



**Political Science 3360G (570)
MASS MEDIA AND POLITICS
Fall/ Winter 2025-2026**

Instructor: A. Chater
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Course Information

Calendar Description:

This course looks critically at the role of media as a contributor to and conduit of the political process. It examines the impact of media type and journalistic practices on the distribution of information and political behaviour. Both traditional and new media will be examined in depth.

Antirequisite(s): Political Science 3384F/G, Political Science 4208F/G or the former Political Science 3350E.

Prerequisite(s): 1.0 Political Science course(s) at the 1000-level and 3rd or 4th year standing in any module/program, or permission of the Department.

Extra Information: 2 seminar hours.

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: POLISCI

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Political Science 3360G: Mass Media and Politics

Course Information

Course Name, Number and Section: Mass Media and Politics, POLISCI 3360G, Section 570

Instructor: Dr. Andrew Chater

Email: achater@uwo.ca

Mode of instruction: In-person

Office hours information can be found on OWL Brightspace.

Course Description and Learning Outcomes

This course looks critically at the role of media as a contributor to and conduit of the political process. It examines the impact of media type and journalistic practices on the distribution of information and political behaviour. Both traditional and new media will be examined in depth.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Critically understand different theories that analyze media and apply this learning using examples from contemporary affairs;
- Evaluate the significance of mediums of media and demonstrate a thorough understanding in class activities;
- Demonstrate a critical awareness of different messages that mass media can convey toward the goal of developing active citizenship;
- Create high-quality research that draws on scholarly sources and demonstrates multiple communication skills to aid in further university study and career goals.

Required Course Materials

Required readings will be posted on the class website. There is no cost to access these materials.

Teaching Methodology and Expectations of Students

This class will take place in-person, during our scheduled class time. Each week, students will:

- Download the weekly materials from our class website;
- Carefully read the assigned readings before coming to class;
- Listen to a lecture and take notes to add class material to lecture slides;
- Take part in in-class participation activities, and;
- Work on class assignments.

Students should come to class ready to participate, having read the assigned reading for the week. Class or tutorial may take place on Zoom if necessary (for example, due to bad weather).

Evaluation Breakdown

Component	Weight	Date/ Deadline	Description
Essay Proposal	5%	Jan. 26	Students will write an essay analyzing a piece of political media using one of the theories covered during class. First, students will write a one-page essay proposal that will identify the media they will analyze, specify a research question and include a working bibliography.
Essay First Submission	15%	Feb. 23	Students will write a 2,500-word essay analyzing a piece of political media using one of the theories covered during class
Essay Final Submission	30%	Mar. 23	Students will make corrections to their essay based on feedback received from the instructor and hand in a final, updated version.
Exam	30%	April exam period	Students will complete a final exam during the April exam period. It will consist of written questions. The goal is to show mastery of course material.
Class Participation	20%	Ongoing	Students will be evaluated on the quality and quantity of their participation during classroom. The goal is to create a lively classroom environment. Students can miss one class without losing marks.

Assignment Submission and Academic Consideration

Assignments are due by 6:30 pm on the due date via the class website. The late penalty for the assignments is 3% per day. Assignments will no longer be accepted one week after the due date. To receive an accommodation for all assignments, documentation from an academic advisor is required. For more information, please see the Academic Policies and Regulations section at the end of this course outline or consult the Academic Calendar.

Academic Integrity

Statement on AI Use

Using generative AI in any context in this course is prohibited. Generative AI includes, but is not limited to ChatGPT, Google Translate, QuillBot and certain features of Grammarly. Using generative AI is a scholastic offence and is subject to the penalties outlined in the academic calendar. When you use AI to do your work, you are submitting work for academic credit that is not your own.

Statement on Turnitin Use

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com.

Statement on Copyright and Intellectual Property

PowerPoint lecture slides and notes, lists of readings, in-class activities, assignment guidelines and other components of the course materials are the intellectual property of the instructor. Unauthorized reproduction through audio-recording, video-recording, photographing, sharing on social media, sharing with AI programs or posting on course-sharing websites is an infringement of copyright and is prohibited.

Statement on Audio/Video Recording or Streaming of Classes

If necessary, some of the classes for this course may be recorded and streamed. The data captured may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers. The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals participating in the course for their private or group study purposes. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings or streaming. Participants in this course are not permitted to privately record class sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, and/or the student has the prior written permission of the instructor.

Schedule of Classes

Week	Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments Due
Part I: Theory			
1	Jan. 5	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course outline
2	Jan. 12	Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dietram A. Scheufele and David Tewksbury, "Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects Models" (17 pages). George Lakoff, "Why it Matters How We Frame the Environment" (13 pages).
3	Jan. 19	Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Andrew Chater, "An Examination of the Framing of Climate Change by the Government of Canada, 2006-2016" (18 pages). Read 25 pages of Pam Chamberlain and Adien Dubbelboer, <i>Read, Think, Write: Writing in University</i>.
Part II: Mediums			
4	Jan. 26	Reading newspapers	Essay proposal is due. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amanda My Linh Quan et al., "Reporting on the Opioid Crisis (2000–2018): Role of The Globe and Mail, a Canadian English-Language Newspaper in Influencing Public Opinion" (11 pages).
5	Feb. 2	Canadian newspapers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fabienne Labbe et al., "Stigma and Blame Related to COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case-Study of Editorial Cartoons in Canada" (12 pages). Claude Beaupre, "Post-Truth Politics vs. Newspaper Coverage: The COVID-19 Pandemic and Transnational Migration in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom" (16 pages).
6	Feb. 9	TV news	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 1 and 2 of Marshall McLuhan, <i>Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man</i> (29 pages).
No class February 16 due to reading week			
7	Feb. 23	Protest music	First submission of essay is due. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christopher Trigg, "A Change Ain't Gonna Come: Sam Cooke and the Protest Song" (15 pages).
8	Mar. 2	Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ferenc Huszár et al., "Algorithmic Amplification of Politics on Twitter" (6 pages). Aidan Moir, "The Use of TikTok for Political Campaigning in Canada: The Case of Jagmeet Singh" (12 pages).
9	Mar. 9	Movies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 29 and 31 of Marshall McLuhan, <i>Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man</i> (44 pages).
Part III: Messages			

10	Mar. 16	Satire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allaina Kilby, "Provoking the Citizen: Re-examining the Role of TV Satire in the Trump Era" (10 pages). • Sophia A. McClennen, "Trump's Ironic Effect On Political Satire" (11 pages).
11	Mar. 23	War!	<p>Final submission of essay is due.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naomi Hendershot, "Propaganda" (3 pages). • Chapter 2 of Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde, <i>Security: A New Framework for Analysis</i> (28 pages).
12	Mar. 30	Political campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anna Esselment, "The Governing Party and the Permanent Campaign" (15 pages). • Pénélope Daignault, "Cognitive Effects of Televised Political Advertising in Canada" (16 pages).
13	Apr. 6	Exam review and mini essay presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None

KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2025-2026

1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences

Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

Friday Make-Up Exams may only be written with the instructor's consent.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at [https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams and tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf](https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf).

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under Special Examinations).

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

2. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:
<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University

College: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-supportservices/personal-counselling/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:
https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/

Academic Support Services at King's University College:
<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

GBSV Support:

King's is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at:
<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing Care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email or by calling 519-661-3568.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safecampus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

See also https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with you instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammarchecking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

5. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

6. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

7. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.