

The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

M.P.S. in Political Management

Summer, 2020

May 20, 2020 – July 22, 2020

Special Topics: Using Humor Strategically

PMGT 6490, 3 Credits

Wednesdays, 7:10pm – 9:40pm,

Online via Blackboard

BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Instructor

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Communication

I prefer to consult with students in person, videoconference or on the telephone as it is much more efficient than the oftentimes protracted and delayed discussions across email. I simply want to give you the best and quickest feedback possible so that you can maximize your educational experience. Telephone and face-to-face communication are much quicker than email for follow-up questions. Moreover, "live" communication helps me to perceive whether you understand my comments and answers to your questions so that I can immediately clarify any misunderstandings. I am available by email for questions that are simple and easy to answer, but for anything more involved and pressing, please call or see me in person. I will try to respond within 24 hours to inquiries submitted by email or telephone, but inquiries submitted after business hours, on holidays, or on weekends may take longer for a response.

Blackboard Site

A Blackboard course site has been set up for this course. Each student is expected to check the site throughout the semester, as Blackboard will be the primary venue for the distribution of course materials. Students can access the course site at <https://blackboard.gwu.edu/>. Support for Blackboard is available at 202-994-4948 or <https://it.gwu.edu/blackboard-students>

Academic Integrity

All members of the university community are expected to exhibit honesty and competence in their academic work. Students have a special responsibility to acquaint themselves with, and make use of, all proper procedures for doing research, writing papers, and taking exams. Members of the community will be presumed to be familiar with the proper academic procedures and will be held responsible for applying them. Deliberate failure to act in accordance with such procedures will be considered academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is defined as "cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information." If you use material that is not in your own words, you must use quotation marks ("these things") and add a full citation. Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. For the first offense, the student will receive an "F" for the assignment and formal charges will be filed with the Office of Academic Integrity. For the second offense, charges will again be filed, and the student will receive an "F" for the final course grade. Penalties for academic dishonesty are not negotiable. You will not get a "do-over" or second chance on a plagiarized assignment. The University Code of Academic Integrity can be found at <http://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity>

University Policy on Observance of Religious Holidays

Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance.

Support for Students with Disabilities

GW's Disability Support Services (DSS) provides and coordinates accommodations and other services for students with a wide variety of disabilities, as well as those temporarily disabled by injury or illness. Accommodations are available through DSS to facilitate academic access for students with disabilities. Please notify your instructor if you require accommodations. Additional information is available at <https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/>

Title IX: Confidentiality and Responsible Employee Statement

The George Washington University (GWU) and its faculty are committed to helping create a safe and open learning environment for all students. If you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. GWU strongly encourages all members of the community to take action, seek support and report incidents of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Office. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty members are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Mental Health Services through Colonial Health (counselors are available 24/7 at 202-994-5300 or you can make an appointment to see a counselor in person.). For more information about reporting options and resources at GWU and the community, please visit <https://haven.gwu.edu/>

Classroom Conduct Policy

This class is (or will be close to) your last chance to practice proper skills and decorum for use in the professional world after you leave GSPM, so you should behave in class as if you are in a professional setting. Please do not “multitask” during our videoconferences.

Attendance Policy

Attending our videoconferences is required. If you find yourself with a scheduling conflict, contact me as soon as possible to let me know that you will absent. Otherwise, it will be considered an unexcused absence and it will negatively count against your participation grade. You must attend class to participate. In recent years, there has been a growing tendency for some students to disappear from class, only to return at the very end of (or after) the semester and expecting to be accommodated. Students who do this will not be accommodated and will not be given an opportunity to re-do missed assignments. If you disappeared on a client who expected regular meetings with you and only showed up at the time your deliverable was due, your client would be rightly upset. You would lose the client and any future referrals from the client. I understand that sometimes things happen in life, but if you fail to communicate with me about any issues you have with class attendance, you cannot expect to be accommodated.

Out-of-Class/ Independent Learning Expectation

Over the course of the semester, students will spend at least 2 hours (100 minutes) per week in our videoconference/synchronous activities or preparing for our videoconference by watching pre-recorded materials/asynchronous activities. Required reading for the class meetings and written response papers or projects are expected to take up, on average, 7 hours (350 minutes) per week. However, because this is a 10-week summer class, there will be 40% more content and preparation per week. Over the course of the semester, students will spend 25 hours in instructional time and 87.5 hours preparing for class.

