

COM3117: MEDIA, COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC OPINION

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Media, Communication and Public Opinion

Subject Code

COM - Media and Communication

Course Number

3117

Academic Unit

Media and Communication (COM)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This seminar aims to describe, evaluate, and critique the literature on the role of mass media in public opinion formation and change. By the end of the semester, the students are expected to demonstrate the ability to evaluate research concepts and perspectives, and furthermore apply them to actual research projects.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if DEC-A1 app.)		DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Demonstrate and develop knowledge of the extensive literature on the nature of public opinion and its relationship to democracy	30	x		
2	Critically evaluate the literature on the role of the media on the formation and change of public opinion	20	x	x	
3	Conduct a research project with classmates	30		x	
4	Present research findings in a professional manner	20			x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Discuss the principles of media and public opinion through lectures: theories, concepts, cases	1, 2, 3	2 (for 13 weeks)
2	Exercises	Identify relevant issues and topics in Hong Kong	3	Throughout the semester
3	Demonstration	Demonstrate, through tutorials, how to develop a group research project	3, 4	1/2
4	Project	Present and discuss research projects in class	4	1/2

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Participation: Students are asked to take part in individual and group in-class exercises and present their work to class.	1, 2, 3, 4	20	This is a formative assessment. Students are encouraged to use AI to enhance and expand their perspectives.	Yes
2	Group Research Project Presentation: Students are asked to present a group research project relating to issues of public opinion.	3, 4	30	This is a summative evaluation. We want to see student's originality and creativity.	No
3	Examination: Taking quizzes to test ability to analyse theories and concepts: lectures, readings, class discussions	1, 2	50	This is a summative assessment. No AI use to ensure students' independent work.	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Examination Duration (Hours)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Participation

Criterion

Attitude for active learning and participation

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High engagement in active learning and participation.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant engagement in active learning and participation.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate engagement in active learning and participation.

Marginal (D)

Basic engagement in active learning and participation.

Failure (F)

No engagement in active learning and participation.

Assessment Task

Group Research Project

Criterion

Evidence of a) quality of the ideas (originality and significance), b) appropriateness and logical coherence of the arguments and hypotheses, c) appropriateness of the analysis and the interpretations of the results, and d) presentation skill

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Comprehensive command of the research project in all facets.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Sufficient command of the research project in all facets.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate command of the research project in all facets.

Marginal (D)

Basic command of the research project in all facets.

Failure (F)

Not even reaching marginal level

Assessment Task

Quizzes

Criterion

Comprehensive understanding of the lectures and course materials

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Comprehensive understanding of knowledge and theories.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant understanding of knowledge and theories.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate understanding of knowledge and theories.

Marginal (D)

Basic understanding of knowledge and theories.

Failure (F)

Not even reaching marginal level

Additional Information for AR

Research Project and Presentation:

- a. The class will be divided into groups. Each group is required to conduct a research project on an approved topic.
- b. Each group is expected to make a presentation to the class on the research project.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Mass media; Communication; Public opinion; Group influence; Opinion polls; Democracy: Public policy; Media and politics

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Erikson, R. S., & Tedin, K. L. (2019). American public opinion: Its origins, content, and impact. Routledge.
2	Glynn, C.J. (2016). Public Opinion (3rd ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429493256

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Theodore L. Glasser and Charles T. Salomon (1995). Public Opinion and the Communication of Consent. New York: Guilford.
2	Bernard Hennessy (1985). Public Opinion. Brooks/Cole.
3	Walter Lippmann (1922). Public Opinion. New York: Free Press.
4	Vince Price (1992). Public Opinion. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
5	Herbert Schiller (1973). The Mind Managers. Boston: Beacon.