

First-Year Seminar JOUR 177 (#21110)
Blame it on the Media: Young People and Media Effects in the Digital Age

Fall 2016: T/Th: 9:30–10:45 a.m.
202 Stauffer-Flint Hall

Instructor:
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Office hours:
-Tuesdays: 11:00–noon
-Thursdays: 2:30–3:30
-By appointment

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Greetings:

Welcome to our First-Year Seminar on media effects! This course is designed to deepen your understanding of the role media play in our lives. We will discuss many key concepts of media studies and apply them to concrete scenarios and projects during the semester.

Course description from the Office of First-Year Experience:

“During the average day, an American adolescent is exposed to more than 10 hours of media outside of school: hours of television shows, video games, websites, and music, often consumed simultaneously. How does all of this watching, playing, and surfing affect young people’s perceptions of themselves and others, and how does it affect their attitudes towards societal matters and everyday behaviors? Drawing on our experience as media consumers and current research by experts, we will examine the extent to which media contribute to young people’s everyday lives, including self-esteem, perceptions of others, policy support, purchase decisions and academic performance. We will also conduct our own research, exploring ‘cause and effect’ relationships between specific media messages of your choice and a topic you care about, and think of strategies aimed at helping young people reduce the consequences of their media habits.”

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Understand how our media use may influence our thoughts and behaviors
- Understand how media research is conducted
- Critically evaluate media effects research
- Develop, conduct and present your own media research project

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Reading:

There is no textbook for this course. We will read various texts available via KU Library’s website, such as journal articles and book chapters, as well as materials available for free online, such as news stories and videos. I expect you to have read all the assigned material before class. This will help you better understand the day’s topic and will facilitate our discussions.

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Attendance & Expectations:

You are expected to attend all class sessions. Some absences are excused, such as illnesses accompanied by a doctor’s note, family emergencies, athletic commitments, religious holidays and other similar reasons but please let me know in advance when possible so we can make arrangements to make up the missed class(es).

More than two unexcused absences will affect your final grade. Each additional absence will take away three points from your final grade. For instance, if you have three unexcused absences and your final calculated grade is 92, you will receive an 89 for the class. If you have four unexcused absences, I will deduct six points from your final calculated grade. Late arrivals (10 minutes) will also negatively affect your grade. Two late arrivals equal one absence. If you have more than four unexcused absences, you are eligible to be dropped from the course.

Participation is an important element of this course. An engaging conversation will enhance your understanding of certain concepts as well as create a healthy learning environment. Therefore, you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings.

During our discussions, please respect the ideas of your peers. You are encouraged to challenge someone’s particular reasoning as long as you stay courteous. You will not be judged on your personal opinions. However, I expect you to frame your arguments using media concepts we will have addressed and clearly articulate the steps of your reasoning.

You are allowed to bring laptops to class as long as you use them responsibly. However, I will ask you to close your laptops during our in-class exercises and presentations. If your laptops are distracting the class, that is, if your peers are paying more attention to your computer screen than to our class, I will ban laptop use in class for everyone. As for cell phones, please put them on silent mode. If you are expecting an important call, please let me know at the beginning of class and sit next to the classroom door.

You are responsible for completing all assignments on time. Assignments are due by the start of the class session on the date indicated unless otherwise specified on our schedule. All assignments must be typed in size 12 font, double-spaced, and sent via email to erba.projects@gmail.com. You do not need to turn in a hard copy. If you are absent, you must email your assignment by 9:30 a.m. on the due date. I will mark down late assignments (after 9:40 a.m. on the due date) by three points for each late day. Extensions may be granted only as circumstances warrant. If you do not submit an assignment within one week of its due date, you will automatically lose the points for that assignment.

Clear writing, free of spelling and grammatical errors is expected. The quality of your writing will affect your grade on written assignments: poor writing will result in poor grades.

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Assignments:

You will complete the following assignments for your final grade. Detailed guidelines are posted on Blackboard for each individual assignment:

- Class Participation: 5%
- Research Question: 10%
- Annotated Bibliography: 17.5%
- Literature Review & Methods: 25%
- Stimuli & Questionnaire: 17.5%
- Research Paper: 25%

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Grades:

To calculate your final grade, I will use the following scale:

A = 93-100%	C = 73-76%
A- = 90-92%	C- = 70-72%
B+ = 87-89%	D+ = 67-69%
B = 83-86%	D = 63-66%
B- = 80-82%	D- = 60-62%
C+ = 77-79%	F = 59% or below

I will only round grades up at the 0.8 level. Therefore, your grade must reach 0.8 for me to round it up. For example, if your final grade is 89.80, I will round it up to 90.00. On the other hand, if your grade is 89.79, it will stay as it is.

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Academic Integrity:

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence. Penalties for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification can include a failing grade for this course and expulsion from the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. If you have any questions about what constitutes original work, plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the professor(s) of this course.

Original work: The expectation when you come to this class is that you come to learn, to be creative, to stretch your imagination, and expand your skills. Therefore, all the work you do in this class must be original. That means no ‘recycling’ of assignments or papers from other classes, in the J-School or outside the J-School. Don’t recycle research papers, news stories, marketing plans, etc. If you conducted a study or a research paper on any aspect of strategic communication for another class, you cannot modify it for this class. Any efforts to recycle material will be regarded as academic dishonesty.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is stealing. You take someone else’s ideas, thoughts, or words, and you present them as your own original work. This includes taking ideas from written sources, such as books, as well as materials on the Internet. Cutting and pasting materials from the Internet and presenting that work as if it were your own is plagiarism. There may be times when you want to incorporate another person’s ideas, opinions, and words into the papers you write, to make a point or to provide background. If you do, it is essential that you attribute that information—that you explain where the information came from and give credit where credit is due. “Recycling” past interviews or research from previous J420 students and presenting it as your own falls into the category of plagiarism.

