Instructor: Carmen M. Lee, PhD   **Email**: carmenml@usc.edu
Class Meeting Time: Mon. & Wed., **12:00-1:50 p.m. PST**   Class Location: Remote/Online
Online Office Hours: Mon. 5:00-6:30 p.m., Thurs. & Fri.   Google Voice Number: (213) 761-7319
10:00-11:00 a.m. & by appt (PST). Join URL: [text or call with full name and class;
        https://usc.zoom.us/j/91574293801   responses typically within 24-hours]

Teaching Assistant	*Email Address*	*Office Hour(s) & Appts*:
Becky Pham	thingocb@usc.edu	By appt. only; Join URL (forthcoming)

Course Description

This course takes an empirical look at the impact of the mass media on individuals and society. First, an overview of the history of media effects research will be presented. Focus will be placed on the paradigm shifts in media effects and the implications of these changes for understanding how individuals are influenced by mass media. Second, the major theoretical perspectives used to explain the influences of the mass media (e.g., priming theory, social cognitive theory) as well as the methods employed to test such effects (e.g., content analysis, surveys, experiments, longitudinal studies) will be discussed. Third and most importantly, a substantial portion of the course content will focus on the intended and unintended effects of different types of media content on individuals and society.

Course Learning Outcomes

The major objective of this course is to provide an extensive examination of the effects of the mass media. By the end of the semester, you will be able to:

- **Discuss** media effects theories and how they help explain research findings;
- **Explain** the ways in which mass media effects is studied;
- **Illustrate** how media selection and avoidance habits influence individuals on a cognitive, affective, physiological, and behavioral level;
- **Apply** empirically derived knowledge to everyday media situations;
- **Explain** how media effects research can be used to inform policy issues;
- **Recognize** some of the unanswered questions in the field and **devise** possible answers to those questions.

Required Readings/Materials

Sparks, G. G. (2015). *Media effects research: A basic overview* (**5th ed.**). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
    [Available at the USC Bookstore or Online via Cengage, Vital Source, Amazon]

All additional required readings/course materials will be made available on Blackboard (Bb).

Poll Everywhere classroom response system-free and available online at https://pollev.com [Username: TBA]
Poll Everywhere is a tool that will allow for greater interactivity in the course to further students' learning experience. Students can use any electronic device, such as web browser (*suggested*), tablet, or mobile phone to complete polls and surveys during synchronous and/or asynchronous course instruction.

Overview of Course Structure

Method of Instruction: This course will be conducted entirely online. The Blackboard (Bb) course website will serve as the access point for all course materials (e.g., syllabus, lectures, videos, assignments, etc.) and contact with the Instructor and Teaching Assistant (e.g., email, listed office hours, etc.). If you are not familiar with Blackboard, you can find information (e.g., tutorials and technical support) on the USC Blackboard Student Help website: https://studentblackboardhelp.usc.edu

On Blackboard, course content is presented in 'Weekly Learning Modules.' Each module has a description of the content covered in that week, Zoom links (to live and recorded lectures), reading prompts (i.e., guided questions to help students actively respond to material they are studying; analyze, reflect, relate) and a time advisory (i.e., an

approximate indication of how long it will take for you to read, watch, and complete any required readings, assignments and/or assessments). It may be useful to take a look at the time advisory to determine how much time you need to allocate to a given week, and then set goals for yourself. It is expected that students will *actively* engage with the course content and spend the necessary time on each task.

Format of Course: The course will be delivered in a *synchronous* format per University mandate. This means that all course content delivery (e.g., lectures or discussions) will be streamed live via Zoom according to the USC Schedule of Classes. While it is expected that students will make every effort to participate in the course synchronously, I recognize that personal circumstances might require some asynchronous course participation. Therefore, all streamed lectures will be recorded <u>and</u> made available to all students for review for a 5-week period of time.

Generally, this course will use a traditional 'lecture-discussion' format. On most days, the instructor will lecture for a good portion of the class, however it is expected <u>and</u> encouraged that we will engage in dialogue continuously throughout the class. Additionally, some class sessions will employ a collaborative learning style, in which students will be asked to divide into smaller groups and discuss course-relevant subjects. Everyone learns in different ways so I hope this varied approach will benefit all students.