Additional Note: Class Content Disclaimer and Expected and Decorum

This class deals with political humor, and the line between offensive and funny varies for each individual. Be warned: We will be analyzing humor that may be considered sexist, racist, ageist, homophobic, or otherwise objectionable to many people. What one person finds humorous another may find offensive (or vice-versa). You may also find other students' interpretations of humor to be distasteful. An important aspect of this class is for you to find out where this line is for yourself. How much is too much? How far are you willing to go and to let others go? However, this content is not an invitation to poor behavior in the class. I expect students to conduct themselves with civility towards one another. Any student directing an offensive comment towards another will be asked to leave the session.

Course Evaluation

At the end of the semester, students will be given the opportunity to evaluate the course through GW's online course evaluation system. It is very important that you take the time to complete an evaluation. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback throughout the course of the semester by contacting Suzanne Farrand, Director of Academic Administration, GSPM, sfarrand@gwu.edu, 202-994-9309.

Political Management Program Objectives

A Political Management degree prepares students to win campaigns for elective office and policy positions, and to do so in a manner that benefits democracy and society as well as their organization and clients.

In completing the degree, students will be able to:

1. Assess a political environment, develop a strategy to achieve specified goals, and execute that strategy;
2. Draw upon a repertoire of effective campaign communication skills;
3. Collect, evaluate, and incorporate empirical evidence to shape and optimize the strategy;
4. Find, engage, and motivate the right leaders, professionals, and citizens;
5. Recognize and work through recurring political dilemmas in a manner that upholds ethical standards and professional conduct.

Graduate School Expectations

Students enrolled in a graduate program should take their academic responsibilities seriously and be prepared to meet the following expectations:

1. Utilize effective time management skills so as to complete and submit their assignments on their required due dates and times.
2. Have attained a mastery of written communication skills including proper sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and word usage.
3. Understand how to properly format in-text citations and references for resources and information integrated into their written assignments.

GSPM prepares students for careers in the professional political world. In politics, words and deadlines matter. Excellent written communication skills are essential for success. Every word used, whether it is in a television or radio ad, direct mail piece, social media, or a press release, will be scrutinized. Similarly, deadlines are important. Election Day does not get postponed because a candidate and their campaign are not prepared. There are no "do-overs" because a direct mail piece did not arrive to its intended recipients until after the election was concluded. Students will be best positioned for success in the practical political world if they have developed and exercise excellent written communication and time management skills.

THE COURSE

Course Description and Overview

This course explores the role of humor in politics and how it can be employed to make campaigns more effective. In doing so, we borrow Harold Lasswell's (1948) communication model: "Who, says what, in what channel, to whom, with what effect" to structure our course by analyzing the communicator, the message (including the target), the medium, the audience, and the effect of political humor. Students will draw upon lessons gleaned from course material in order to create humorous campaign media materials ("deliverables" below) and to develop a "humor campaign strategy memo." Because humor is culturally specific, our readings will focus on US-based political humor. However, you are encouraged to create and explain your deliverables within another political/cultural context.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, the students will be able to:

1. Explain how the impact of political humor varies based upon the characteristics of the communicator, the message, the medium, and the audience.
2. Evaluate differing types of impacts of political humor, including knowledge acquisition, partisan

reinforcement, behavioral stimulation, and opinion persuasion.

3. Interpret the different approaches to political humor used by liberals and conservatives.
4. Explain the relative advantages and drawbacks of different media as they pertain to political humor, specifically text, audio, visual, and audiovisual media.
5. Evaluate how humor interacts with individuals' pre-existing ideologies, partisanship, morals, values, emotions, identities, and knowledge bases.
6. Produce effective humorous political media.
7. Develop a "humor campaign strategy memo" that, based upon research and course material, details a plan for a candidate to employ and respond to political humor.

Course Requirements

Students will receive a letter grade for each requirement. Descriptions detailing the expectations for the four deliverables and memo, as well as a grading rubric, are provided below. Final course grades will be calculated by weighing assignment grade by the percentage weight for the following components:

<u>Component</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Reading Group Assignments	20%	Due throughout, description below
Text Deliverable	10%	Due Week 3, Individually produced
Visual Deliverable	10%	Due Week 5, Individually produced
Audio Deliverable	10%	Due Week 7, Individually or Team produced
Audiovisual Deliverable	20%	Due Week 9, Individually or Group produced
Campaign Strategy Memo	20%	Due Week 10, Individually produced
Participation	10%	Contributions to class discussion throughout

Media Deliverables and Campaign Strategy Memo

Text Deliverable: Produce a funny piece of text one page long (such as a letter or speech) in support of or opposition to a candidate or issue. The author may "be" the candidate him/herself or someone else.

