

Syllabus Media Psychology

01:830:230:01

Spring 2022 – version 1.0

The first two weeks (hopefully not more) of this course are online. We will be using the Voicethread system (where you will access a recorded lecture) for those two weeks. Lectures will go up at around noon on the day they were originally scheduled to be held, and will remain accessible for 7 days, after which they will no longer be accessible. This class, and therefore this syllabus is designed for in-person instruction. If we are to be online longer than the initial two weeks, there may very well be changes to the syllabus, please keep an eye on announcements during class (i.e. during the Voicethread lectures) and on Canvas.

Who

Instructor: Estelle Mayhew
Instructor email: emayhew@rutgers.edu
TA : Nipun Arora
TA email: nipun.arora@rutgers.edu

When/where

Class location: Scott 123, College Avenue
Class time: 12:10 – 1:30 pm
Office hours instructor: Thursdays 2:10 – 3:10 pm in person, zoom office hours by arrangement. **During the first two weeks, office hours will be by zoom, link posted in Canvas under announcements on Thursdays.**
Office location instructor: Room 229, Tillett Hall Livingston Campus
Office hours TA: TBA after exams. In any case, please email the TA if you are coming to office hours.
Office location TA: TBA

What is this course about?

This course will explore the effects of media on human cognitive, emotional, and social functioning, with an emphasis on 'new' media. We cover the history of media and the theoretical and methodological approaches to studying media. Students will then explore the representation of groups of people, sex, and violence in advertising, news coverage, video games and social media and the effects on identity, self-esteem, relationships and conflict. We will also look at problematic effects of engagement with new media and the effects of new media engagement on child development.

Course objectives

- Be familiar with the history of media, and differences between various ways of speaking about media.

- Know the leading terms, concepts, theoretical perspectives, and historical trends in the field of media psychology
- Know the research methods used in media psychology
- Understand the methods employed in new media to gain and keep people's attention
- Identify the representations of groups of people, sex, and violence in media and the effects of these representations on identity and self-esteem
- Understand the effects of new media on relationships and group processes.
- Understand the effects on mood, as well as the addictive effects of new media.
- Understand the changes in child development related to new media.
- Reflect upon and evaluate your own engagement with media

Materials

Readings

- Readings will be posted online, and will be supplemental to material covered in lecture.

The review questions that will be posted on Canvas are your guide to what you must know for the exams.

Turning technologies mobile app required

- This app is for in-class participation, and is required. Information about how to work the app, and how to register your will be discussed during our first in-person class. **If we are remote for much longer than the originally announced two weeks, this is likely to change.**

Tentative Class Schedule (i.e. this can CHANGE)

Week	Dates	Topic
1	Thu, January 20	Introduction
2	Mon, January 24	History of media
	Thu, January 27	What counts as media? Research methods
3	Mon, January 31	Research methods, Exposure to media
	Thu, February 3	Theoretical perspectives 1
4	Mon, February 7	Theoretical perspectives 2
	Thu, February 10	Effects of media engagement on cognitive function attention, multitasking
5	Mon, February 14	Psychological methods in media to promote engagement with media
	Thu, February 17	EXAM 1
6	Mon, February 21	Self and media
	Thu, February 24	Media portrayal of groups 1
7	Mon, February 28	Media portrayal of groups 2, Influence of group portrayal on identity formation and self-esteem
	Thu, March 3	Influence of celebrities, influencers on identity formation and self-esteem

8	Mon, March 7	Media portrayal of sex & violence
	Thu, March 10	Sex and violence in video games -effects
SPRING BREAK!		
9	Mon, March 21	Sex, violence, and appeals to values in advertising - effects
	Thu, March 24	Media and romantic relationships, online dating
10	Mon, March 28	Relationships and social media
	Thu, March 31	EXAM 2
11	Mon, April 4	Social media, online conflict cyberbullying
	Thu, April 7	Social media and shaming
12	Mon, April 11	Anxiety and depression, effects of media?
	Thu, April 14	Addictions - shopping, gambling
13	Mon, April 18	Addictions - sexually explicit material, gaming
	Thu, April 21	Child development and media 1 possibly voicethread
14	Mon, April 25	Child development and media 2
	Thu, April 28	News, politics
15	Mon, May 2	Reflections - overview
Study, study, study		
15	Thu, May 5	FINAL EXAM 8-9:30 AM

Class Website

- The class has a Canvas website which you should have access to if you are enrolled in the course.
- Make sure you check that you can access our site, and keep an eye on announcements from the site.
- The class slides (which are only an outline of the material covered) will be posted on Canvas (under Modules). Posting will likely take place after class.
- **Recent research on methods of notetaking and memory suggests that handwritten notetaking is significantly more likely to result in remembering the material than notetaking on the computer.**
- Assignments will be posted Canvas under Modules. Count on about three assignments before each exam.
- Most importantly review questions will be posted on Canvas. They basically spell out what you should know for each exam. If you thoroughly know the answers to the review questions, you will do well in the course.

