Course Description
This class surveys the literature on media and politics. My experience with media and politics courses is that they tend to be U.S. centric. A good deal of the scholarly literature that has been written on this subject is from U.S. politics or perhaps from other developed democracies. Only relatively recently have researchers who study other regions or international relations focused on the role that media play. First IR scholars began studying the role of the media in setting policy and influencing public opinion on foreign policy. More recently, scholars in comparative politics have approached media in the developing world and in non-democracies both to explain what factors affect the professionalism and openness of the media and also what role the media may have in affecting public opinion, political transitions, citizens’ actions, etc. The course will present an overview of all of these perspectives of the media and politics. It will draw initially from theoretical work primarily focused on U.S. politics but then will turn to more comparative work that uses some of the theories and applies them to other case or adapts theories accordingly to deal with the different circumstances of other world regions. To allow for such breadth, unfortunately we will be leaving out some important topics in the media politics/political communications field.

Course Requirements
This course is a seminar, not a lecture. I will expect that you come to class having read and thought about the material in advance. Your participation in class is essential to positive learning experience for both you and your classmates. You should come prepared with questions and critiques relating to the material.

Course Grading
Since the discussion in class is essential to learning and having read the material is essential for a good discussion, your active participation contributes heavily to your course grade, which will stem from not only how often you participate, but also from the usefulness of your contribution. Please still speak if you are unsure of whether you are right or wrong. Your comments should be on subject, analytical, intelligent, and helpful in building a stimulating class discussion.

Each of you will be responsible for three “research evaluation reports” throughout the semester. I will hand out and explain this assignment during the first class and we will divide them up throughout the rest of the semester. These will be due by Tuesday at 10 p.m. the night before class meets.

During Week 3, no class will meet. You may select a book of your choice (I will have several suggestions). Your assignment is to write a critical book review that might appear in an academic journal. This will be due at the beginning of class during Week 4. It should be 3-4 pages, double spaced, 12-point font.
Additionally you will be asked to work on a coding project that will become part of your final paper. First, drawing from the course material, you will form a hypothesis about some aspect of the media (what influences media coverage under certain conditions or in certain contexts or how media coverage might affect some outcome). You then will develop a coding scheme that will allow you to test your hypothesis (or observable implications of your hypothesis). You will perform a content analysis based on the coding you do. Your final project should include a an introduction, a relevant literature review, a methodology section, and a write-up your results using some visual aids to present your data, followed by a review of your analysis explaining whether or not your data support or contradict your hypothesis. (Note the initial proposal and proposed coding sheet will be due during week 7 so that I have time to give you feedback before you proceed with your coding). Your final paper, including the write-up of your conclusions will be due on Friday of the last week of the semester. Late work will be penalized, one half grade per day. Not including the appendix (which should have your coding sheet and data summaries), the final paper should be 17-20 pages, double spaced.

**Grading Breakdown**

- Course participation: 20%
- Book Review: 10%
- Research Evaluation Reports (RERs), 10 percent each: 30%
- Final Paper (Coding Project): 40%

**Required Materials**


**Week 1, August 14**

**Introduction/Measuring Media Exposure**


**Week 2, August 21**

**Formation of Mass Opinion**

Tell me what book you will be reading for your book review


Week 3, August 28  
Class Canceled/Attending APSA  
Work on book review.

Week 4, September 4  
Media Influence on Mass Opinion in Theory  
Book Review due at beginning of class.


Week 5, September 11  
Election Coverage and Vote Preference, Part 1  


Week 6, September 18  
Election Coverage and Vote Preference, Part 2  


Week 7, September 25  
**Media Portrayals and Public Conceptions: effects on political & policy outcomes**

Week 8, October 2  
**Comparative Media Systems**

Week 9, October 9  
**Media and Accountability/Good governance**
Week 10, October 16

**Media Coverage of Corruption: Perceptions versus Reality**


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Week 11, October 23

**Media Censorship: Media in Brazil’s Dictatorship**


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Week 12, October 30

**Media Influence on Mass Opinion in Authoritarian Regimes**


Week 13, November 6  Information, Media and Mass Action

Week 14, November 13  Media and Democratization

Week 15, November 20  Media in New Democracies

Final Papers due Friday, November 22 by 5 p.m.

You must submit a hard copy to me and send me a Word document as an email attachment