
Media and Society (SOC 330)

Stony Brook University, Summer 2025

Course Information

Time: Asynchronous

Location: Online

Instructor: Danial Vahabli

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Office: SBS S-418

Office Hours: Online office hours by appointment. Mondays and Thursdays, 3:00-5:00 pm.

Appointment form: <https://calendar.app.google/sEPEPtobKHyyXi9o6>

Course Credit: 3 credits

Prerequisite: one D.E.C. F or SBS course or U3/U4 status

SBC: SBS+

Course Description

The course examines changes in the use of mass communications media, such as newspapers, radio, television, and the Internet, over time, and assesses the implications of these changes for society. Consideration of the commercial use of mass media and the media's role in providing news for democratic societies. Emphasis on the global dimensions of the mass media, including how they shape Americans' understandings of other countries and peoples, and vice versa.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the complex interaction between society and media.
2. Learn to analyze media with sociological lens.

Course Requirements

Item	Grade
4 Writing Assignments (15 points each)	60 points
Final Project Part 1	10 points
Final Project Part 2	30 points
Total	100 points

Grading Scale

Final Score	Grade
94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-

77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
67-69	D+
60-66	D
0-59	F

Writing Assignment (4*15 = 60 points)

The students will be assigned 5 writing assignments throughout the semester, but only 4 of them are mandatory. Students can choose to skip one assignment of their choice. Students can also submit the 5 assignments and then the assignment with the lowest grade will be dropped.

In each writing assignment, students must answer the questions in one coherent essay.

To receive full credit, students must answer the questions using the course material. They must also provide two examples in each essay, **one of which must be from the required readings**. The assignments must be between 1 to 3 pages.

The writing assignments must adhere to the following formatting guidelines: Times New Roman font, size 12, with 1-inch margins on all sides of the page and double-spaced lines.

Assignment questions will be posted at the beginning of every week.

Final Project

For the final project, students must choose a piece of media (part 1) and analyze it through a sociological lens (part 2). The project will be developed throughout the semester in two steps:

Final Project Part 1 (10 points)

For part 1 of the project students must choose media objects (movie, tv show, news journal, song, album, game, YouTube Channel, social media, etc.) and explain it thoroughly within 1 page. The goal is for the students to get initial approval for the object of their choice. If the object is not approved, an extra week will be given to the students to come up with a new object.

This assignment must adhere to the following formatting guidelines: Times New Roman font, size 12, with 1-inch margins on all sides of the page and double-spaced lines.

Final Project Part 2 (30 points)

For the final assignment, students must explain what is sociological about their object chosen in part 1. They should at least use one sociological theory or concept and analyze their object using a sociological lens. The final assignment can be in the form of an essay between 3 to 5 pages, a podcast or a video essay.

If you choose the essay, it should adhere to the following formatting guidelines: Times New Roman font, size 12, with 1-inch margins on all sides of the page and double-spaced lines. As for other media forms, the podcast should be at least 10 minutes, and video essays should be at least 5 minutes.

Regardless of the format of the assignment, the submission must contain the following:

- 1) A description of the object chosen in part 1 of the final project.
- 2) A summary of the sociological concept or theory used to analyze the object.

3) An explanation of how the object and the sociological concept are related.

Students will be graded on their ability to explain the sociological concept correctly and apply it to their object in a meaningful and logical way.

In each class session, the instructor is going to provide a variety of examples of applying sociological concepts to different media objects. It is expected by the students to follow a similar approach for their final project.

There will be no grace period for the second part of the final assignment.

Extra Credit (5 bonus points)

As an extra credit assignment, students can make a playlist about a sociological concept discussed in the class. The playlist should contain 10 to 20 songs. In addition to the playlist, students must submit a 500-word essay explaining the connection between the songs and the concept.

Course Policies

Late Submissions

It is strongly recommended for students to submit their assignments by the due date. In case of a late submission for 5 writing assignments and the first part of the final project, students can submit their assignments up to 3 days after the deadline. Ten points will be deducted from their grade for each day past the deadline. After the 3-day grace period, assignments will not be accepted.

There will be no grace period for the second part of the final assignment. The deadline is final and non-negotiable.

Use of LLMs (ChatGPT, Bard, Gemini, etc.)

One of the main aims of this class is for students to practice coming up with their own idea and explain their understanding of the concepts in the best way possible. Hence, students are strictly forbidden from using ChatGPT (or any equivalent Large Language Model) for assignments and the final project. Submitting ChatGPT output as an assignment is plagiarism and the student will be reported to the university officials.

