Telecommunication Media Studies Seminar on
MEDIA PROCESSES AND EFFECTS (COMM 663)

Course Meetings
Wednesdays, 6 to 9 pm

Instructor Information
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Course Description
This graduate seminar focuses on the processes through which mass media influence our everyday lives. In particular, it examines social scientific approaches to understand how viewers select, interpret, and respond to mediated messages. We will cover a wide range of topics such as media representations of race/ethnicity and gender/sexuality, intergroup processes, news framing, political advertising, persuasive messages, entertainment media, popular culture, health campaigns, positive media psychology, new media technologies, pro-social media, and critical media literacy.

Course Objectives
The objectives of this course are to:
- introduce you to the prominent theories relating to information processing and media effects,
- hone skills required to read, understand, and critically evaluate classic and current studies in various programs of research that employ these theories, and
- develop a communication research proposal on a media topic of your choice that advances these theories in meaningful ways

Reading Materials

Grading Policies

  Reaction papers (5% each for 6 papers) - 30%
  Research paper - 40%
Tentative Course Schedule

Week 1  Introduction to media processes & effects research  
N&O: Ch. 1, 2, 3 & 9
Week 2  Cultivation, gender roles, and perceived reality  
N&O: Ch. 5 & 28; Segrin & Nabi (2002); Riddle (2010)
Week 3  Agenda-setting, framing, and news media  
N&O: Ch. 6 & 8; Hannah & Cafferty (2006); Gibson & Zillmann (1994); Dixon & Linz (2000)
Week 4  Priming, sexuality, and media violence  
N&O: Ch. 12, 24 & 27; Ward & Friedman (2006); Scharrer (2001)
Week 5  Social cognitive theory, entertainment-education, health effects  
N&O: Ch. 19, 21 & 26; Harrison (1997); Stephenson et al. (1999)
Week 6  Uses & gratifications and selective processing  
N&O: 10, 13, & 16; Vidmar & Rokeach (1974); Mares & Cantor (1992)
Week 7  Topic TBD & Writing Workshop 1
Week 8  Media stereotyping and racial/ethnic identity  
N&O: Ch. 25 & 27; Ford (1997); Ramasubramanian (2011); Inniss & Feagin (1995)
Week 9  Spring Break
Week 10  Pro-social effects, media literacy, and positive media psychology  
N&O: Ch. 15, 22 & 23; Oliver & Bartsch (2011); Ramasubramanian (2014)
Week 11  Topic TBD; Writing Workshop 2
Week 12  Narratives, transportation, and media enjoyment  
N&O: Ch. 11, 29 & 30; Slater (2002); Green et al. (2004)
Week 13  Persuasion, advertising, and information processing  
N&O: Ch. 18 & 20; Petty et al. (1983); Lumpkins (2010); Moyer-Guse & Nabi (2010).
Week 14  Diffusion of innovation and technological effects  
N&O: Ch. 32, 34 & 37; Ivory & Kalyanaraman (2007); Stavrositu & Sundar (2012)
Week 15  Paper presentations