UniSC

COURSE OUTLINE

INT370 Politics and the Media

School: School of Law and Society

2026 | Semester 1

UniSC Sunshine Coast	**BLENDED LEARNING**	Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.
Online	**ONLINE**	You can do this course without coming onto campus, unless your program has specified a mandatory onsite requirement.

Please go to usc.edu.au for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

1. What is this course about?

1.1. Description

Politics and the media are closely entwined. In this course you will be introduced to the way politicians seek to influence the media and you will evaluate the power the media has over populations. The impact of political advertising, media ownership, social media, surveillance, media law, and popular culture are investigated across international politics. You will investigate the coverage of foreign and international affairs and consider the constraints placed on reporting defence, terrorism, and war. Media regulation and the increasing importance of visual media/new media is also examined across a comparison of states in world politics.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – 13 x 2-hour tutorials (synchronous)	2hrs	Week 1	13 times
Learning materials – 13 hours LMs (asynchronous)	1hr	Week 1	13 times
ONLINE			
Learning materials – Online learning materials	1hr	Week 1	13 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Weekly online tutorials	2hrs	Week 1	13 times

1.3. Course Topics

Module 1 - Media in Theory and Time: History, theory, and production of media

Topic 1 – Politics and the Media: Introduction and Overview

Topic 2 – Media, History and News Production

Topic 3 – Theories of Media

Module 2 - Media and Power: Ownership, audience, and the state

Topic 4 – Ownership of the Media: Regulations and Monopolies

Topic 5 – Media and Demcoracy: Elections, Citizens, and the State

Topic 6 – The Audience: Framing, data, and control

Module 3 - Media and Security: Conflict, Terrorism, and Surveillance

Topic 7 – Decoding the Media: Surveillance & Advertising

Topic 8 – Securitisation and the Media

Topic 9 – The Media and War

Module 4 - Media and popular culture

Topic 10 – TV & Film Analysis: A case-study on the Zombie genre

Topic 11 – Horror, Global Pop-Culture and World Politics

Topic 12 – Cartoons, Memes, and the Dark Web

[All topics could contain mature content]

1.4. Mature Content

Sex/Sexual references, Violence, Adult themes

2. What level is this course?

> 300 Level (Graduate)

Demonstrating coherence and breadth or depth of knowledge and skills. Independent application of knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts. Meeting professional requirements and AQF descriptors for the degree. May require pre-requisites where discipline specific introductory or developing knowledge or skills is necessary. Normally undertaken in the third or fourth full-time study year of an undergraduate program.

3. What is the unit value of this course?

> 12 units

4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES	GRADUATE QUALITIES
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...
① Apply theories of media, communication, and politics to real world events and problems.	Empowered
② Investigate and evaluate the impact of media on politics, and, the influence of politics on media.	Creative and critical thinker
③ Critically analyse the nature and value of current international media, sources, and news items.	Creative and critical thinker
④ Critically compare and contrast different media sources, evaluate content, and identify issues, themes, and biases.	Empowered Ethical
⑤ Communicate effectively to appropriate audience and apply referencing conventions.	Knowledgeable Empowered Ethical

5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the UniSC Glossary of terms for definitions of "pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites".

5.1. Pre-requisites

Not applicable

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

INT270

5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Not applicable

6. How am I going to be assessed?

6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

Early feedback is provided in Portfolio from the second week. Students will be given direct oral and written feedback on their work and their preparation and participation in the tutorial related to readings and content in classes each week.

6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Report	Individual	30%	1500 words	Week 7	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	2	Essay	Individual	40%	2000 words	Week 13	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3	Portfolio	Individual	30%	150 - 200 words approx. per week over 10 weeks	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	In Class

All - Assessment Task 1: Media Analysis report

GOAL:	You will research and analyse two news items of your choice (on the same story/theme/issue but from different sources) and complete a report critically comparing and contrasting these items.
PRODUCT:	Report
FORMAT:	The report is written as a formal academic paper consistently applying a referencing style (Harvard, Oxford, or Chicago preferred) and containing a List of References (LOR).The news items (whether articles, reports, editorials, TV spots) must be included with your report, either in print or as a link.

CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Breadth of research on media sources; understanding and application of relevant literature.	① ② ④
	2	Critical comparison of news items (analysis and synthesis)	① ④
	3	Application of theories (communication/media and related concepts)	①
	4	Written communication	④ ⑤
	5	Academic referencing	③ ⑤

GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy

All - Assessment Task 2: Essay

GOAL:	You will undertake research and write an essay that explores a media and politics issue in depth.
PRODUCT:	Essay
FORMAT:	Academic product 2000 words Particular attention will be focused on the inclusion of empirical data to support points and arguments made, integration of arguments with theories of media/communication, and, on the critical analysis and synthesis of materials in the essay.

CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Research and discussion of the relationship between politics and the media. Breadth of research, understanding and application of relevant literature	② ③
	2	Evaluation of the impact of media on politics. Comprehensiveness of argument in response to question.	① ② ③
	3	Application of theory of media and communication; use of evidence; range of sources and evidence; quality of sources and evidence	① ④
	4	Critical evaluation and analysis of media sources (compare and contrast). Critical analysis; critical and lateral thinking; engagement with sources, theories and different viewpoints	① ② ④
	5	Structure of essay; language /written expression; Written communication and language	① ③ ⑤
	6	Referencing and citations	⑤

GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, Problem solving, Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy

All - Assessment Task 3: Preparation and Participation Portfolio

GOAL:	You will complete a written portfolio documenting your engagement with readings, learning materials, tutorials, discussions and activities.
PRODUCT:	Portfolio
FORMAT:	Format: From weeks 1 - 10, you will have an in-class evaluation of your tutorial engagement: Preparation for each tutorial will require: reading the required readings for the week; watching the online learning materials; completing written summaries and/or question/answer (150-200 words) each week and emailing these to the lecturer prior to the tutorial; reflecting about the issues highlighted for discussion in the class. Discussions will take place in the tutorial which will give you the opportunity to be heard and participate in a range of learning activities.

CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Application of theory, philosophy, knowledge of media and politics	① ② ③ ④
	2	Analysis of readings and case study materials	① ② ③ ④

GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy

7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

> There are no required/recommended resources for this course.

8.2. Specific requirements

> Not applicable

9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the online induction training for students, and following the instructions of the University staff.

10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%
The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale
You have not failed an assessment task in the course due to academic misconduct

10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submission of assessment tasks may be penalised at the following maximum rate:
- 5% (of the assessment task's identified value) per day for the first two days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.
- 10% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the third day - 20% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the fourth day and subsequent days up to and including seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.
- A result of zero is awarded for an assessment task submitted after seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task. Weekdays and weekends are included in the calculation of days late. To request an extension you must contact your course coordinator to negotiate an outcome.

10.4. SafeUniSC

UniSC is committed to a culture of respect and providing a safe and supportive environment for all members of our community. For immediate assistance on campus contact SafeUniSC by phone: 07 5430 1168 or using the SafeZone app. For general enquires contact the SafeUniSC team by phone 07 5456 3864 or email safe@usc.edu.au.

The SafeUniSC Specialist Service is a Student Wellbeing service that provides free and confidential support to students who may have experienced or observed behaviour that could cause fear, offence or trauma. To contact the service call 07 5430 1226 or email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au.

10.5. Study help

For help with course-specific advice, for example what information to include in your assessment, you should first contact your tutor, then your course coordinator, if needed.

If you require additional assistance, the Learning Advisers are trained professionals who are ready to help you develop a wide range of academic skills. Visit the Learning Advisers web page for more information, or contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or studentcentral@usc.edu.au.

10.6. Wellbeing Services

Student Wellbeing provide free and confidential counselling on a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological matters, to foster positive mental health and wellbeing for your academic success.

To book a confidential appointment go to Student Hub, email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 1226.

10.7. AccessAbility Services

Ability Advisers ensure equal access to all aspects of university life. If your studies are affected by a disability, learning disorder mental health issue, injury or illness, or you are a primary carer for someone with a disability or who is considered frail and aged, AccessAbility Services can provide access to appropriate reasonable adjustments and practical advice about the support and facilities available to you throughout the University.

To book a confidential appointment go to Student Hub, email AccessAbility@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 2890.

10.8. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching

10.9. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The Student Charter sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

10.10. General Enquiries