Visual Deliverable: Produce a funny cartoon, meme, sticker, t-shirt, or other visual still image in support of or opposition to a candidate or issue.

Audio Deliverable: You will, either by yourself or with another student, produce a funny 30-second audio file (radio ad or brief stump speech) in support of or opposition to a candidate or issue.

Audiovisual Deliverable: You will, either by yourself or with other students (*as many as three per group), produce a funny audiovisual file (campaign ad) in support of or opposition to a candidate or issue. The video must be either 30 or 60 seconds.

The Campaign Strategy Memo is a four-page memo from yourself as communications director to the campaign manager of a political campaign (candidate or issue-based). You are to create, describe, and explain the use of humor in a political campaign through various media in support of a candidate/issue. You must create a memo that describes who will be saying what, in what channel, to whom, with what effect.

Grade scale (for all GSPM classes):

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Grade Points</i>	<i>Grading Standard</i>
A	94-100	4.00	Your work is outstanding and ready for submission in a professional environment. Your material, effort, research, and writing demonstrate superior work.
A-	90-93	3.67	Represents solid work with minor errors. Overall, excellent work.
B+	87-89	3.33	Very good. Represents well-written material, research, and presentation, but needs some minor work.
B	83-86	3.00	Satisfactory work but needs reworking and more effort. Note that although not a failing grade, at the graduate level, anything below a "B" is viewed as unacceptable.
B-	80-82	2.67	You've completed the assignment, but you are not meeting all the requirements.
C+	77-79	2.33	Needs improvement in content and in effort. Shows some motivation and concern.
C	73-76	2.00	Needs reworking, improved effort, and additional research. Shows minimal motivation and concern.
C- (lowest grade to pass)	70-72	1.67	Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with accuracy, etc.
F	< 70	0.00	Unacceptable performance, or inability to submit the assignment.

Assignments are due vis Blackboard at 6pm (EDT) before the course meeting. If your assignment is not ready at this time, you will be penalized a full course grade for each course period it is late. Extensions will not be given except in cases of a verified emergency.

Don't ever neglect an assignment or turn it in with a comment such as "I hope this is right" or "I didn't know what to do." This only underscores your unpreparedness to the instructor (would you ever say something like that to a client?). It is your responsibility to find out what is required of you, and if you have any questions, you must ask them well in advance so that you can get a timely answer to help you. Failure to do so is a mark of procrastination. This responsibility is yours alone.

Note on excuses: Please realize that when you give someone (an instructor, a business associate, a boss) an excuse, you are essentially saying that "I value X more than the time it took to [meet with you, complete this project, etc.]." Don't be surprised if the person you are making excuses to does not share your perspective. Considering that, it may often be better to not offer an excuse at all.

Points earned for each assignment will be multiplied by weight, then all weighted components summed together to calculate your final grade points out to two decimal points. The letter grade associated with the final grade point calculation will be your final grade.

Grading of Media Deliverables

Turn in all deliverables as a digital file vis Blackboard by 6pm (EDT) of the day they are due. We will view/listen and discuss each of them as a group. Each student, team, or group will be asked what material from class was incorporated into the deliverable. The instructor's evaluation process will be guided by the following rubric:

<i>Category</i>	<i>Excellent (A to A-)</i>	<i>Good to Acceptable (B+ to B-)</i>	<i>Needs Work (C+ to C-)</i>	<i>Incomplete (F)</i>	<i>Possible Points</i>
Production Quality	No or very minor flaws ready for distribution. (18-20 points)	Some minor fixable flaws, almost ready for distribution. (16-17 points)	Completed but flaws not easily fixed, not ready for distribution. (14-15 points)	Not complete. (0-13 points)	20
Issues/ Character	Individuals' character and/or issues identifiable and prominent. (18-20 points)	Individuals' character and/or issues portrayed, but not easily identifiable. (16-17 points)	Individuals' character and/or issues are confusing. (14-15 points)	Not completed. (0-13 points)	20
Connection	Easy to connect political message to content of media. (18-20 points)	Connection between political message and content exists but connection is strained. (16-17 points)	Connection between message and content is confusing or ambiguous. (14-15 points)	Not completed. (0-13 points)	20
Impact	Media has punch, is effective, funny, and memorable. (18-20 points)	Media is lacking a quality of punch, effectiveness, or humor. (16-17 points)	Media is lacking more than one quality of punch, effectiveness, or humor. (14-15 points)	Not completed. (0-13 points)	20
Discussion/ Q&A	Several specific applications made of course content, and all questions answered fully and satisfactorily. (18-20 points)	One or two specific applications made of course content, and questions answered satisfactorily. (16-17 points)	One or no applications made of course content, questions not answered satisfactorily. (14-15 points)	Not completed. (0-13 points)	20

