Reimagining pathways to political participation. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, *7*, 36-51.		
Gonzalez-Bailon, S., Kaltenbrunner, A., & Banchs, R. E. (2010). The structure of political discussion networks: A model for the analysis of online deliberation. *Journal of Information Technology*, *25*, 230-243.		
Valenzuela, S., Arriagada, A., & Scherman, A. (2012). The social media basis of youth protest behavior: The case of Chile. *Journal of Communication*, *62*, 299-314.		
Vaccari, C., Chadwick, A., & O'Loughlin, B. (2015). Dual screening the political: Media events, social media, and citizen engagement. *Journal of Communication*, *65*, 1041-1061.		
Boulianne, S. (2016). Online news, civic awareness, and engagement in civic and political life. *New Media & Society*, *18*, 1840-1856.		

Nov. 9	Participation – Extensions	*Online, via Zoom*
Bode, L. (2017). Gateway political behaviors: The frequency and consequences of low-cost political engagement on social media. *Social Media and Society*, *3*(4), 1-10.		
Freelon, D., McIlwain, C., & Clark, M. (2018). Quantifying the power and consequences of social media protest. *New Media & Society*, *20*, 990-1011.		
Pan, J., & Siegel, A. A. (2020). How Saudi crackdowns fail to silence online dissent. *American Political Science Review*, *114*, 109-125.		
Van Duyn, E. (2018). Hidden democracy: Political dissent in rural America. *Journal of Communication*, *68*, 965-987.		

Nov. 16	Presidential Comm – Foundations	*Online, Async.*
Campbell, K. K., & Jamieson, K. H. (2008). *Presidents creating the presidency: Deeds done in words*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 1: The rhetorical presidency (pp. 1-28).		
Edwards, G. C., III. (1996). Presidential rhetoric: What difference does it make? In M. J. Medhurst (Eds.), *Beyond the rhetorical presidency* (pp. 199-217). College Station: Texas A&M University Press.		
Beasley, V. B. (2004). *You, the people: American national identity in presidential rhetoric*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press. Chapter 2: A presidential rhetoric of shared beliefs (pp. 46-67).		
Cohen, J. E. (2010). *Going local: Presidential leadership in the post-broadcast age*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1: Context and presidential leadership styles (pp. 11-34).		
Stuckey, M. E. (2010). Rethinking the rhetorical presidency and presidential rhetoric. *Review of Communication, 10,* 38-52.		

Scacco, J. M., & Coe, K. (forthcoming). *The ubiquitous presidency: Presidential communication in tumultuous times*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 1: The ubiquitous presidency: A conceptual framework.		
Nov. 23	**Presidential Comm – Extensions**	*Online, via Zoom*
Horn Sheeler, K., & Vasby Anderson, K. (2013). *Woman president: Confronting postfeminist political culture*. College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press. Chapter 5: Bodies politic: "Porning" the presidential body (pp. 132-151).		
Gillion, D. Q. (2016). *Governing with words: The political dialogue on race, public policy, and inequality in America*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 3: The backlash: Does America approve of racial discussions (pp. 53-76).		
Soto-Vásquez, A. D. (2018). The rhetorical construction of U.S. Latinos by American presidents. *Howard Journal of Communications*, *29*, 353-367.		
Haines, P. E., Mendelberg, T., & Butler, B. (2019). "I'm not the president of Black America": Rhetorical versus policy representation. *Perspectives on Politics*, *17*, 1038-1058.		
Nov. 30	**Course Conclusions**	*Online, via Zoom*
Book review due via Canvas		

***Please note that your continued enrollment in this course constitutes an
agreement to abide by the policies and procedures explained in this syllabus.***