

HIST 495: Undergraduate Research Seminar Media & Politics in Modern America

Fall 2023
T/Th: 9:00-10:15 AM
UNIV 201



Dr. Brownell
Office: UNIV 21
Email: Brownell@purdue.edu
Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-3PM and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will introduce students to the methods of historical research and writing by focusing on media and politics in modern America. During the semester, students will read primary and secondary sources that showcase different aspects of how media has shaped the political terrain, influenced voter attitudes, impacted policy, and transformed electoral campaigns. Students will then write an original research paper on a topic of their own choosing and based on their own archival work.

READING ASSIGNMENTS:

All books can be purchased at the University Book Store, Follett's, or through Amazon.

Required Reading Material:

James L. Baughman, *The Republic of Mass Culture: Journalism, Filmmaking, and Broadcasting in America since 1941*. 3rd ed. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006.

Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing History*.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

This course will introduce you to historiographical debates between scholars of media and political history. It will also help you gain the skills needed to analyze primary and secondary sources and pursue an original research project that contributes to our broader scholarly understanding of media and politics in modern America.

FORMAT:

The course will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9-10:15. Because classes rely heavily on discussion, students are expected to arrive to each class having completed the reading and research assignments for that day. Attendance is mandatory and expected throughout the semester and if you cannot attend class due to sickness, you are expected to email me in advance to discuss a make-up assignment. Students will also be responsible for delivering class presentations, providing constructive peer review feedback, and completing regular analytical and writing assignments that will culminate in an original research paper based on primary and secondary sources.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

- **Attendance and Participation: 20%**
 - o Participation and attendance are mandatory components of the class. You are expected to show up for each class prepared to discuss the reading material and any specific research assignments for that class. **If you are sick or have an emergency, please let me know in advance and we can work on a make-up assignment.**

- **Small Writing Assignments: 40%:**
 - o You will be responsible for five small writing assignments over the course of the semester that will provide the foundation for the longer research paper due at the end of the semester.
 - **Book Review (15%):** Due via Brightspace by **September 5 at 9AM.**
 - This two-page, double-spaced paper should assess James L. Baughman's *The Republic of Mass Culture*.
 - o The first page should answer these three questions:
 - What is the book's central argument?
 - What is the narrative arc of the book?
 - What sources does he use to make his argument?
 - o The second page should identify three possible areas for further research of interest to you. (i.e. what is overlooked or perhaps only briefly covered that you might explore as a political historian interested in media questions?)
 - **Paper Topic Proposal (5%):** Due via Brightspace by **October 24 at 9AM.**
 - This one-page, double-spaced paper should outline the specific topic you want to pursue. It should explain how it relates to the reading material of the course and how it explores a topic, issue, event, or person **by asking a new research question.** The paper should include an intellectual justification for why you want to pursue this research question and the **specific** sources you plan to investigate.
 - **Primary Source Analysis (10%):** Due via Brightspace by **November 7 at 9AM.**
 - This two-page, double-spaced paper should analyze a primary source on your topic. Where did it come from? What does it illuminate about an aspect of modern media and politics? What perspectives are included? What perspectives are not included? What questions might it raise for your research agenda?

- Introduction Draft and Outline (5%): Due via Brightspace by **November 16 at 9AM**.
 - This three-page, double-spaced introduction should introduce the topic, argument, and contribution of the research to the broader historiography.
 - Peer Review Report (5%): Due in class on **November 30**
 - Each student should prepare a one-page reader report for members of the peer review group.
- **Research Paper: 40%**
- You will produce a 15-20-page (double spaced) original research over the course of the semester. You will be responsible for choosing your topic, and as long as it relates to media and politics in modern America, you can choose any topic that interests you. I will explain and guide you through this assignment at length over the course of the semester, but I encourage you to think about the topic early and often!
 - **IMPORTANT DUE DATES:**
 - **October 24:** Paper Topic Proposal due to Dr. Brownell by 9AM via Brightspace.
 - **November 7:** Primary Sources Analysis due to Dr. Brownell by 9AM via Brightspace.
 - **November 16:** Introduction and Outline due to Dr. Brownell by 9AM via Brightspace.
 - **November 26:** Paper draft due to your peer review group and Dr. Brownell via Brightspace.
 - **November 30:** Peer review comments due in class.
 - **December 5 & 7:** Conference Presentations
 - **December 14:** Final Paper due via Brightspace by 9AM.

Late policy: Late papers/projects will be penalized **one-third grade per day** (example: a B paper that is one day late becomes a B-). All students are required to keep copies of their graded essays and exams until the end of the semester.

General notes re: grades:

- Final grades in the course **will** be assessed according to the plus/minus scale.
- Neither exam grades nor final grades in the course will be provided or discussed via email. If you would like to discuss your exams, grades, and/or your coursework in general, please do not hesitate to see me during office hours. I will be happy to go over your grades with you at any point in the semester.
- **You must complete all assignments to pass the course. This includes participation.**

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

- This class is intended to encourage open, informed discussions and I hope to protect and foster a classroom atmosphere that will encourage an open and enlightened discourse in the class. Ultimately I would hope that you take those ideas and informed discussions with you beyond the classroom. **Respect, open-mindedness and tolerance will be the standard for all classroom discussions.** I encourage you to ask questions you may have on this topic either in the class or during office hours.