Grading of Campaign Strategy Memo

You are to submit your memo vis Blackboard by 6pm (EDT) prior to the last class. Grading will be based upon the following rubric:

<i>Category</i>	<i>Excellent (A to A-)</i>	<i>Good to Acceptable (B+ to B-)</i>	<i>Needs Work (C+ to C-)</i>	<i>Incomplete (F)</i>	<i>Possible Points</i>
Who	Speaker(s) is/are justified as being appropriate individual(s) to deliver message(s). (9-10 points)	Either speaker(s) is/are not appropriate, or justification(s) is/are not adequate. (8 points)	Neither speaker(s) nor justification(s) is/are appropriate. (7 points)	Not complete. (0-6 points)	10
Says What	Content has punch, is effective, funny, and memorable. Issues/character are obvious and well connected to political message. (27-30 points)	Content is lacking a quality of punch, effectiveness, humor, or memorability. Connections between issues/character and political message exist but are strained. (24-26 points)	Media is lacking more than one quality of punch, effectiveness, humor, or memorability. Connections between issues/character and political message are confusing. (21-23 points)	Not complete. (0-20 points)	30
In what channel	Suggested media usage is appropriate and well- defended. (9-10 points)	Suggested media usage may not be appropriate and/or is not well-defended. (8 points)	Suggested media usage is neither appropriate nor well-defended. (7 points)	Not complete. (0-6 points)	10
To whom	Suggested audience targeting is appropriate and well-defended. (18-20 points)	Suggested audience targeting may not be appropriate and/or is not well-defended. (16-17 points)	Suggested audience targeting is neither appropriate nor well-defended. (14-15 points)	Not complete. (0-13 points)	20
With what effect	Several specific effects are anticipated and well-defended based upon specific literature. (27-30 points)	One or two specific effects are anticipated and defended adequately based upon literature. (24-26 points)	One or no specific effects are anticipated, or defense is not adequately based upon literature. (21-23 points)	Not complete. (0-20 points)	30

Reading Groups

The purpose of this assignment is to develop a semester-long dialogue that interrogates the readings and benefits your general knowledge about leadership and the practice of wielding power as well as your final project. For each assigned week, your task will be one of four roles. You are to submit your prepared comments via Blackboard by 6pm (EDT) **before** that night's class meeting. If you have not submitted a completed assignment, you will not be permitted to participate in the discussion. If you have not thought-out and written-out your comments, you are not prepared. Do not procrastinate—plan ahead to anticipate technological or other difficulties. Submissions should be made available to your group members. Late submissions will be deducted 10 points per class meeting they are late. If not received by the last class meeting, a missed assignment will receive a grade of zero. Include your name, group number, and assigned role for the week on your submission. Grading will be guided by the specific description for each role below.

1. Discussion Director

You are the leader of your group, and it is your responsibility to begin the discussion, to keep it moving, and maintain a focus on the readings for the duration of the discussion. It is your job to elicit (make the other people in the group discuss) a brief summary of the assigned reading. Be prepared with a list of at least **five (5) questions** (at least one per reading) to guide discussion in such a way as to get the most out of your conversation (don't just ask: "What did you think about X?"). Do not go beyond the reading or do the job of the other members of the group. You are responsible for ensuring a polite and respectful conversation, and to ensure that everyone has a chance to speak and that no student dominates the conversation or is left out. Make sure everyone has a chance to share their prepared comments.

