

Political Communication (CMN145)
Spring 2015
293 Kerr, TR 9:00 – 10:20 am

Professor: Jaeho Cho (jaecho@ucdavis.edu)
Office: 375 Kerr Hall
Office hours: T R 10:30am – noon

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to theories and research on the connection between mass media, citizens, and politics in the digital age. Specifically, the course will focus on the complex inter-relationships between production of political news, political elites' campaign strategies, and the motives, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors of democratic citizens. The goal of this course is to provide students with a critical framework for understanding the nature of mediated politics, identifying the roles played by news media in contemporary politics, and analyzing elite discourse and campaign messages.

Required Readings

Readings for the class will be available on this course's website at SmartSite.

Evaluation

- a. There will be **one midterm (in-class) and one final (take-home) exam** throughout the quarter. Each exam will constitute 30 percent of the course grade. The exams will cover material presented in class *and* readings.

- b. **Class project** is worth 40 percent of your grade. Each of you will be in a group of 4 or 5 members and do a class project. The main task is two fold. First, as a group, you follow the detailed class project schedule including a class presentation (15-20 minutes) at the end of the quarter. This will account for 20 percent of your grade. Second, as a group, you submit a class project report, which is worth 20 percent of your grade. Detailed instructions about the class project will be provided later.

Note: Students will have a chance to evaluate the performance of each member of your group, including yourself, over the period of the group project. Further, the instructor will closely communicate with each group to consult about issues concerning the group work, if any.

Course Policies

You are expected to be active learners in this class. Asking questions when appropriate and participation in sessions is a must. If you missed a class it is your responsibility to obtain lecture notes and relevant assignments from other class members.

E-mail will be used for taking care of course matters. Please use your UC Davis e-mail account to make sure your email is not classified as spam.

I expect that you will devote yourself to the learning process during class time. If I see you engaging in activities distracting to students around you and to me, I reserve the right to ask you to leave the room.

Cheating is a serious violation of your contract as a student. I expect you to know and follow the University's policies on cheating (<http://sja.ucdavis.edu>). Any suspected cases of academic misconduct including plagiarism will be handled according to University regulations.

Course Schedule

This schedule may be altered during the quarter due to a new class interest or other issues. Any changes will be announced in class and via e-mail. An up-to-date version of the syllabus will always be available upon request and on the web.

March 31: Course Introduction

April 2 & 7: Nature of political communication and media effects

- Gruber, D. (2003). The media and democracy: Beyond myths and stereotypes. *American Review of Political Science*, 6, 139-160.
- Bennett, W. L., & Iyengar, S. (2008) A new era of minimal effects? The changing foundations of political communication, *Journal of Communication*, 58, 707-731.
- Katz, E. (1987). Communications research since Lazarsfeld. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 51, S25-S45.
- **[Class Project] Grouping and orientation (4/7)**

April 9: Construction of news

- Hamilton, J. (2007). News that sells: Media competition and news content. *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, 8, 7-42.
- Livingston, S., & Bennett, W. L. (2003). Gatekeeping, indexing, and live-event news: Is technology altering the construction of news? *Political Communication*, 20, 363-380.

April 14 & 16: News coverage of politics and its effects

- Althaus, S. L., & Tewksbury, D. (2002). Agenda setting and the “new” news patterns of issue importance among readers of the paper and online versions of the New York Times. *Communication Research*, 29(2), 180-207.
- Cappella, J., & Jamieson, K. H. (1996). News frames, political cynicism, and media cynicism. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, 546, 71-84.
- Russell Neuman, W., Guggenheim, L., Mo Jang, S., & Bae, S. Y. (2014). The Dynamics of Public Attention: Agenda-Setting Theory Meets Big Data. *Journal of Communication*, 64(2), 193-214.

- de Vreese, C. (2005). The spiral of cynicism reconsidered. *European Journal of Communication*, 20, 283-301.
- **[Class Project] Research Question Due (4/16)**

April 21: Campaign tone and democracy

- Ansolabehere, S., & Iyengar S. (1995). *Going negative: How political advertisements shrink and polarize the electorate*. New York: Free Press. (Chapter 5, pp. 99-114).
- Geer, J. G. (2006). *In defense of negativity: Attack ads in presidential campaigns*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapter 1, pp. 1-19).

