

Welcome

Everyone has an opinion on the media: "it is too biased," "it is too shallow," "it is the bedrock of free speech," and the like. In this course, we will dig deeper than anecdotal evidence and personal experience to try to discover what the media is really like and what role it plays in the political realm. We will read a couple of theories on the media in America, we will study the history of the media, we will analyze some potentially inherent pitfalls in the media, we will examine the various forms of media, we will seek to understand the relationship between media and government, and we will debate the proper role of media in a democracy.

My name is Sean McKeever, and I am your professor for this online course: RPOS 365 Government & Mass Media. Welcome!

This "Syllabus" folder is your syllabus, so please take the time to carefully read through the various sections found in the "Table of Contents" to the left. In the following sections, I will outline what you can expect from the course, the kind of work that you will be expected to complete in the course, and a more detailed analysis of what we seek to accomplish in this course. The syllabus is an important document that is analogous to a contract in important ways, so please read it carefully. Once you have read through everything, there will be a short quiz on what you have just read.

Contact Information

Instructor:	Sean McKeever
Course Number:	RPOS 365: Government & Mass Media
Semester:	Winter 2017 (December 23, 2016-January 18, 2017)
Private Communications:	<p>You can contact me by e-mail in two ways. Through Blackboard, click on the "Email (external)" tab, which you can find on the far left of the screen. Alternatively, you can e-mail me directly from your e-mail by using smckeever@albany.edu. E-mails of this kind should only be used for private communication with me. By private communication, I mean any communication that is particular to you or to your personal situation.</p> <p>Anything that does not qualify as a private communication should be posted in the appropriate course areas. For example, if you have a question about the course (including due dates, assignment directions, and the like) that you cannot find answered in this syllabus, you should post the question in the "Ask a Question" forum. Another student or I will be able to answer your question there. Also, no assignment should be e-mailed to me unless I specifically direct you to do so (in the directions included in this syllabus, in the directions of the individual assignment, or through a personal e-mail that I send to you). Each assignment should be submitted on Blackboard as directed by the assignment's accompanying directions.</p> <p>You should daily check the "Announcements" portion of this course as well. I will frequently communicate with the class as a whole there. Finally, make sure that you regularly check your official UAlbany e-mail address or that you have that e-mail linked to an e-mail that you check regularly, as I only have access to your official UAlbany e-mail address.</p>
Instructor Login	I will login to Blackboard and will check my e-mails periodically each day

Schedule:	Monday-Friday, so I will, as needed, be able to answer your questions and add to the forum discussions during those times.
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Course Objectives

- 1) To develop a deeper understanding of how the various forms of mass media exert political and governmental power, including:
 - conflicting theories as to what mass media is, how it acts politically and affects government and the desirability of those acts and affects,
 - and how the interaction between mass media and government works out in practice
- 2) To tease out the various issues that beset mass media
- 3) To analyze how mass media affects democracy
- 4) To think more deeply about how mass media may be able to evolve within a democracy
- 5) To further develop independent learning skills

Readings and Required Materials

Required Texts:

There are four required texts to buy for this course (since this is a winter course, I did not order them from Mary Jane Books or the University Bookstore, but they are easily available through a number of other channels such as Amazon, etc.):

1. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* by Marshall McLuhan (you can often find this used online for just a few dollars)
2. *Governing with the News: The News Media as Political Institution*, 2nd Edition (make sure you get the 2nd edition published in 2005) by Timothy E. Cook (again, you can often find this used online for just a few dollars)
3. *Tweeting to Power: The Social Media Revolution in American Politics* by Jason Gainous and Kevin M. Wagner (an online version of this is available for free through the SUNY Albany library system, just search for it through Minerva; however, since we will skim large portions of this text, you may wish to purchase a physical copy)
4. *The Hybrid Media System: Politics and Power* by Andrew Chadwick (again an online version of this book is available for free through the SUNY Albany library system, just search for it through Minerva; of course, you may also wish to purchase a physical copy of this book)

Aside from these texts, there will be a number of book chapters and articles that you are required to read. These all can be found in the “Electronic Reserves” section of the Blackboard site (the tab is located to the left). In each of the course unit sections, I will direct you to the readings that are required for that unit. In the Electronic Reserves section, I have also tagged each reading with the appropriate unit number, so you can quickly find the appropriate readings.

For many units, I also posted some news articles that are also required reading. These will highlight some particular aspect of the academic texts that we are reading. You can find the links to these articles in the “In the News” sections of the “Assigned Readings” folders for each unit.