- Email will be the preferred mode of contact outside of regular classroom hours and office hours. I will also create a class email list which I will use to send course-related announcements as needed. **For this reason, I expect you to check your Purdue email account at least once a day.**
- In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to changes as necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Any necessary changes to the syllabus will be announced in class and via email and the class Brightspace page.
- During the last two weeks of the semester, you will be provided an opportunity to evaluate this course and my teaching. You will receive an official email from evaluation administrators with a link to the online evaluation site, and you will have two weeks to complete this evaluation. I consider your feedback vital, as does Purdue University. Your professors have access to these online evaluations only after grades are due.

Academic Integrity

- As a student in this class and at Purdue, you are expected to uphold the standards of academic integrity. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses and will be treated as such in this class. You are expected to produce your own work and to accurately cite all necessary materials.
- Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: the use of papers or books not authorized by the instructor during examinations, quizzes, and other written assignments; giving or receiving answers during or in preparation for examinations and quizzes; and failing to cite sources employed for writing assignments.
- Those who engage in such practices should expect to fail the course and have their behavior referred to the Dean of Students. This is non-negotiable: if I find that you have plagiarized, you will fail the assignment and potentially will fail the entire course—period. Please do not put yourself in this situation.

Student with Disabilities:

- If you need any special accommodations to participate fully in class, please see me as soon as possible. I will keep all discussions confidential as long as the situation permits. Please note that, in order for Purdue University to accommodate your needs, you will need to provide appropriate written documentation and have it on file with Student Services. Students should be aware that Services for Student Disabilities are available at 494-1247 if you need further assistance.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

If you hear a fire alarm inside, proceed outside. If you hear a siren outside, proceed inside.

- **Indoor Fire Alarms** mean to stop class or research and immediately **evacuate** the building. Proceed to your Emergency Assembly Area away from building doors. **Remain outside** until police, fire, or other emergency response personnel provide additional guidance or tell you it is safe to leave.

• **All Hazards Outdoor Emergency Warning Sirens** mean to immediately seek shelter (**Shelter in Place**) in a safe location within the closest building. “Shelter in place” means seeking immediate shelter inside a building or University residence. This course of action may need to be taken during a tornado, a civil disturbance including a shooting or release of hazardous materials in the outside air. Once safely inside, find out more details about the emergency*. **Remain in place** until police, fire, or other emergency response personnel provide additional guidance or tell you it is safe to leave.

**In both cases, you should seek additional clarifying information by all means possible...Purdue Home page, email alert, TV, radio, etc...review the Purdue Emergency Warning Notification System multi-communication layers at http://www.purdue.edu/ehps/emergency_preparedness/warning-system.html*

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES:

Review the **Emergency Procedures Guidelines**

https://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness/flipchart/index.html

Review the **Building Emergency Plan** (available from the building deputy) for: o evacuation routes, exit points, and emergency assembly area

- when and how to evacuate the building.
- shelter in place procedures and locations
- additional building specific procedures and requirements.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AWARENESS VIDEOS

"Shots Fired on Campus: When Lightning Strikes," is a 20-minute active shooter awareness video that illustrates what to look for and how to prepare and react to this type of incident. See:

<http://www.purdue.edu/securePurdue/news/2010/emergency-preparedness-shots-fired-on-campus-video.cfm> (Link is also located on the EP website)

MORE INFORMATION

Reference the Emergency Preparedness web site for additional information:

http://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness

COURSE SCHEDULE

Readings for each week should be completed by the designated class. Students should bring copies of the assigned readings to class that day. Articles with a ** and links to digital archives can be found on Brightspace under Course Resources.

Week 1: Course Introduction

August 22: Introduction

August 24: Media and Politics: Yesterday and Today

- Reading Assignment:
 - Baughman, *The Republic of Mass Culture*, xiii-29
- Discussion Assignment:
 - Bring in a contemporary media source that you think illuminates something significant about politics in 2023 to share with the class.

Week 2: Review of Baughman's *Republic of Mass Culture*

August 29: Mass Media, Mass Politics

- Reading Assignment:
 - Baughman, *The Republic of Mass Culture*, 30-116

August 31: Work on Book Review: No class meeting

- Reading Assignment:
 - Baughman, *The Republic of Mass Culture*, 117-256

Week 3: Broadcast Television & Politics

September 5: Book Review Presentations

- Writing Assignment:
 - Review of Baughman's *Republic of Mass Culture* due via Brightspace by 9AM.
- Discussion Assignment:
 - Come to class prepared to discuss 2-3 potential research questions generated from reading the book.

