

POLS 3523: Money, Media, and Politics

Oklahoma State University

Fall 2019

Second Eight Weeks

Online

I. Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Joshua Jansa
Email: joshua.jansa@okstate.edu
Office Location: Murray Hall 233
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 2:30-4, or by appointment

II. Course Overview

Nearly all of us learn about politics through the media. We watch the news, discuss politics on social media, and are exposed to seemingly endless campaign ads. To truly understand American democracy, it is imperative to understand how the media covers the news, how citizens' opinions are affected by the news, and how elected officials communicate through the media. Candidates and their campaigns craft messages and seek media coverage in order to reach ordinary Americans, but it is becoming increasingly expensive to run a campaign. Therefore, we will also look at the role of money in American politics, including the rules for giving money to candidates, and how individuals and organizations may spend money independently of candidates.

Students should leave the course with a clear idea of the implications of the current media and campaign finance landscape for the functioning of American democracy. In addition to learning about money and media in American politics, students will practice skills transferrable to the workplace, including: critical and creative thinking, writing clearly and concisely, and time management.

III. Course Website on Canvas

To access the course site, go to <https://canvas.okstate.edu> and sign-in. You should have automatic access to POLS 3523 on Canvas just by registering for the course. On Canvas, you will find all the content you need to complete the class. First, start by reading this syllabus. More often than not, your question will be answered by the syllabus.

Next, you will find a module for each of the 8 weeks of the course. In the module, you will find links to 1) lecture videos, 2) activities and other assignments, 3) quizzes. Each week will have a short lecture video to help elucidate the week's readings. The quizzes are based on readings and lectures. Activities and other assignments follow along with the schedule provided in the syllabus. Material will appear to students four weeks at a time. You may work ahead or follow along week-by-week, the choice is yours as long as you hit your deadlines and complete the assigned work.

If you have any questions about the workflow of the course, or if you have any problems accessing the course site, please let me know as soon as possible!

IV. Student and Instructor Responsibilities

I will be prepared, enthusiastic, fair, and respectful of every student. I will provide interesting and important readings, lectures, and assignments that will help you better understand the subject and help you practice important skills for success in your careers. I will also be accessible and do my best to return graded materials in a timely fashion.

You are expected to actively engage with course material, to read all assigned material, and complete assignments on time. You are expected to keep up with lectures, grades, and assignments as they are posted to the course website. You are also expected to ask questions about the material when necessary, and provide thoughtful responses on written assignments. Do not let your education be the one thing where you expect less for your money.

V. Assignments and Grading

Your grade for the course will be determined in the following way:

Papers:	200 points (2 papers at 100 pts each)
Activities:	200 points (10 activities at 20 pts each)
<u>Quizzes:</u>	<u>200 points (4 quizzes at 50 pts each)</u>
Total:	600 points

Grade scale

The following grading scale will be used for assigning final letter grades.:

- A = 90.00% – 100.00%, or 540 – 600 points
- B = 80.00 – 89.99, or 480 – 539 points
- C = 70.00 – 79.99, or 420 – 479 points
- D = 60.00 – 69.99, or 360 – 419 points
- F = 0 – 59.99, or 0 – 359 points

Note on grade scale: There will be no rounding up of final course grades, nor a grade curve.

Quizzes

There are four quizzes. Each quiz will be a mix of multiple choice and short answer questions. The first quiz will test your knowledge of the material from Weeks 1 and 2, the second quiz will test your knowledge of material from Weeks 3 and 4, and so forth. Each quiz is worth 50 points.

Papers

There are two papers. Each paper is worth 100 points of your final course grade. You will be given a prompt that asks specific questions related to proposed reforms to media and campaign finance. Excellent papers will clearly and directly answer the prompt, providing detailed and convincing answers with few (if any) grammatical errors. All papers must be formatted correctly for full points. The first paper will be graded on a points basis (the better you do, the more points you get). The second paper will be graded on a pass-fail basis (pass = 100 points; fail = 50 points; incomplete = 0 points).

A guide to formatting the papers is provided below:

- Your response should begin on the very first line of the document.
- 4-5 pages long
- Double spaced
- 12 point Times New Roman font
- 1 inch margins
- Headers, footers, footnotes, endnotes, and references do not count toward the final page count
- **Failure to format properly will result in a one letter grade penalty.**

Activities

Each week, you have some activities to complete for credit. These activities require you to watch short clips of (in)famous news reports, campaign commercials, and issue advertisements and respond by answering a few questions. All clips can be found at <http://mediapolitics.stanford.edu> or <http://mediapolitics.stanford.edu/mptthird/> or <http://youtube.com>. To complete the activities, you should find the activity on Canvas, read all of the instructions, watch the corresponding clips, and then respond to the questions. You will earn 10 points for completing the activity. Answers must be clear, thorough, and written in complete sentences in order to earn another 10 points. Each activity is worth 20 points total.

