This course introduces students to concepts in, theory about, and research approaches to the study of media from a political science perspective. Students will learn about what the media is/are (and perhaps should be), what roles it plays in politics, and some of the key research topics that political scientists pursue with regard to it.

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

Other readings are available on reserve, through the library website, or online as stated. In addition to listed readings, students will need to access media each week for class assignments.

**GRADING:**
- **In-class participation:** 10%
- **Op-ed article and essay:** 25% *(October 19 in-class exam)*
- **Research paper:** 35% *(Due Tuesday, November 16. 3% per 24-hour late penalty)*
- **Media Journal (Final):** 30% = 15% Journal and 15% Exam *(Due Monday, December 6. 10% per 24-hour late penalty)*

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

**In-class participation:**
In order to encourage students to complete course readings, engage in media, and attend class throughout the semester, various in-class participation exercises will be conducted throughout the semester. These will include asking students to share what they have read/seen/heard in the media in the past 24 hours, asking students to read and evaluate articles in class, and having occasional quizzes on assigned readings. These will normally be conducted at the very start of class. Students are excused from such exercises only if they provide written medical documentation stating the date of absence.

1.) Do not email or call the instructor if you have been, or will be, absent – these will not be responded to. Simply bring a doctors note to the instructor’s office or drop it off in the instructor’s mailbox.

2.) Participation grades will be based on these exercises only – there are no grades for attending class or speaking in class, though students are encouraged to do both.

3.) Prepare all readings for the date listed in the syllabus unless otherwise instructed.

**Op-Ed article and essay (in class examination October 19):**
Students will write an opinion-editorial style article as well as a response to an essay question, in class. This assignment comprises the midterm examination. Newspaper op-eds are normally written to a strict length, so students will be limited to exactly 3-4 double spaced pages (at least 3 complete pages, not more than 4 complete pages in an exam booklet) of legible hand-written copy – under-length will be penalized significantly and over-length will not be read by the instructor. Topic is open. Students are strongly encouraged to prepare a topic and know what issue/topic they plan to write on before entering the class. Students will also choose from 3 essay questions, all of which will be based upon class readings and/or lectures. Essay length will be approximately 3-4 pages (not strict), and should adequately answer the selected question with reference to course material.

**Media Journal (semester long and final exam):**
Students must keep a media journal during the semester that will focus on one of the following five topics (students can choose a more specific focus within these topics):
- The Prime Minister
- A major Canadian Political Party (if Green party, see professor in advance)
- Canadian international relations, international conflict, or foreign policy
- Canadian environmental politics
- The Canadian economy

The media journal will document at least 2 stories of direct relevance to the stated topic, providing the full bibliographic source and a brief summary (2-3 sentences) for each story. Students should also note if the story appears to present any characters or policy options in a positive or negative manner. If the nature of coverage appears to have changed since the previous weeks then this should be also be noted (i.e. has the tone of coverage changed, has there been a key development/event, has a new “important” actor entered the picture, etc.?). Every week should have approximately 10 sentences.

Students must include at least 2 sources from each of the following types of media over the course of the semester:
- Daily newspaper
- News magazine or weekly newspaper
- Television (or webcast)
- Radio (or podcast)
- Weblog/podcast/webcast

*Must be a well-recognized news organization

**Must be a specialized, non-corporate individual or organization

The journal will begin in the 2nd week of classes and finish in the 12th week of classes. Therefore, at least 22 stories will be included. Grading will be based upon the relevance, accuracy and completeness of the journal.

In the 13th week of classes, students will be given a set of essay questions that they must answer with reference to the course readings and lectures, and to the content in their media journal. This latter component comprises the final examination for the course (and half the value of the project). The entire project/exam must be submitted on Dec 6.