April 23: Emotional appeals in political messages

- Brader, T. (2006). *Campaigning for hearts and minds: How emotional appeals in political ads work*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapter 6, pp. 147-176).
- Masters, R. D., & Sullivan, D. (1993). Nonverbal behavior and leadership: Emotion and cognition in political attitudes. In S. Iyengar & W. McGuire (Eds.), *Explorations in Political Psychology* (pp. 150-182). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- **[Class Project] Bibliography Due (4/23)**

April 28: Televised debates

- Jamieson, K. H., & Adasiewicz, C. (2000). What can voters learn from election debates? In S. Coleman (Ed.), *Televised election debates: International perspectives* (pp. 25-42). New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Mutz, D. C. (2007). Effects of "In-Your-Face" television discourse on perceptions of a legitimate opposition. *American Political Science Review*, 101, 621-635.
- Boydston, A. E., Glazier, R. A., & Pietryka, M. T. (2013). Playing to the crowd: Agenda control in presidential debates. *Political Communication*, 30(2), 254-277.

April 30: Midterm exam

May 5 & 7: Campaign geography and the voter

- Lipsitz, K. (2009). The consequences of battleground and "spectator" state residency for political participation. *Political Behavior*, 31, 187-209.
- Cho, J. (2011). The geography of political communication: Effects of regional variations in campaign advertising on citizen communication. *Human Communication Research*, 37, 434-462.
- Althaus, S. L., Cizmar, A. M., & Gimpel, J. G. (2009). Media supply, audience demand, and the geography of news consumption in the United States. *Political Communication*, 26, 249-277.
- McClurg, S., & Holbrook, T. (2009). Living in a battleground: Presidential campaigns and predictors of vote choice. *Political Research Quarterly*, 62, 495-506.
- **[Class Project] One-page Project Outline Due (5/7)**

May 12: Candidate images

- Bailenson, J. N., Iyengar, S., Yee, N., & Collins, N. A. (2008). Facial similarity between voters and candidates causes influence. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 72, 935-961.
- Todorov, A., Mandisodza, A. N., Goren, A., & Hall, C. C. (2005). Influences of competence from faces predict election outcomes. *Science*, 308, 1623-1626.

May 14: Communication modality

- Neuman, W. R., Just, M. R., & Crigler, A. N. (1992). *Common knowledge: News and the construction of political meaning*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Ch. 5, pp. 78-95)
- Druckman, J. N. (2005). Media matter: How newspapers and television news cover campaigns and influence voters. *Political Communication*, 22, 463-481.

May 19: Newspaper endorsement

- Kahn, K. F., & Kenney, P. J. (2002). The slant of the news: how editorial endorsements influence campaign coverage and citizens' views of candidates. *American Political Science Review*, 96, 381-394.
- Ansolabehere, S., Lessem, R., & Snyder, J. (2006). The orientation of newspaper endorsements in U.S. elections, 1940-2002. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 1, 393-404.

May 21: No Class (Instructor at ICA)

May 26-28: Media and an informed citizenry

- Eveland, W. P. Jr. (2001). The cognitive mediation model of learning from the news: Evidence from nonelection, off-year election, and presidential election contexts. *Communication Research*, 28, 571-601.
- Althaus, S. L. (1998). Information effects in collective preferences. *American Political Science Review*, 92, 545-558.
- Zukin C., & Snyder, R. (1984). Passive learning: When the media environment is the message. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 48, 629-638.
- Gruber, D. A. (1994). Why voters fail information tests: Can the hurdles be overcome? *Political Communication*, 11, 331-346.

June 2: Class Presentations

June 4: Class Presentations

- **[Class Project] Final Report Due by 10 pm (PST) (6/4)**

June 6: Final Exam (Take-home) Due by 10 pm (PST)