2. Methodologist

Your job is also to help your group as a political analyst. Identify at least **five (5) choices** (at least one per reading) the author(s) made in order to convince the audience of the validity of the piece's thesis. The choices you identify can deal with data and evidence (most important), examples, and logical arguments. Cite the page and line numbers of the examples you've chosen so that others can find it and offer a brief explanation as to why you think the writer made the methodological choices s/he did. Finally, evaluate the strength of this choice — is it persuasive? Your submission should invite agreement and/or disagreement among group members in order to create a critical evaluation of the piece.

3. Connector

Your job is to ensure that this continues to be a semester-long conversation that builds on prior knowledge. You must refer specifically to previous readings (more than just one), and to specific passages in those readings, as they pertain to the current week's readings. Identify at least **five (5) connections** (at least one per reading) between the current reading and previous readings (use more than just one), and cite them by author, page number, and line number. You don't have to copy down the whole passage that "connects," just the key words. You must construct a **question** to stimulate discussion regarding each connection (something more sophisticated than "what do you think of this?").

4. Applier

You must integrate the course material by reference to real-world situations. You must develop a list of at least **five (5) applications** (at least one per reading) where the material from the reading applies to a political issue, current (preferably) or past. You must explain why and how it applies. Be sure to reference where you found the applied internal (the week's reading) as well as the external material (not the week's reading) with a **full citation and/or web link**. Your applications should be phrased in a way that stimulates discussion or even disagreement among your group.

Learning Materials

We will be reading approximately 100 pages of material per week which may be supplemented by other media. These materials will include book chapters and articles as well as web media content (linked on Blackboard). I reserve the right to update media materials one week before class in order to keep content current. The following are required texts for this course:

Lichter, Robert S., Jody C Baumgartner, and Jonathan S. Morris. 2015. *Politics is a Joke! How TV Comedians are Remaking Political Life*. Philadelphia, PA: Westview.

Young, Dannagal Goldthwaite. 2020. *Irony and Outrage: The Polarized Landscape of Rage, Fear, and Laughter in the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Course readings not in these assigned books will be available on Blackboard and noted below as (BB).

Note on downloading PDFs from Blackboard: There is a problem with the web browser Chrome's handling of large PDF files. You can fix it by adjusting a setting this way: In Preferences, go to Settings -> Advanced (at bottom) -> In "Privacy & Security" select Site Settings -> PDF Documents -> Turn on "Download PDF Files Automatically."

Tentative Course Calendar

The instructor reserves the right to alter course content, include guest speakers, and/or adjust the pace to accommodate class progress. Students are responsible for keeping up with all adjustments to the course calendar.

May 20 – Week 1: Course Introduction

Readings: None.

- Discussion of course expectations
- A brief introduction to political humor and what it can do
- Examples of modern and historical humor
- Basic psychological approaches to understanding types of humor and taste in humor
- Quick review of scientific research and statistical modeling
- Reading group In-class example

May 27 – Week 2: Recognizing and Using Different Types and Styles of Humor, The Written Word

Assignment: Reading Group #1

Readings:

Berger, Arthur Asa. 1993. *An Anatomy of Humor*, chs 1-2 (pp. 15-61). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction. (BB).

Goodman, Joel. 1983. "How to Get More Smilage Out of Your Life: Making Sense of Humor, Then Serving It." In *Handbook of Humor research, Vol. 2: Applied Studies*, edited by Paul E. McGhee and Jeffrey H. Goldstein, 1-21. New York: Springer-Verlag. (BB).

Pepicello, William J. and Robert W. Weisberg. 1983. "Linguistics and Humor." In *Handbook of Humor research, Vol. 1: Basic Issues*, edited by Paul E. McGhee and Jeffrey H. Goldstein, 59-81. New York: Springer-Verlag. (BB).

Shatz, Mark, and Mel Helitzer. 2016. *Comedy Writing Secrets: The Best-Selling Guide to Writing Funny & Getting Paid for It*, 3d ed, ch. 12 (190-207). Cincinnati, OH: Writer's Digest Books. (BB).

Twain, Mark. 1879. "A Presidential Candidate." Library of America. (BB).