**Research Paper:**
Topics for the research paper are open to those that fit broadly within the titles of the first 8 chapters of the textbook. Students must notify the professor of their paper topic before Tuesday, November 2. Papers may be theoretical or empirical. The research may be based entirely upon literature, or it may be a small- or large-N study that uses cases to develop, explain, or test theories about the media and politics (data sources used in POSC 3010 may not be used). Papers should be approximately 3,000 words in length and must include at least 8 academic sources, not including media sources or the textbook. The paper must make detailed use of at least one chapter from the textbook and indicate a thorough understanding of that chapter.

All written assignments must:

- Include the title, date, course name, student’s name and student number on a title page, and page numbers on all pages of text.
- Be submitted on standard-sized paper and either stapled or otherwise securely bound (paperclips are not accepted). *Double-sided printing is encouraged, though not necessary.*
- Have text that is double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font, with margins of approximately 3 centimetres (1.25 inches).
- Be submitted on the due date to avoid a late penalty.

Papers that do not conform to the above requirements will be penalized according to the discretion of the instructor, depending on the final product’s substance and presentation.

Late Penalty: Assignments will be considered late if received *after the due date (strict midnight deadline)*, and will be docked the relevant percentage (out of 100% for the assignment) at that time. The same percentage will be docked for each additional 24-hour period. (For example, if the due date is Friday and the penalty is 3%, then a paper submitted on Saturday will lose 3% and a paper submitted on Sunday will lose 6%, etc.) In order to be fair to all students, these times and penalties will be strictly followed except in cases where the student has a doctor’s note (or otherwise instructed by the university), in which case a *reasonable extension* will be determined by the instructor.

Email submission of papers: Submission of a *printed copy* is necessary in order to receive a grade on the assignment. However, students should also email their papers as insurance against loss, or to avoid additional late penalties if a printed copy cannot be immediately submitted. The date of receipt of the email copy will be considered the submitted date if earlier than submission of the paper copy (so long as the two are identical). The date of email submission should be noted on the front page of a printed copy submitted after the email submission. Any assignment for which the professor does not have a copy (paper or email) will be considered not yet submitted.

Plagiarism: Memorial University values academic integrity. All students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences. If you are unsure, *give the source and indicate clearly all the text that it applies to.* See [http://www.mun.ca/regoff/calendar/sectionNo=REGS-0748](http://www.mun.ca/regoff/calendar/sectionNo=REGS-0748)

Add/Drop forms: Students wishing to withdraw from the course must do so by the end of Week 11 (Nov.19). Add/Drop forms will not be completed by the instructor after this time unless the student has medical documentation.
SCHEDULE:
(Schedule is approximate for topics covered – it is subject to change based on missed classes, guest speakers, or some topics taking longer/shorter than expected to adequately cover.)

Week 1. Introduction (Sep. 9)

Week 2. What is/are “The Media”? (Sep. 14)
Ch.1
Rand Dyck – The Mass Media and Public Opinion Polls (on reserve)

Week 3. The Media as a political institution (Sep. 21)
Ch. 2
Taras – Canadian Journalists: From Servants to Power Brokers (on reserve)

Week 4. What is news? (Sep. 28)
Ch. 3

Week 5. The Business of News (Oct. 5)
Ch. 4
Blidook – “Choice and Content: Media Ownership and Democratic Ideals in Canada” (available online in Canadian Political Science Review, 3(2) June 2009)

Week 6. Political Institutions and Media (Oct. 14 – Class on Friday Oct. 15 as well)
Ch. 5


Week 8. Media and Political Behaviour (Oct. 26)
Ch. 6

Week 9. Agenda Setting (Nov. 2)
Ch. 7

Week 10. Media and Elections (Nov. 9 – no class Nov. 11)
Ch. 8

Week 11. Trust and Alternative Media (Nov. 16 – Research paper due November 16)
Hart, Jarvis, Jennings and Howell – The Media: Powerful Despite Themselves (on reserve)
Keren – How Canadians Blog (on reserve)
Week 12. Assessing the Media (Nov. 23)
Ch. 9

Week 13. Catch-up, Critiques, and Review (Nov. 30 – Final exam questions in class November 30)