Announcements/Weekly Class Updates: Announcements and Class Updates are important for communicating course changes, clarifying material, and/or providing follow-up information. **It is important that you regularly check the Announcements and Weekly Class Updates on Blackboard (Bb).** The Announcements page will be reserved for permanent or time-sensitive institutional and course-related issues. Announcements are high priority points. In order to update you about minor course changes or follow-up on an issue or point raised in the class, you should check the Weekly Class Updates section. Weekly Class Updates are available within each weekly learning module and also accessible through the Blackboard course menu.

Technology and Access Requirements: In order to take this course, you *must*: (1) have consistent access to a computer, (2) have continuous broadband internet access, (3) have the ability to install plug-ins or software (e.g., Adobe Reader or Flash), and (4) have the ability to download and save files and documents on the computer or a USB drive. Resources and services available to students to ensure your success with online learning can be found through USCs [Student Toolkit] and [Information Technology Services.]

Questions/Consultations: In online courses it is *normal* to have many questions about things that relate to the course, such as clarification about assignments, course materials, or assessments. You are more than welcome to email me, attend virtual office hours, Google voice/text me, and/or set up a Zoom appointment with me. Do not wait until the night before (or day of) an assignment due date to realize that you do not understand what is expected of you. If you experience difficulty in this course *for any reason*, please do not hesitate to contact me.

<div align="center">Course Requirements</div>

1. Class Participation

This course depends on each participant for its energy and vitality! Meaningful participation occurs when students: (1) read the assigned readings *before* class, (2) come to each class prepared to discuss assigned reading content, and (3) *actively* participate in the course. Students are encouraged to participate synchronously and asynchronously. During synchronous class instruction, students can ask/answer questions, engage in breakout room activities with peers, and complete live polls or surveys to assess their comprehension of course material in real-time. Asynchronously, students will also be able to engage by completing poll/survey questions posed during lecture or as part of a follow-up assignment. Also, all students can show their course engagement by attending an office hour or scheduling an appt. with the Instructor/Teaching Assistant, reading the required readings, utilizing the resources on Blackboard, and by sending emails discussing the real-world application of course content.

Regular attendance and participation will assist in your comprehension of course content *and* also provide you with opportunities to connect with the Instructor and your peers. It is expected that students will make every effort to attend the live/synchronous classes, however it is recognized that personal circumstances will arise which preclude class attendance. In such circumstances, the student is responsible for reviewing the missed lecture content, participating in any polls/surveys presented in class, and making sure they are completing course requirements. Based on both objective (quantifiable; e.g., regular class 'attendance,' actively participating in class activities,

speaking/using the chat box during class, attending office hours/scheduled appointments, engagement with course material via Bb) and subjective (qualitative; e.g., contributing meaningful questions/answers, illustrating comprehension of course material) assessment, participation scores shall be at the discretion of the Instructor. The 'average' participation score is 32 points; noteworthy participation will receive more points. Class participation is worth 10% of your final grade (40 points).

2. Student Profile Blog/Vlog
In an effort to 'get to know each other,' I would like for you to profile a blog (written) or vlog (video) post about yourself and then introduce yourself to other students by replying to their posts. Your post should include: (a) a visual of yourself (e.g., picture or video capture of your face), (b) some information you wish to share with the class in order for us to get to know you better (e.g., about you in the context of USC and outside the context of USC), and (c) what *you* think is the most important thing to consider about mass media today. NOTE: Your posts should be a minimum of 150 written words *or* 1-2 minutes spoken.

The introduction replies (2 required) should include your observation about something the other person indicated in their post (e.g., commonality in experience). In order to submit your profile, click on 'Personal Profiles' under the Student Profiles tab on Blackboard. Once you submit your post you will be able to view other submitted posts. The deadlines for submission are: **Post, Fri., January 29, 2021; Replies, Fri., February 05, 2021** (by 11:59 p.m. PST). The student profile blog assignment is worth 5% of your final grade (20 points).

3. Exams
There will be three (3) exams given throughout the course. The exams will open-note/open-book, timed (60 minutes), and available for a 24-hour window of time. The exams are NOT cumulative; however, concepts do build upon each other. Both lecture material and assigned course readings will be covered on the exam; therefore, attending/reviewing all lectures and erudition of all assigned readings is essential. Exams *will* consist of true/false and multiple-choice questions. There will be a review prior to each exam. Each exam is worth 40 points (collectively worth 30% of your final grade).

