This syllabus is intended to give students guidance regarding the structure of this course and the material that will be covered. I will follow the syllabus as closely as possible, but also reserve the right to make changes (to readings, assignments, dates, etc.) as needed.

Description and Goals of the Course
The media play a crucial role in American politics. Long known as the “fourth estate,” the Founders enumerated press protections largely because the media help us monitor those in power and hold leaders accountable. Since those days, the media landscape has changed in many ways (e.g., social media) yet also remained very much the same (e.g., partisan news). This course will provide an overview of the media’s role in American politics with a special focus on implications for leadership. We’ll cover several large themes: the role of the press in a democracy; how media help (and don’t help) us hold leaders accountable; media owners and the business of news; the news making process; how media affect our understanding of elections, leaders, policies, and groups in society; and the role of technology in the news. You will also learn some research skills through a group project that requires original data collection and a critical analysis of media coverage.

Readings
The readings for this course include empirical social science articles, popular readings based on social science research, and documentaries. We will also read frequently from the following textbook:


Copies of all other assigned readings (or links to them) are available on Blackboard. All readings should be done before the class period for which they are listed, as they serve as background for the day's discussions, class activities, and lecture. Readings may change slightly and new readings may be assigned throughout the semester. It’s important to remember that these texts are just a starting point. My hope is that they will pique your interest so that you explore beyond what is assigned. Additional readings and viewpoints are always welcome in class discussions to help enrich all of our learning experiences.

Course Requirements
Attendance and Participation: 10%
Students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, and be actively engaged in discussions and activities. To do so, all assigned readings should be completed prior to the
Start of class. Keep in mind that quality (not quantity) matters most for your class participation. You will be afforded one absence but after that, each unexcused absence will lower your grade. Inadequate class participation will also lower your course grade. The default participation grade will be a C (average), while As and Bs will be given to only the most consistently active, informed, and engaged students.

Discussion Questions: 10%
As an upper-level elective, I treat this class much like a graduate-level seminar. That means, our class meetings will largely consist of discussions about the readings and current events. Each student should come prepared for class having completed all of the assigned readings and/or videos. Students will also submit discussion questions roughly once a week. The class will be divided into two groups: A and B. Members of each group will be assigned to different class dates on the syllabus, and should submit 3-5 thoughtful discussion questions prior to that class meeting. All questions must be submitted via Blackboard Journal by noon the day before our class meets (i.e., noon on Mondays for groups that write for Tuesdays and noon on Wednesdays for groups that write for Thursdays). These questions should demonstrate a deep understanding of the readings and how they do or do not fit together. Examples of topics and approaches you might consider when crafting your (thought-provoking) discussion questions are posted on Blackboard.

Midterm Exams (2): 20% each
Two midterm exams will be held in class on Thursday, February 21 and Thursday, April 11. The exams will cover material from class lectures, discussions, and readings.

Media Coverage Analysis Paper: 40% total
In lieu of a final exam, you will work in groups on a media analysis project. This project is an opportunity for you to think critically about how the media cover a topic of your group’s choosing. More details will be provided in class, but the main components are listed below:

- **Project proposal**: 5% of total grade; due 2/14. Revision due by 11:59p on 2/27.
- **Rough draft**: 10% of total grade; due 4/4.
- **Presentation**: 10% of total grade; in-class 4/18-4/25.
- **Final draft**: 15% of total grade; due 5/2.

Grading Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades will be rounded as follows: 0.01-0.49 will be rounded down; 0.50-0.99 will be rounded up.

Policies, Statements, and Notes

Awarding of Credit
To be successful in this course, a student should expect to devote 10-14 hours each week, including class time and time spent on course-related activities. 
registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html

**Honor System**
The Jepson School supports the provisions of the Honor System. The shortened version of the honor pledge is: “I pledge that I have neither received nor given unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work.”
studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/student-handbook/honor/the-honor-code.html

**Plagiarism**
Any written work must reflect your own scholarship and adhere to the UR honor code. Please be aware of the University’s policies and guidelines regarding plagiarism. Violations of these guidelines will not be excused by ignorance and will be reported to the Honor Council.