September 7: Network Television and the Presidency

- Reading Assignment:
 - Susan Douglas, "Presidents and the Media" **
 - David Greenberg, "Do Historians Watch Enough Television?"**
- Discussion Assignment:
 - Lead a discussion around one specific television advertisement from the 1950s and 1960s in the Living Room Candidate Archive. You should come prepared to show the advertisement and raise several research questions around it.

Week 4: Grassroots Activism and Media Mobilization

September 12: Media and Civil Rights

- Reading Assignment:
 - Sage Goodwin, “Reckoning with whiteness: the limits of desegregation in America’s newsrooms from the 1960s to the present” **

September 14: Video & Brightspace Assignment: No class meeting

- Reading Assignment:
 - Nicole Hemmer, “How Conservative Media Learned to Play Politics,” *Politico*, 2016
- Viewing Assignment:
 - “Conservative Media and Politics,” *Washington Journal*, C-SPAN Video Library
- Online Discussion Assignment:
 - Post an original discussion response of about 200-300 words to the Brightspace discussion forum by noon on Thursday. Each student should reply to 1 other discussion posts by 5PM on Friday.

Week 5: Noncommercial Television

September 19: The Political Debate *over* Educational Television

- Reading Assignment:
 - Allison Perlman, “The Battle for Educational Television” **

September 21: Political Debate *on* Public Television

- Discussion Assignment:
 - Explore the American Archive of Public Broadcasting exhibits and find one archival source to present in class. What is the source and how does it fit into the broader scholarly questions explored in the exhibit?

Week 6: The Battle for the Soul of American Journalism

September 26: The Objectivity Crisis in Newsrooms

- Reading Assignment
 - Matthew Pressman, “Objectivity and Its Discontents: The Struggle for the Soul of American Journalism in the 1960s and 1970s” **

September 28: Watergate and Dismantling Media Media Myths

- Reading Assignment
 - Michael Schudson, “Watergate and the Press” **

Week 7: Alternative Approaches to Media Politics in the 1970s

October 3: Reviewing a work-in-progress: Zoom meeting with Oscar Winberg

■ Reading Assignment:

- Oscar Winberg, “Archie Bunker for President” ** excerpt
- “Don’t be a Conference Troll: A Guide to Asking Good Conference Questions,” *The Guardian*, 2014 **

October 5: The Politics of Cable Television

■ Reading Assignment

- Kathryn Cramer Brownell, “Watergate, the Bipartisan Struggle for Media Access, and the Growth of Cable Television,” *Modern American History*, 2020 **

Week 8: Fall Break

October 10: No Class- Fall Break

October 12: Research & Brightspace Assignment: No Class Meeting

■ Complete Online C-SPAN Video Tutorial

■ Explore the C-SPAN Video Library and post on archival source to Brightspace along with 250-500 words discussing the significance of the source and the research questions it raises.

- Students should post their original thread with the C-SPAN clip by 9AM on Thursday. Each student should reply to one other discussion post by 5PM on Friday.
- Note: Unlike the earlier discussion assignment, students should post an individual thread with a title that draws attention to the video topic, just as you would title a research paper!

Week 9: Individual Meetings

October 17: Individual Meetings during class time with Dr. Brownell

October 19: Individual Meetings during class time with Dr. Brownell

Week 10: Topic Selection Week

October 24: In-class discussion of research project.

■ Writing Assignment:

- Paper Topic Proposal due via Brightspace **by 9AM.**

■ Discussion Assignment:

- Prepare to share your research project with the class.

October 26: Research & Writing Day: No class meeting

Week 11: Research & Writing

October 31: Research Day & Writing Day: No class meeting

November 2: Research Day & Writing Day: No class meeting

Week 12: Primary Research Presentations

November 7: In-class discussion of research progress and primary source analysis.

- Writing Assignment:
 - Primary Source Analysis due via Brightspace by **at 9AM.**

November 9: In-class discussion of research progress and primary source analysis.

Week 13: Research & Writing

November 14: Research & Writing Day: No class meeting

November 16: Research & Writing Day: No class meeting

- Writing Assignment:
 - Introduction Draft and Outline due via **Brightspace at 9AM.**

Week 14: Research & Writing

November 21: Research & Writing Day: No class meeting

November 23: Thanksgiving Break: No class meeting

- Writing Assignment:
 - Drafts due to peer review group **via Brightspace at 5PM on Sunday, November 26.**

Week 15: Peer Review & Presentations

November 28: In-Class Conference Planning

November 30: In-class Peer Review

- Writing Assignment:
 - Bring two copies of your peer review to class. You will provide your peer with one copy and turn in one copy to Dr. Brownell during class.

Week 16: Student Conference on Media and Politics in Modern America

December 5: Conference Panel Presentations

December 7: Conference Panel Presentations

Final Papers are due in via Brightspace by Thursday, December 14 at 5PM

NOTE: You will need to upload your paper to Safe Assign, a web-based plagiarism and ChatGPT detection service, when you submit it on Brightspace.