Rationale for the Readings:

As you probably noticed, there is not a traditional textbook for this course. This was by design for a couple of reasons. First, I have tried to keep the cost of materials as low as possible. Textbooks are traditionally more expensive, and the textbook that would have fit best for this course would have cost about \$70. But there are substantive reasons for avoiding a traditional textbook as well. Textbooks synthesize material for you. Sometimes—when the information is historical or factual—

this is useful. In the cases where we encounter this kind of material, I have tried to select chapters from textbooks to include as the required reading. However, at other times, the summarization and synthesis of knowledge that comes from textbooks is counterproductive, because sometimes there are significant differences in opinion, and it is important to understand the differences and to form your own kind of synthesis of the various ideas and opinions. In these cases, I often provide at least two perspectives, so that you can form your own opinions. A further reason to shy away from textbooks, is that different forms of writing have different strengths and weaknesses, so it is useful to read more than one form. As we will discover in this class, the form is often at least as important as the content. I have picked readings that take on different forms precisely because they have different things to offer. The *Annual Review of Political Science* articles will teach you something about political science methodology and some of the research problems and approaches that accompany them. This will help you to evaluate the strength of various arguments that you will encounter in this and other political science courses. The *CQ Researcher* articles offer historical context for some of the important issues in mass media, and they highlight some of the debates that occur in the political realm as well as give some academic insight into those political debates. The theory texts take the opposite approach. They argue for a particular kind of reality in hopes that the reality that we do have will change in various ways. These theoretical pieces help us to see things that we would miss if we only examined what actually happens in the political world. The polemical pieces may be less objective, but this can be a strength as well as a weakness. While they may carry arguments too far, they offer a perspective that is likely to be, at least partially, true, and the force with which they argue the point forces us to rethink some of our own assumptions and polemics. A final reason for eschewing a traditional textbook involves the breadth of knowledge. No matter how thorough, no textbook covers the range of issues associated with the themes of the course. While it is always impossible to fully exhaust any topic, it is my hope that the readings that I have selected provide more breadth than a traditional textbook can manage.

Other Required Materials:

Since this is an online course, you are required to have access to the internet, a computer, and various kinds of software.

Software: It is a good idea for you to draft your discussion posts and your responses to the essay and short answer questions from the quizzes and exams in a word processing program such as Microsoft Word. After you are happy with your answer, you can copy and paste it into the appropriate field on Blackboard. It is a good idea to save these answers (as a .doc or .docx file) as well. (But remember, quizzes and exams are timed, so make sure that you copy and paste your answers well before the time runs out. You should also periodically return to the Blackboard site to ensure that the timed assignment does not timeout on you.)

You will also need a PDF reader like Adobe Acrobat in order to access various required materials for this course.

Internet and computer: You will need reliable access to a computer and to the internet. As I outline in the section entitled “My Expectations and Requirements” you **MUST** have a backup plan in case you have computer or internet problems. I will grant assignment extensions due to internet or computer problems only in extreme circumstances.

[Click here](#) to see if your internet browser and operating system play nice with Blackboard. To avoid any last minute surprises due to browser or operating system problems, I also encourage you to click through various parts of the course (but NOT the exam and quiz sections, as these can only be accessed once) to see if you have any issues.

Course Assessments

Each course assessment will be assessed as follows:

Assessment	Description	How it will be evaluated
Opening Exercises	<p>Before you formally begin the course, you will be required to introduce yourself to the class and to take a short quiz on the syllabus. These activities will help you to familiarize yourself with some of the Blackboard tools that we will be using throughout the course. To introduce yourself, please post a short blurb about yourself in the discussion forum entitled "Course Introductions." Please include your name, your major, what you hope to achieve in this course, and (if you so choose) an interesting fact about yourself. The Syllabus Quiz will offer a range of question types to introduce you to the style of questions that you will encounter in later assessments. Both of these assessments are due Friday, December 23.</p>	<p>You will receive all 10 points for the discussion forum if you include all of the required biographical details and if you complete the assignment on time. The quiz will consist of ten questions of varying types that will each be worth one point. In both cases, late assignments will not be graded. You will receive zero points if the assignment is not completed on time.</p>
Discussion Forums	<p>The discussion forum is an important component of the course. Here you will demonstrate your grasp of the readings, and you will have a chance to interact with other students regarding the readings. For these forums, you will be required to answer one or more prompt(s) that are related to the readings and then you will be required to respond to other students' posts. In these forums, you will have to submit an initial post before you can view other students' posts or my lecture notes on the readings. After this initial post (which cannot be edited, so make sure you submit a thorough and polished post the first time), you will have access both to other students' posts and to my lecture notes. Throughout the rest of the week, you will dialogue with your fellow students on the readings for the week. You will be required to write two response posts (sometimes referred to as two final posts) in each week's discussion forum. On any weeks when there is more than one prompt for the</p>	<p>You will receive full credit on the week's discussion forum grade if you completely, thoughtfully, and originally answer each prompt in a well-written post by the deadline that it is due. Every post should demonstrate that you read and understood the readings. You must provide citations of the readings whether you use direct quotations or not, and every post should make consistent reference to the readings. You must provide citations from at least 3 different readings for the week, though, I encourage you to cite from more than those 3 readings. Every post that you make should offer something new to the discussion (this means that you must read other students' posts before adding your own response/final posts). Every post should be well-written with correct grammar and spelling (I encourage you to read the section of this syllabus entitled "My Expectations and Requirements" for more information). Points will be lost for posts that are poorly written, that show a lack of or an incomplete understanding of the readings, that fail to adequately (in quantity and/or in quality)</p>

