Course Description:
Our contemporary world is saturated with media in its various forms. Few Americans go a day without interacting with some form of media; most tune into several different media outlets daily. Our images, ideologies, and even our identities, are shaped by the media that surrounds us. However, the media we engage in is constantly, and recently rapidly, evolving and changing. Politicians and cultural leaders often have to struggle to keep up with the pace of the culture, which sometimes the young understand much more naturally. The power of the media is pervasive in both electoral and cultural politics in the U.S. This is an influence that is growing, not shrinking, with the rise of new media technologies. Its examination only becomes more crucial as time goes on. This course explores the effects of mass media on individuals and on society, dealing with the conflicts that arise in the political, social, legal, cultural, and economic arenas.

Learning Outcomes:
- Students will examine how the media presents political leaders and the national and international issues that shape our society and our world.
- Students will learn to critically analyze both long-established and emerging new media for persuasive content and influence on individuals and groups.
- Students will develop analytical writing skills for a variety of texts.
- Students will learn oral communication skills in small group and formal public settings.
- Students will participate in an online discussion forum and develop their abilities to use technology for academic purposes.

Texts:
- Media Samples (include tv, radio, newspaper, magazine, & internet)

Requirements:
- Come to class prepared and on time, ready to actively participate in discussion and engage with material.
- Read all required texts
- Post weekly on forum discussing course readings and media examples.
- Prepare TWO 1-minute media analyses (student selected dates)
- Present one 5-8 minute critique on a media sample of your choosing.
• Complete one in-class midterm exam in essay form.

• Write a final research paper on an issue of personal interest addressed in class (6-8 pages).

Grading:
• Online Discussion Postings  120 points
• Attendance and Participation  50 points
• Media Critiques (15 points X 2)  30 points
• Midterm Exam  40 points
• Media Self Critique  20 points
• Research Paper  60 points
• Presentation  30 points

350 points possible

100-90% = A;  89-80% = B;  79-70% = C;  69-60% = D;  59-0% = F

PLAGIARISM POLICY:
Plagiarism is a violation of NDNU’s code of student ethics and will not be tolerated by the instructors. It is a form of intellectual dishonesty that involves the theft of another person’s ideas, language, and/or written thought process. Plagiarism may result in the student’s expulsion from the course; it may also result in dismissal from NDNU.

Learning Disabilities
Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NDNU makes every responsible effort to provide appropriate accommodations and assistance to students with disabilities. Students with learning disabilities who request accommodations must schedule an appointment with the PASS Coordinator at the beginning of each semester. Contact: Dr. Peggy Koshland-Crane at 650-508-3670 and/or email: mcrane@ndnu.edu.
Com2408: Media, Politics, and Society
Spring 2014/T&Th 9:25-10:40
Darth Cabrol-Easton
dcabroleaston@ndnu.edu / (650) 504-3166

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Week 1:  Thursday 1/9
Intro; definitions and beginnings
Do online forum introduction

Week 2: 1/14 & 1/16
Reading: Chapter 1
Media’s place in a democracy: The “fifth estate” & the 1st amendment.

Week 3: 1/21 & 1/23
Reading: Chapter 2
The question of media control

Week 4: 1/28 & 1/30
Reading: Chapter 3
History in the U.S.; special cases is electoral politics

Week 5: 2/4 & 2/6
Reading: Chapter 4
History in the U.S.; special cases in social politics

Week 6: 2/11 & 2/13
Reading: Chapter 5
News coverage of world events; the proximity problem

Week 7: 2/18 & 2/20
Reading: Chapter 6
Investigative journalism; “muckraking” and beyond

Week 8: 2/25 & 2/27
T: Review
Th: Midterm

SPRING BREAK MARCH 3-7

Week 9: Thursday 3/13
Tuesday 3/11- no class-Media self-critique due on line
Reading: Chapter 7
Media Socialization
Week 10: 3/18 & 3/20
Reading: Chapter 8
Politics in the Internet Age

Week 11: 3/25 & 3/27
Reading: Chapter 9
Recent Coverage of the Congress and the President

Week 12: 4/1 & 4/3
Reading: Chapter 10
Coverage of the Judicial System

Week 13: 4/8 & 4/10
Reading: Chapter 11
International news in the new age

Week 14: 4/15 & 4/17
Reading: Chapter 12
The Future?

Week 15: 4/22 & 4/24
Last Research days

Week 16: Final Exam period
Oral Presentations delivered; final paper due

Please Note: All classes will begin with a review and discussion of current news stories; students are expected to pay attention to the news during the duration of this course.