Fabrication and Falsification: Fabrication and falsification mean that you made it up. This can include making up an entire interview or embellishing a fact, quote, or statistic to make it sound better. Don’t do it.

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Journalism School Policy on Classroom Attendance:

“No student may add a journalism class after the 20th day of a semester.”

“Students must attend their classes and laboratory periods. Instructors may take attendance into account in assessing a student's performance and may require a certain level of attendance for passing a course. Instructors may choose to drop students from a course, based on attendance, without consent.”

“The School of Journalism reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of students who fail to attend the first class or laboratory meeting.”

“The KU Office of Student Financial Aid is required by federal law to determine whether students who receive aid are attending each class in which they are enrolled. Instructors are required to report to that office absences of students who have stopped attending and names of those who have enrolled but never have attended. Students who do not attend classes may be required to repay federal and/or state financial aid.”

“Students who receive any form of financial aid should learn all requirements including minimum hours of enrollment and grades to qualify for and retain that aid.”

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Seeking Assistance:

You are urged to attend office hours or meet with me by appointment to discuss any questions pertaining to the course, the readings, exams and assignments, or career prospects and opportunities. You should not hesitate to seek continuing assistance throughout the semester.

The University of Kansas is committed to helping all students learn. Please be aware that the KU Office of Student Access Services coordinates accommodations for all students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted this office, please do so as soon as possible. Information about services can be found at <https://disability.ku.edu/>. Or you can visit the office on the first floor of Strong Hall. The phone number is: 785-864-4064. The email is: achieve@ku.edu. Please contact me privately regarding your needs in this course.

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Copying or Recording of Classroom Lectures:

Course materials prepared by the instructor, as well as content of all lectures presented by the instructor in class and on Blackboard, are the instructor’s property. Video and audio recording of lectures without instructor consent is prohibited. On request, the instructor will usually permit

students to audio tape lectures, on the condition that these audio tapes are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless the instructor gives explicit permission, recordings of lectures may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course. This also applies to any lecture notes and other content prepared by the instructor on Blackboard.

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Commercial Note-Taking:

Pursuant to the University of Kansas’ [Policy on Commercial Note-Taking Ventures](#), commercial note-taking is not permitted in this course. Lecture notes and course materials may be taken for personal use, for the purpose of mastering the course material, and may not be sold to any person or entity in any form. Any student engaged in or contributing to the commercial exchange of notes or course materials will be subject to discipline, including academic misconduct charges, in accordance with University policy. Please note: note-taking provided by a student volunteer for a student with a disability, as a reasonable accommodation under the ADA, is not the same as commercial note-taking and is not covered under this policy.

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Inclement Weather:

In the event of inclement weather, the decision to cancel classes is made by KU officials. To determine whether snow or icy conditions have canceled classes, call 864-7669 (864-SNOW).

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Note:

The schedule below may be modified and any potential changes will be announced in advance.

	Topic	Assignments
Week I		
T. Aug. 23	Intro	
Th. Aug. 25	Media literacy & Identity	What role do media play in your life?
Week II		
T. Aug. 30	Examples of media research	What media effects would you like to explore?
Th. Sept. 1	How to read a research article	Read one of three articles on Blackboard

Week III

T. Sept. 6	Media Effects	DUE: Research Question and rationale
Th. Sept. 8	Dyad research article presentation	Explore library database and present article

Week IV

T. Sept. 13	How to measure media effects	Submit questions about using library database by M. Sept 14, noon.
Th. Sept. 15	Library Presentation	Think about key terms (concepts) and key measurements (scale) for your research

Week V

T. Sept. 20	Workshop: Annotated Bibliography	DUE: Annotated Bibliography by W. Sept. 21, 11:59pm
Th. Sept. 22	Experimental Design	What will your experiment 'look' like?

Week VI

T. Sept. 27	Workshop: Literature Review & Methods	What gap does your research address? Why is your research relevant?
Th. Sept. 29	Workshop: Literature Review & Methods	How will you explore your research question? How will you collect your data?

Week VII

T. Oct. 4	What have we learned? How to proceed?	DUE: Literature Review & Methods
Th. Oct. 6	Experimental Questionnaire	What scales will you use?

Week VIII

T. Oct. 11	No class: Fall Break	Forget about media, don't even use media...
Th. Oct. 13	Workshop: Preparing for data collection	How will you recruit participants?

Week IX

T. Oct. 18	Workshop: Preparing for data collection	DUE: Stimuli and Questionnaire by W. Oct. 19, 11:59pm
Th. Oct. 20	TBA	

Week X

T. Oct. 25	Workshop: Qualtrics	
Th. Oct. 27	Participants in media effects	Who are research findings based on?

Week XI

T. Nov. 1	Advertisements through time	Meet at the Spencer Museum
Th. Nov. 3	Racial and gender stereotypes	How are 'others' represented in the media?

Week XII

T. Nov. 8	TBA	Data Collection Ends by 11:59pm
Th. Nov. 10	Data cleaning	Colloquium from 7:00-8:30 pm in KS Union

Week XIII

T. Nov. 15	Workshop: SPSS	
Th. Nov. 17	Workshop: SPSS	

Week XIV

T. Nov. 22	TBA	
Th. Nov. 24	No class: Thanksgiving Break	

Week XV

T. Nov. 29	Workshop: Research Paper	
Th. Dec. 1	Workshop: Research Paper	DUE: Research Paper by M. Dec 5, noon

Week XVI

T. Dec. 6	Class Presentations	
Th. Dec. 8	Class Presentations & Debrief	