Student Accessibility Support Center Statement

If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact the Student Accessibility Support Center, Stony Brook Union Suite 107, (631) 632-6748, or at sasc@stonybrook.edu. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and the Student Accessibility Support Center. For procedures and information go to the following website: <https://ehs.stonybrook.edu//programs/fire-safety/emergency-evacuation/evacuation-guide-disabilities> and search Fire Safety and Evacuation and Disabilities.

Critical Incident Management

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and the School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. Further information about most academic matters can be found in the Undergraduate Bulletin, the Undergraduate Class Schedule, and the Faculty-Employee Handbook.

Academic Integrity Statement

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty is required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (School of Health Professions, Nursing, Social Welfare, Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty please refer to the academic judiciary website at http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/academic_integrity/index.html

Course Materials

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment due
Week 1	July 7 - 14	Media	Writing Assignment 1 Due on July 13 - 11:59PM
		Media and technology	
Week 2	July 14 - 21	Media and economy	Writing Assignment 2 Due on July 20 - 11:59PM
		Media and politics	
Week 3	July 21 - 28	Media, organizations, professionals	Writing Assignment 3 Due on July 27 - 11:59PM
		Media, users, influencers	
Week 4	July 28 – August 4	Ideology	Writing Assignment 4 <i>and</i> Final Project Part 1 Due on August 3 - 11:59PM
		Inequality	
Week 5	August 4 - 11	Popular culture, memes	Writing Assignment 5 Due on August 10 - 11:59PM
		Digitization, surveillance, AI	
Week 6	August 11 - 16	Globalization	Final Project part 2 Due on August 15 - 11:59PM
		Concluding remarks, summary	

Required and Suggested Readings

Textbook

Media/Society: Technology, Industries, Content, and Users, 7th Edition by Dav Croteau, William Hoynes, Clayton Childress . and ISBN: 978-1071819357

Week 1 – 1

Chapter 1, Media/Society: Technology, Industries, Content, and Users

Week 1 – 2

Chapter 2, Media/Society: Technology, Industries, Content, and Users

Week 2 – 1

Chapter 3, Media/Society: Technology, Industries, Content, and Users

Week 2 – 2

Chapter 4, Media/Society: Technology, Industries, Content, and Users

Week 3 – 1

Chapter 5, Media/Society: Technology, Industries, Content, and Users

Week 3 – 2

Chapter 8, Media/Society: Technology, Industries, Content, and Users

Week 4 – 1

Chapter 6, Media/Society: Technology, Industries, Content, and Users

Week 4 – 2

Chapter 7, Media/Society: Technology, Industries, Content, and Users

Week 5 – 1

Flaherty, Michael G., and Cosima Rughiniş. “Online Memes and COVID-19.” *Contexts* 20, no. 3 (August 1, 2021): 40–45. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15365042211035338>.

Khosravi-Ooryad, Sama. “Memeing Back at Misogyny: Emerging Meme-Feminism, Visual Tactics, and Aesthetic World-Building on Iranian Social Media.” *Feminist Media Studies* 24, no. 5 (July 3, 2024): 984–1003. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2024.2319423>.

Week 5 – 2

Park, Lance Yong Jin, Yu Won Oh, and Yoonmo Sang. “Digital Access, Digital Literacy, and Afterlife Preparedness: Societal Contexts of Digital Afterlife Traces.” *Social Media + Society* 10, no. 3 (July 1, 2024): 20563051241274676. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051241274676>.

Liu, Zheng. “Sociological Perspectives on Artificial Intelligence: A Typological Reading.” *Sociology Compass* 15, no. 3 (2021): e12851. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12851>.

Department of Sociology. “The Sociological Take on AI: Unpacking Current Debates.” Accessed July 5, 2025. <https://sociology.ubc.ca/news/the-sociological-take-on-ai-unpacking-current-debates/>.

Week 6 – 1

Chapter 10, Media/Society: Technology, Industries, Content, and Users

Week 6 – 2

Concluding remarks. No reading

Additional Open Access Resources

The following resources can be used by the students if they miss a class, or they want to learn a concept from different resources. The book is an open-access book so you should be able to easily download it for free. The few listed YouTube channels are full of educational videos on related

concepts. Students are advised to use these resources to gain a better understanding of the course material.

Books:

- Introduction to Sociology 3e – Openstax
<https://openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-3e?Book%20details>

YouTube:

- Crash Course Sociology:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8dPuuaLjXtMJ-AfB_7J1538YKWkZAnGA
- What the Theory – Tom Nicholas:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIVcDWpMT7Kd3O0eq8b6fMOwvK26vpiWE>
- The School of Life:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwxNMb28XmpcoeCDO0VnGUavcLUFiNcAI>