There are no make-up exams allowed. In the rare event that an ***extreme*** emergency arises (i.e., you were in the hospital, there was a death in the family), it is your responsibility to: (1) inform your Instructor prior to the scheduled exam time, and (2) provide the Instructor with written documentation of the emergency (e.g., medical note from a certified physician, obituary) that can be verified. If your excuse can be verified with appropriate documentation, we will work toward a solution. Exam I will be held on **February 17, 2021;** Exam II will be held on **March 29, 2021;** Exam III will be held on **Friday, May 07, 2021.**

4. Reaction Papers
You will be assigned a series of reaction papers. A reaction paper features your intellectual response to a mass media topic covered in lecture/readings. You *might* be asked to: (a) juxtapose theories/research findings/arguments presented, (b) discuss potential implications for theory, research, or "real world" application, or (c) critique an idea and suggest an alternative. The reaction papers will vary in length from 3 to 5 double-spaced, typed pages. All reaction paper descriptions are presented on Blackboard. Reaction Papers turned in late *may* result in a **4 point deduction for each day** after the deadline. The reaction papers are due by 11:59 p.m. [via Turnitin on Blackboard] by the following dates: **#1: by Feb. 12 (Week 4); #2 and #3: by Apr. 02 (Week 11); #4 and #5: by May 07 (Finals Week).** Each reaction paper is worth 44 points (collectively worth 55% of your final grade).

Grading Timeframe and Missing or Inaccurate Score Inquiries/Disputes
For effective learning, students should receive timely feedback on assignments. Therefore, *every attempt* will be made to grade assignments and post grades within 7-14 days. Scores for all assignments are regularly updated on Blackboard. You are responsible for notifying the Instructor **within one (1) week** of a score posting if you think a score is missing or inaccurate. Moreover, you only have this period of time to dispute a score. To dispute a score, you must submit your reason *in writing*. This policy is helpful for two reasons: First, if a score change is justified, it provides documentation for change in the record. Second, it gives you a chance to think through and present your argument carefully, to maximize your chances of success. Submit your brief, written argument to the course instructor. If you fail to inquire/notify us of any discrepancy, missing score, or dispute a score within one week of the date the score is posted, no further changes will be made.

Extra Credit Opportunities
There *may* be extra credit opportunities available. Extra credit is <u>not</u> guaranteed as it is dependent on the need of research participants in departmental research *or* a relevant Annenberg School of Communication sponsored event. *If* extra credit opportunities are made available, students can receive 2 pts. for each 1/2 of participation (max. 8 pts.).

Assessment:
You will be assessed on the following requirements:

Requirements	% of Final Grade	Point Equivalent	Date Due
Class Participation	10%	40	*weekly*
Student Profile Blog/Vlog	5%	20	Post: 01/29/21 Replies: 02/05/21
Exam I		40	02/17/21
Exam II	30%	40	03/29/21
Exam III		40	05/07/21
Reaction Papers			
#1: Personal Media Use [*required*]			02/12/21
#2: Choose one from Section 1	55%	220	*by* 04/02/21
#3: Choose one from Section 1			
#4: Choose one from Section 2			*by* 05/07/21
#5: Choose one from Section 2			
Total		***400 pts. possible***	

Grading
The following scale will be used to assign final course grades:

Points	%	Grade	Points	%	Grade
372-400	93-100	A	292-307	73-76	C
360-371	90-92	A-	280-291	70-72	C-
348-359	87-89	B+	268-279	67-69	D+
332-347	83-86	B	252-267	63-66	D
320-331	80-82	B-	240-251	60-62	D-
308-319	77-79	C+	0-239	≤59	F

<u>NOTE</u>: Grades are based on the work completed from the first and last day of class. Per USC policy, "No student is allowed to re-take a final examination or do extra work in a course after the semester has ended for purposes of improving his or her [or their] grade."

What does a letter grade mean?
Enrollment in this course does not mean you earned an "A" in this course. *Earning an A* might require more diligence than you are used to. Doing the bare minimum is not A-level work. Description of letter grades are below.