- Humor typologies
- Variances in preferences for humor
- Uses and gratifications of humor
- Political literary humor
- Sloganeering
- Text on social media
- Tips for humorous writing
- The creation of meta-narratives

June 3 – Week 3: Considering the Source

Assignment: Text Deliverable Due

Readings:

- Bippus, Amy. 2007. "Factors Predicting the Perceived Effectiveness of Politicians' Use of Humor during a Debate." *HUMOR: International Journal of Humor Research* 20(2): 105-19. (BB).
- Gruner, Charles R. 1985. "Advice to the Beginning Speaker on Using Humor—What the Research Tells Us." *Communication Education* 34(2): 142–7. (BB).
- McCarthy, Ellen. January 16, 2020. "For Female Leaders, Humor Is a Blessing. Unless It's a Curse." *The Washington Post*, pp. 1-5. (BB).
- Nabi, Robin L., Emily Moyer-Gusé, and Sahara Byrne. 2007. "All Joking Aside: A Serious Investigation into the Persuasive Effect of Funny Social Issue Messages." *Communication Monographs* 74(1): 29-51. (BB).
- Weiss, Joanna. November 9, 2019. "Trump Pokes Fun at Himself. Why Do Only Some People See It?" *Politico*, pp. 1-4. (BB).

- Speeches
- Debates and "zingers"
- Real-time in-person response
- Self-deprecation
- Credibility
- Personal repercussions of using humor
- Sharing and analysis of text deliverables

June 10 – Week 4: Humor in a Polarized Landscape I, Visuals

Assignment: Reading Group #2

Readings:

Young, Dannagal Goldthwaite. 2020. *Irony and Outrage*, pp. 1-99.

- Cartoons
- Stickers, signs, billboards, and t-shirts
- Memes
- Still image manipulation

June 17 – Week 5: Humor in a Polarized Landscape II, Understanding your Audience

Assignment: Visual Deliverable Due

Readings:

Young, Dannagal Goldthwaite. 2020. *Irony and Outrage*, pp. 100-140.

- Knowing the preferences of the audience
- Areas of common resonance
- Information requirements for types of humor to resonate
- Going too far: Topics that are "off limits"
- Sharing and analysis of visual deliverables

June 24 – Week 6: Humor in a Polarized Landscape III, Audio

Assignment: Reading Group #3

Readings:

Young, Dannagal Goldthwaite. 2020. *Irony and Outrage*, pp. 141-214.

Dagnes, Allison. 2012. *A Conservative Walks Into a Bar: The Politics of Political Humor*, ch. 5 (165-207). New York: Palgrave-MacMillan. (BB).

- Radio, including talk-radio
- Audio advertising
- Jingles and music
- The sound of sarcasm

July 1 – Week 7: Audiovisual I

Assignment: Audio Deliverable Due

Readings:

- Lichter, Robert S., Jody C Baumgartner, and Jonathan S. Morris. 2015. *Politics is a Joke!* (pp. 45-104).
- TV and Internet advertisements
 - Movies
 - Television entertainment programming
 - Late-night talk shows
 - Interviews
 - Internet and social media
 - Sharing and analysis of audio deliverables

July 8 – Week 8: Audiovisual II, Media Effects I

Assignment: Reading Group #4

Readings:

- Lichter, Robert S., Jody C Baumgartner, and Jonathan S. Morris. 2015. *Politics is a Joke!* (pp. 105-174).
- Shatz, Mark, and Mel Helitzer. 2016. *Comedy Writing Secrets: The Best-Selling Guide to Writing Funny & Getting Paid for It*, 3d ed, ch. 3 (40-60). Cincinnati, OH: Writer's Digest Books. (BB).
- Becker, Amy B. 2014. "Humiliate My Enemies or Mock My Friends? Applying Disposition Theory of Humor to the Study of Political Parody Appreciation and Attitudes Toward Candidates." *Human Communication Research* 40(2): 137-60. (BB).
- Recap of the main question: What makes something funny?
 - Delivery styles
 - Punching up vs. punching down

July 14 – Week 9: Media Effects II

Assignment: Audiovisual Deliverable Due

Readings:

Lichter, Robert S., Jody C Baumgartner, and Jonathan S. Morris. 2015. *Politics is a Joke!* (pp. 177-217).

Assignment: Reading Group #6

- Knowledge acquisition effects
- Opinion crystallization effects
- Partisan reinforcement effects
- Agenda-setting effects
- Persuasion effects
- Behavioral effects

July 22 – Week 10: Putting It into Action

Readings: None.

Assignment: Campaign Strategy Memo Due

- Discussion of memos (part of participation grade, not a formal presentation)
- Discussion of the future of political humor.

Copyright Statement

Unless explicitly allowed by the instructor, course materials, class discussions, and examinations are created for and expected to be used by class participants only. The recording and rebroadcasting of such material, by any means, is forbidden.