What makes the grade?

(1) Exams

- There will be three non-cumulative exams. Two exams during the semester and a final exam. Material covered in each exam is indicated below. The two exams during the semester will be held in our normal location. The final exam will be held *in our normal location*, unless you get email/Canvas notification to the contrary (which for this class virtually never happens). See further down in the syllabus for absence policy for exams.
 - Exam 1: Material covered in class wks. 1-4 25% of grade
 - Exam 2: Material covered in class wks. 5-9 28% of grade
 - Exam 3/Final: Material covered in class wks. 10-14 28% of grade
- Exam characteristics:
 - 50 Multiple choice questions
 - Covers lecture, see review questions

Exam conflicts

- *If* you have a conflict for the final exam, which is defined as follows by SAS:
 - More than two (2) final exams on one calendar day
 - More than two (2) final exams scheduled in consecutive periods (ex: A student has exams scheduled for 4:00-7:00 pm and 8:00-11:00 pm on one day and 8:00-11:00 am on the following day.)
 - Two final exams scheduled for the same exam period.
- *Then* you are allowed to ask for a makeup on the basis of conflict.
- In order to obtain it, you need to go to <http://finalexams.rutgers.edu> and log in (it's at the top of the page). *Print out* your final exam schedule and only then come to me. You should actually be able to do this on the first day that your schedule is finalized. The day before the exam conflict is **TOO LATE** to come asking for a makeup! When I have looked over your schedule, and told you that you qualify, I will ask you to send me an email saying we talked this over, and I will email you the time and place of the makeup.

(2) Assignments

- Assignments make up 14% of the grade. They are completed on Canvas, and they will have a deadline. Submissions will be accepted for 50% the grade ONE day after the deadline, later than that means no points for that assignment.
- Assignments will be of various kinds, but most will be reflections on and evaluations of various readings, episodes of TV shows, as well as a measurement of and reflection on/evaluation of your own media use.
- Note that the reflection assignments, although relatively brief, are *writing* assignments, requiring that you organize your observations, reflections and evaluations and present them in a logical and coherent manner. Stream-of-consciousness word confections will not garner you much credit.
- Do not underestimate your need at the end of the semester for the points from the assignments! You are responsible for keeping an eye on due dates; flaking out will not work as an excuse for missed deadlines with your boss in the real world either.
- SAVE your drafts of answers in the assignment, both right before you submit it, and in cases where you 'are going to get back to it at some point'.

(3) Participation and Extra Credit

- There will be clicker questions during class that will be administered via the Turning Technologies mobile app. The responses to the clicker questions count both towards participation and towards extra credit. Participation credit (which requires that you respond to at least 75% of the questions during a class) is 5% of your grade. The total possible extra credit is 4 % (i.e. almost half a letter grade).
- Clicker questions start counting with the questions on February 14th, and by that time you have to have registered a mobile app subscription, be linked to the class, and have checked that everything is functioning as required. Clicker questions on days before then are to make sure your clicker works, so do bring it, and do check that the signal from your clicker is received.
- The spreadsheets showing responses received during a class will be posted within 4 days of the class. It is **your responsibility** to check if your clicker responses were received and credited with points **NOT ASTERISKS**. If your clicker signal was not received, I will grant you the benefit of

the doubt for ONE class, and give you 'presence points' - basically you get the points that you would have gotten if you were there and answered all questions wrong.

- If you notice DURING class that your app malfunctioned, you MUST come to me right away after class and show me what did and didn't go through, and I'll write you up in the grand blue book of clicker issues and give you 'presence points' for that class at the end of the semester. You cannot get clicker malfunction 'presence points' more than twice in a row.
- **THERE IS NO OTHER EXTRA CREDIT, please don't email me after the semester is over for further extra credit opportunities.**
- **If we are remote for much longer than the originally announced two weeks, this is likely to change.**

Contact - email & office hours

Please ask me administrative questions before or after class, it's the most efficient communication method.

Email procedures

Politesse

- Please remember to SIGN (that means first and last name) your emails.
- I have a lot of students, and I am afraid I don't know who you are, even if you have emailed before. Therefore you also need to indicate in EVERY email WHICH CLASS you are in. ***If you forget to indicate your name, or your class, I am unlikely to reply to your email. (this applies all the way to the end of the semester).***

Questions via email

- If you ask an administrative question for which the answer is in the syllabus or in the announcements on Canvas, I will reply with "check syllabus and announcements on Canvas". So if you have checked those places and still have an administrative question, start with something like "I read the syllabus and the announcements carefully, and I could not find the answer to the following question".
- On other issues, I will try to get back to you within 3 days. Any emails sent at unearthly hours may not get read before class period, keep it in mind.