Extra Credit

There are two extra credit opportunities. Both are due at the end of the semester. Check Canvas for more details. You may earn up to 30 points of extra credit by completing these assignments.

VI. Academic Honesty

You must always adhere to OSU's academic integrity standards. Violations of academic integrity, including unauthorized collaboration, plagiarism, cheating on examinations, helping another person cheat, and unauthorized advance access to examinations, will result in severe penalty. Penalties include: receiving a failing grade on an assignment, examination or course, receiving a notation of a violation of academic integrity on your transcript, and being suspended from the University.

You can learn more at <http://academicintegrity.okstate.edu>.

VII. Communication

I am easy to reach if you need to communicate with me. It is important for you to stay in touch, especially if any problems arise. **For an online course like this one, email is the best form of communication.** Please allow two business days for a response, and be aware that I will only respond to email from your okstate.edu email account. **I am more than willing to meet with you in person, or via Skype or Google Chat, or to discuss things over the phone. For this to occur, just email me to set up a time to meet or talk.**

If you do not understand a lecture or reading, or if you have further questions about a lecture or reading, please do not hesitate to ask questions. The same goes for assignments. It is better to ask for clarification before assignments are due.

You have an important role to play by reviewing your scores as they are posted to Canvas, and communicating with me in the event of an error. If you think there is an error, please bring it to my attention as soon as possible and I will investigate as necessary. There will be no way to change grades after the last assignment is due.

VIII. Late Work

Activities, exams, and papers are due through Canvas **by 11:59 PM** on the due date. If any assignment is not turned in at this time it will be considered late. Late assignments will be discounted a full letter grade each day it is late. For example, if you scored a 90 on an assignment but turned it in a day late, you will earn an 80 on that assignment. I cannot accept any work after December 13th at 11:59 PM (the end of finals week) because final course grades are due soon after to the University.

Note on late work penalty:

Turning in an assignment at any time after 11:59 PM on the due date but before 11:59 PM the next day is considered one day late. After 11:59 PM the next day will be considered two days late, and so forth.

IX. Additional Course Policies

Please see the Oklahoma State University Syllabus Attachment for all other policies in effect and resources available to you for this course.

X. Required Readings

The following books are required for the course:

1. Iyengar, Shanto. 2019. *Media Politics: A Citizens Guide*. Fourth Edition. ISBN: 978-0393664874
2. Mutch, Robert E. 2016. *Campaign Finance: What Everyone Needs to Know*. ISBN: 978-0190274689

These books are available at the OSU Bookstore, or through online vendors. The only additional reading you will be required to complete are short readings associated with the paper prompts.

XI. Course Schedule

Week 1 (October 13-19): Media, Reporting, and American Democracy

Read: Iyengar Chapters 2, 3, 4

Complete: Activities 1 and 2 (Due Friday, October 18 at 11:59 PM)

Week 2 (October 20-26): The Effect of the Media on Public Opinion

Read: Iyengar Chapters 5 and 8

Complete: Activity 3 (Due Friday, October 25 at 11:59 PM); Quiz 1 (Due Saturday, October 26 at 11:59 PM)

Week 3 (October 27-November 2): Campaigning Through the Media

Read: Iyengar Chapters 6 and 7

Complete: Activity 4 and 5 (Due Friday, November 1 at 11:59 PM)

Week 4 (November 3-9): Reforming the Media

Read: Iyengar Chapter 11

Complete: Quiz 2 and Paper 1 (Due Saturday, November 9 at 11:59 PM)

Week 5 (November 10-16): The Basics of Campaign Finance

Read: Mutch Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5

Complete: Activity 6 and 7 (Due Friday, November 15 at 11:59 PM)

Week 6 (November 17-23): *Citizens United*, Super PACs, and Money as Speech

Read: Mutch Chapters 6, 8, 9

Complete: Activity 8 (Due Friday, November 22 at 11:59 PM); Quiz 3 (Due Saturday, November 23 at 11:59 PM)

Week 7 (November 24-30): Money and Influence

Read: Mutch Chapters 3, 7

Complete: Activity 9 and 10 (Due Friday, November 29 at 11:59 PM)

Week 8 (December 1-7): Reforming Money in Politics

Read: Mutch Chapter 10, Drutman “Enough about Corruption, Let’s Talk Equality”

Complete: Quiz 4 and Paper 2 (Due Saturday, December 7 at 11:59 PM)