Letter Grade	Description
A	Excellence; demonstrates *extraordinarily* high achievement; comprehensive knowledge and understanding of subject matter; all expectations met and exceeded.
B	Good; moderately broad knowledge and understanding of subject matter; explicitly or implicitly demonstrates good, if not thorough understanding; only minor substantive shortcomings.
C	Satisfactory/Fair; reasonable knowledge and understanding of subject matter; most expectations are met; despite any shortcomings, demonstrates basic level of understanding.
D	Marginal; minimal knowledge and understanding of subject matter; more than one significant shortcoming; deficiencies indicate only the most rudimentary level of understanding.
F	Failing; unacceptably low level of knowledge and understanding of subject matter; deficiencies indicate lack of understanding.

Course Policies

Academic Integrity Policy
The School of Communication maintains a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found responsible for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards and may be dismissed from the School of Communication. There are no exceptions to the school's policy (USC Catalogue, 2020-2021).

Academic Conduct
Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course, without approval of the instructor.

Emergency Preparedness/Couse Continuity in a Crisis
In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university's site on **Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness**.

Disability Service Accommodations
If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Disability Services and Programs (DSP). You need to make a request with DSP for each academic term that accommodations are desired. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you are encouraged to do this **during the first week of class**. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your Instructor with an accommodation letter from DSP. Your cooperation is appreciated. Disability Services & Program contact information: (213) 740-0776 or https://dsp.usc.edu.

Email Policy
Email *can be* an effective communication tool. However, it also can produce more confusion than clarity and be an inefficient use of time. Emails should be limited to quick questions and scheduling appointments; they should not be seen as an alternative to attending class lectures, office hours, or a scheduled appointment. Before emailing, make sure you consult the course syllabus, lecture notes, handouts, and the course website to see if the answer to your question is there. **Although responses may be provided quickly (within 24 hours), you should give us 48 hours to reply to your email. If you do not receive a response within 48 hours,** *please* **follow-up via email or before/after class.**

Netiquette
We live in an era of globalization where we often forget/confuse/ignore appropriate behaviors when interacting with others via computer-mediated communication. When sending emails, posting on the blogs, and participating in Zoom classes or breakout rooms it is important to understand how to interact with another online; netiquette. We will consider these "rules," adapted from Virginia Shea's The Core Rules of Netiquette, when navigating the virtual world.

Recording Policy
Students may not record any portion of a classroom lecture, discussion, or review **without the prior and explicit written permission of the course instructor**. The unauthorized use of any form of device to audiotape, photograph, video-record or otherwise reproduce (in whole or in part) lectures, course notes, or teaching materials provided by the instructor is forbidden. Students registered with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) who are unable to take

or read notes have the right to audio record class lectures for their personal study only. Lectures recorded for this purpose may not be shared with other people without the consent of the Instructor. Furthermore, permission granted for recording of a lecture, discussion, or review also requires the observation of privacy guidelines and regulations for students in the class whose presence or statements might also be recorded.

Intellectual Property
The syllabus, lectures, handouts, and Blackboard content fall under personal and university-wide intellectual property policies. Anything other than personal use (e.g., organized recording, duplication, or distribution) on your part represents a violation of copyright and fair use laws.

Incomplete Work (IN)
A mark of incomplete is used to reflect work not completed because of documented illness or some other emergency occurring after the twelfth week of the semester; arrangements for the IN and its completion should be initiated by the student and agreed by the Instructor prior to the final exam. Incompletes will be given only when all University requirements pertaining to them are met. Marks of IN must be completed within one year from the date of the assignment of the IN (USC Catalogue, 2020-2021).

Turnitin.com
Students agree that by taking this course all required papers might be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers.

Learning Experience Evaluations
Learning Experience Evaluations will be conducted on the last day of the class. This will be your opportunity to provide feedback about your learning experience in the class. This feedback helps the instructor determine whether students are having the intended learning experiences for the class. It is important to remember that the learning process is collaborative and requires significant effort from the instructor, individual students, and the class as a whole. Students should provide a thoughtful assessment of their experience, as well as of their own effort, with comments focused on specific aspects of instruction or the course. Comments on personal characteristics of the instructor are not appropriate and will not be considered. For this feedback to be as comprehensive as possible, all students should complete the evaluation.