Office hours and exams

To arrange office hours "by appointment"

- If you can't make my standard office hours we can meet "by appointment" either in person or via zoom. What this means is that we need to coordinate our schedules. The fastest way to do that is to send me the slots of time that you can reasonably make it to my office (Tillett 229, Livingston campus) or when you are available for a zoom appointment, and I will look at those and pick some times that also work with my schedule (which varies from week to week).
- Example of timeslots (i.e. your availability is bound to be different): Mondays 10-12 and 3-4, Tuesdays 9-12, Wednesdays after 4, Thursdays before 2, Fridays no availability.

Sending me just one time slot is almost never going to work, so be comprehensive the first time and save us some email back and forth.

Looking at your exam

(A) *To see your exam -- go to the TA's office hours*

- The TA is in charge of copying and grading the exams.
- The TA will have the physical exams.
- If you wish to see your exam (and this is a **very** good idea) then you must visit the TA during his office hours after emailing him that you will be attending office hours. The TA will only have office hours AFTER the exams.
- If you then wish to discuss the exam with me, the TA can send it to me and we can go over it together. **Bring your review question sheets** (the answers you prepared to the review questions) when we discuss the exam, so we can see how your preparation for the exam can be tweaked.

(B) *What to look for in your exam*

- Look at the questions you got wrong.
- Then try to figure out **why you got them wrong!** Did you not know the answer at all? Did you not know which of two answers was correct? Did you read the question too quickly and misunderstand what was being asked? Did you overthink? Were all your mistakes on one topic, a class you missed? What type of questions did you get wrong? Fact questions, concept questions, application questions?
- Once you see what types of mistakes you made, consider how to change your studying so that you don't make this type of mistake again (or fewer of them in any case).

How to do well in the course

- **Come to class, and arrive in time, make sure your Turning technologies mobile app is working properly.**
- Announcements are at the beginning of class, and they are usually important! Make sure you arrive in time.
- Pay attention in class (i.e. what is getting explained/emphasized). Get enough sleep before class, or your body will be present but not your brain.
- Taking notes on laptops has been shown to lead to less retention of the material than taking handwritten notes. I strongly suggest you take notes by hand.
- Recent research also shows (not surprisingly) that those who engage in nonacademic laptop use during class do more poorly in the class than those who don't (controlling for intelligence, motivation and interest in course material). Navigating to class-related sites during classtime did not result in better academic performance.
- Given how distracting laptop use can be for colleagues in the class, those with laptops have to sit in the last 10 rows of the lefthand (from stage) bank of seats. Laptops **MUST** be CLOSED during the showing of videos.
- **Prepare the answers to the review questions, start early. These questions are your guide to what you should know. So KNOW the answers, be able to explain them to your roommate!**
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Grading Scale for letter grades end semester

A	90% or higher
B+	85% - 89%
B	80% - 84%
C+	75% - 79%
C	70% - 74%
D	60% - 69%
F	below 60%

Course Ground Rules

(a) In class

- Please make sure your cellphone does not emit any noises. If you urgently need to have a conversation, or watch YouTube you are free to do so, but go elsewhere. Other people want to learn the material, even if you are currently not so inclined. If you are having a conversation disturbing others, I will ask you to leave.
- I have rules for behavior during exams. These rules will be up on the screen during exams. Failure to comply with these rules has (bad) consequences for your grades, with severity of consequences depending on the rule violated.

(b) Academic dishonesty

You are required to abide by the Rutgers policy on academic integrity; please familiarize yourself with this policy, you can view it at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml> Read the section on level three violations and the sanctions that follow!

(c) Absences from class

It is your responsibility to arrange to obtain information (other than the downloadable class slides, and those are outlines) if you miss one or more classes. Please do not ask or send email to the professor or teaching assistant. If you can, arrange in advance for someone in the class that you know to take good notes for you.

(d) Missing an exam

- There will be non-cumulative make-up exams.
- ONLY for those who present a doctor's note or a Dean of Students' note within a week of the missed exam to the instructor can take this without penalty.

Support

(a) Rutgers Academic Support Services

Rutgers has a variety of resources for academic support. For more information, check <http://www.rutgers.edu/academics/academic-support>

Rutgers has Learning Centers on each campus where any student can obtain tutoring and other help. For information, check <http://lrc.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers also has a Writing Center where students can obtain help with writing skills and assignments. Learn more here: <http://wp.rutgers.edu/tutoring/writingcenters>

(b) Rutgers Student Accommodations

The Rutgers Office of Disability Services evaluates students and provides documentation about necessary accommodations. Students who need accommodations in class must do so through the Rutgers Disabilities Services Office. See <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students> for details.

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations can do so here:
<http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html>

If you need special accommodations, let me know early in the semester. I need a PAPER copy of the first page of the Letter of Accommodation from the disability office.

(c) Student Wellness Services

Just In Case Web App

<http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.vpva.rutgers.edu/

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Scarlet Listeners

(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.

Note: Your decision to remain enrolled in the course after the add/drop period is your implicit agreement to abide by everything stated above.