**Make-Up Exams and Assignment Extension Policy**
Make-up exams and assignment extensions will only be permitted under extraordinary circumstances. Students seeking either must provide a letter from the Dean. Late work for any items will result in a loss of 10 percentage points for each day it is late (unless an acceptable excuse is provided). “One day late” begins when I leave the class period in which the item is due. Make-up exams may differ in form from those taken by the rest of the class.

**Disability Accommodations**
Students with a Disability Accommodation Notice should contact their instructors as early in the semester as possible to discuss arrangements for completing course assignments and exams. disability.richmond.edu/

**Religious Observance**
Students should notify their instructors within the first two weeks of classes if they will need accommodations for religious observance. registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html

**Laptops, Cell Phones, and Electronic Devices**
Electronic devices tend to be more of a distraction than anything else in the classroom. I do allow laptops, but only to consult readings, take notes, or to participate in classroom activities. Cell phone use is prohibited. If you need to be accessible by phone, please let me know before you use the device in class. Illegitimate use of phones, laptops, or tablets will result in a grade of zero for class participation.

**Office Hours**
Please feel free to stop by my office whenever my door is open. You can also email me to schedule a time to meet. My goal is to help you get the most you can out of this class. I welcome any questions about lectures, readings, and research—or just a quick hello!
Statement of Diversity
I consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect, and I welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability – and other visible and nonvisible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment for every other member of the class. (Source: Safe Zone)

Preferred Name/Pronoun Statement
I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. (Source: Safe Zone)

Other Campus Resources

If you experience difficulties in this course, do not hesitate to consult with me. There are also other resources that can support you in your efforts to meet course requirements.

Academic Skills Center (http://asc.richmond.edu, 289-8626 or 289-8956): Assists students in assessing their academic strengths and weaknesses; honing their academic skills through teaching effective test preparation, critical reading and thinking, information conceptualization, concentration, and related techniques; working on specific subject areas (e.g., calculus, chemistry, accounting, etc.); and encouraging campus and community involvement.

Career Services (http://careerservices.richmond.edu/ or 289-8547): Can assist you in exploring your interests and abilities, choosing a major or course of study, connecting with internships and jobs, and investigating graduate and professional school options. We encourage you to schedule an appointment with a career advisor early in your time at UR.

Counseling and Psychological Services (http://wellness.richmond.edu/offices/caps/ or 289-8119): Assists currently enrolled, full-time, degree-seeking students in improving their mental health and well-being, and in handling challenges that may impede their growth and development. Services include short-term counseling and psychotherapy, crisis intervention, psychiatric consultation, and related services.

Speech Center (http://speech.richmond.edu or 289-6409): Assists with preparation and practice in the pursuit of excellence in public expression. Recording, playback, coaching and critique sessions offered by teams of student consultants trained to assist in developing ideas, arranging key points for more effective organization, improving style and delivery, and handling multimedia aids for individual and group presentations.

Writing Center (http://writing.richmond.edu or 289-8263): Assists writers at all levels of experience, across all majors. Students can schedule appointments with trained writing consultants who offer friendly critiques of written work.

Boatwright Library Research Librarians (http://library.richmond.edu/help/ask/ or 289-8876): Research librarians assist students with identifying and locating resources for class assignments, research papers and other course projects. Librarians also provide research support for students and can respond to questions about evaluating and citing sources. Students can email, text or IM or schedule a personal research appointment to meet with a librarian in his/her office on the first floor Research and Collaborative Study area.
DATES + TOPICS

Tuesday, January 15
Introductions.