Support Systems

Counseling and Mental Health: (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call; studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call; suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP): (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED): (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298; equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment: (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298;
usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs: (213) 740-0776; dsp.usc.edu
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention: (213) 821-4710; campussupport.usc.edu
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC: (213) 740-2101; diversity.usc.edu
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency: UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call; dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety: UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call; dps.usc.edu
Non-emergency assistance or information.

Annenberg Student Success Fund
https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/additional-funding-resources
The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

Course Schedule*

	Date	Topic	Readings	Assign. Due
Week 1	Jan. 18	**No Class – Martin Luther King's Birthday**		
	Jan. 20	Introduction to the Course & Media Effects	Syllabus	
Week 2	Jan. 25	Understanding Mass Communication & Media Effects	^TSparks (Chpt. 3, pp. 72-73 <u>only</u>)	**Profile Post** [due Fri. 01/29]
	Jan. 27	Scientific Study of Media Research	^TSparks (Chpt. 1 & Chpt. 2)	
Week 3	Feb. 01	Historical Overview of Media Effects Research	^TSparks (Chpt. 3, pp. 54-72 <u>only</u>)	**Profile Replies** [due Fri. 02/05]
	Feb. 03	Audiences: Identification, Interaction, & Gratification	^TSparks (Chpt. 4); ^{Bb}Nielsen	
		(Feb. 05: Last Day to drop w/out mark of "W"; full refund)		
Week 4	Feb. 08	Unique Audiences: Children and Adolescents	^TSparks (Chpt. 7)	**RP #1 (All)** [due Fri. 02/12]
	Feb. 10	Unique Audiences (cont.)	----------	
Week 5	Feb. 15	**No Class – President's Day**		
	Feb. 17	**Exam I**		
Week 6	Feb. 22	Violence and Mass Media: Content	----------	
	Feb. 24	Violence and Mass Media: Content (cont.).	^TSparks (Chpt. 5)	
Week 7	Mar. 01	Violence and Mass Media: Effects	^{Bb}Huesmann & Taylor	
	Mar. 03	Sex and Mass Media: Content	^TSparks (Chpt. 6)	
		(Mar. 05: Last Day to drop w/out mark of "W" on transcript)		
Week 8	Mar. 08	Sex and Mass Media: Effects	^{Bb}Collins et al.	
	Mar. 10	Stereotypes and Mass Media: Gender	^TSparks (Chpt. 10, pp. 253-265); ^{Bb}Smith et al. (Gender sections)	
Week 9	Mar. 15	Stereotypes and Mass Media: Gender (cont.)	----------	
	Mar. 17	Stereotypes and Mass Media: Gender (cont.)	^{Bb}Grabe et al. (2008)	
Week 10	Mar. 22	Stereotypes and Mass Media: LGBTQ	^{Bb}Smith et al. (LGBT sections)	
	Mar. 24	Stereotypes and Mass Media: Disability; Ment. Health	^{Bb}Smith et al. (Disability sections)	
		(Mid-Semester Grade Report)		
Week 11	Mar. 29	**Exam II**		**Two RPs due** [by 04/02]
	Mar. 31	Stereotypes and Mass Media: Ethnic/Racial Groups	^{Bb}Smith et al. (Race/Ethnicity sects.)	
Week 12	Apr. 05	Stereotypes and Mass Media: Ethnic/Racial (cont.).	^{Bb}Monk-Turner et al.	
	Apr. 07	**No Class – Wellness Day**		
Week 13	Apr. 12	Mass Media and Health: Tobacco & Alcohol	----------	
	Apr. 14	Mass Media and Health: Campaigns	^TSparks (Chpt. 9)	
Week 14	Apr. 19	News and Media Effects	^TSparks (Chpt. 10, pp. 266-278 <u>only</u>)	
	Apr. 21	News and Politics: Misinformation & Disinformation	^{Bb}Jang & Kim	
Week 15	Apr. 26	Diffusion of Innovations	----------	**Two RPs due** [by 05/07]
	Apr. 28	New Technology/Change Agency & Course Wrap-Up	^TSparks (Chpt. 11)	
		(Apr. 30: Last Day to Drop or Change Letter Grade to P/NP)		
Finals Week		**Exam III (Friday, May 07, 2021; 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.)**		

*Course schedule/content subject to change at Instructor discretion   ^TCourse Textbook (Sparks)   ^{Bb}Blackboard Reading

Per university policy, a final examination or other final summative experience is required during the published final examination week.