Thursday, January 17
**No class – SPSA**

RESEARCHING THE MEDIA

Tuesday, January 22
Social Science Methods and Approaches.
Readings:

Thursday, January 24
Social Science Methods and Approaches.
Reading:

THE MEDIA’S PLACE IN AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Tuesday, January 29
Democracy Dies in the Darkness.
Readings:
- Graber and Dunaway: Chapter 1.
- Optional background reading: Justice Black's opinion in the Pentagon Papers case https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/403/713#writing-USSC_CR_0403_0713_ZC
⇒ Group A submits questions for today.

Thursday, January 31
Watch All the President’s Men in class.

Readings:

**Tuesday, February 5**

Finish All the President’s Men.

Comparative Perspectives.

Reading:

⇒ Group B submits questions for today.

**Thursday, February 7**

Media as a Business: Owners.

Readings:
- Graber and Dunaway: Chapter 2.
- Optional additional reading: Kovach and Rosenstiel. The Elements of Journalism. Chapter 3.

⇒ Group A submits questions for today.

**Tuesday, February 12**

Media as a Business: Profits.

Readings:


⇒ Group B submits questions for today.

Wednesday, February 13: Jepson Leadership Forum with Zeynep Tufecki
“Democracy in the Age of Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube”

Thursday, February 14
Watch Page One: Inside the NYT in class.
**Group project research design proposal due by today**

Tuesday, February 19
Finish Page One: Inside the NYT.
Review for Midterm.

Thursday, February 21
**Midterm #1**

MAKING THE NEWS

Tuesday, February 26
Newsmaking: Part I.
Guest speaker (via Skype): Michelle Ye Hee Lee (@myhlee), National Political Enterprise and Accountability Reporter at The Washington Post, and President of the Asian-American Journalists Association
Readings:
• TBD – article from Michelle Lee
• Graber and Dunaway: Chapter 5.
• Optional background reading: Kovach and Rosenstiel. The Elements of Journalism. Chapter 4.
⇒ Group A submits questions for today. Others may also submit questions in preparation for our guest!

Thursday, February 28
Newsmaking: Part II.
Readings:
• Graber and Dunaway: Chapter 3 (pp. 63-97).

⇒ Group B submits questions for today.

Tuesday, March 5
Newsmaking: A case study of Wikileaks.
Readings:
- Background: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WikiLeaks

⇒ Group A submits questions for today.

Thursday, March 7
Newsmaking: The consequences.
Readings:

⇒ Group B submits questions for today.

SPRING BREAK, MARCH 12 & 14

(TECHNOLOGICAL) CH-CH-CHANGES

Tuesday, March 19
Social Media Killed the TV Star.
Readings:


⇒ *Group A submits questions for today.*

**Thursday, March 21**

*Reevaluating the Social Network.*

Reading:

- Watch Part 1 of Frontline Documentary on Facebook: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T48KFiHwexM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T48KFiHwexM)

⇒ *Group B submits questions for today.*

**Tuesday, March 26**

*Reevaluating the Social Network continued.*

Reading:

- Watch Part 2 of Frontline Documentary on Facebook: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EuA4qxPbpQE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EuA4qxPbpQE)

⇒ *Group A submits questions for today.*

**Thursday, March 28**

*News Consumption and Media Coverage.*

Readings:

- Graber and Dunaway. Chapter 12, pp. 401-420.

⇒ *Group B submits questions for today.*

**Tuesday, April 2**

*More Candidate Coverage and Strategy.*

Readings:

- Graber and Dunaway. Chapter 12, pp. 386-400.
⇒ Group A submits questions for today.

Thursday, April 4
Looking ahead to the future.
Readings:
⇒ Group B submits questions for today.

**Rough draft of group project paper due by today**

Tuesday, April 9
Review for midterm, catch up, and work on group projects.

Thursday, April 11
**Midterm #2**

Tuesday, April 16
In-class time to work on group projects/presentations.

Thursday, April 18
Media analysis presentations.

Tuesday, April 23
Media analysis presentations.

Thursday, April 25
Media analysis presentations + course wrap-up.

Thursday, May 2 at 5pm
**Final group papers due**