	<p>week, you are still only required to write a total of two response posts, which can be distributed across the prompts in any way you desire.</p> <p>These discussion forum posts should be treated as the equivalent of papers that you would hand in during an in-class course. Your initial discussion forum post should be between 1,200 and 1,500 words. This is the equivalent of a 3-5, double-spaced page paper. You may find it helpful to write the posts in a program such as Microsoft Word, where you can keep track of the number of words written and where you can save a backup copy of the assignment. However, you must copy and paste the assignment into the appropriate discussion forum board. Do NOT post your work as an attachment.</p>	<p>cite the readings, or that are too short or that have little or no substance. Points will also be lost for failing to complete all (initial and response/final) posts. Generally speaking, A posts excellently accomplish each aspect of the requirements of the discussion forum posts as outlined here. B posts, generally, demonstrate a pretty good knowledge of the readings but either 1) include a number of grammatical and/or spelling mistakes or are a collection of jumbled thoughts rather than a well-written, coherent post or 2) misinterpret 1 or 2 key aspects of the readings or miss 1 or 2 important points from them. C posts, generally, are very poorly written and/or systematically misinterpret the readings or fail to summarize many of the key aspects of them. D posts, generally, demonstrate very little knowledge of the readings or of proper writing. E posts demonstrate that you have not done the readings and/or the posts are written in such a way as to be incomprehensible. Initial posts submitted after the "Initial Posts" deadline for the week will be assessed a late penalty of 5 points per day or partial day. No posts will be graded that are submitted after the "Final Posts" deadline for the week. Failure to complete all of the required posts will result in grade deductions commensurate with the number of posts missed.</p>
Exams	<p>After the second week, there will be an exam. This is a cumulative midterm exam that will cover all of the material through the first 2 weeks of the course. This exam will consist of roughly 1-3 short answer questions and 1 or 2 essay questions. Similarly, there will be a cumulative final exam after the fourth week that will cover all of the material from the entire class. The final exam will consist of 2 essay questions. All material from the readings and lecture notes will be fair game for the exams. You will have one and a half hours to complete the midterm exam and two hours to complete the final exam. The exams can only be taken once, and they cannot be</p>	<p>Unless otherwise noted, short answer questions require roughly 3-5 sentences to answer.</p> <p>The essay questions, however, should be more involved. The essay questions are worth a lot more points, so they should command the majority of your time while taking the exam. I expect essay questions to be answered with an introduction that includes a thesis statement that summarizes your argument, a body that constructs your argument, and a conclusion that extends your argument. I expect these essays to rely heavily on the readings. I cannot grade opinions, so only include your personal opinion if the question asks you for it, and</p>

	<p>taken late. However, there is a grace period that applies to the midterm exam. The midterm exam will not technically be considered late until Sunday, January 8, 2017 at 11:59pm. However, due to the ending of the course, the due date for the final exam is nonnegotiable.</p>	<p>when you provide it always use evidence from the readings or from the other course materials (such as the news articles that we read) to support your opinions. I expect the essays to be well written. While there is no length requirement for the essays, I expect them to include as much information as the time allows. A good rule of thumb is to assume that I have never read the books before, and you have to explain them to me for the first time. Exam essay questions will be graded following criteria that is similar to the criteria used to grade discussion forum posts. However, unlike discussion forum posts, for exam essay questions, you do not need to directly cite the readings (you will not be required to provide quotes or page numbers, but you will still need to demonstrate your understanding of the readings which will require you to indirectly reference them), and I will be more lenient on spelling and grammar (though your essay must be intelligible).</p>
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Course Grading

The course is out of a possible 1,000 points. At the end of the course, you will be able to add up the total number of points that you received for the course and divide it by 1,000 to tally your percentage grade for the course. For example, a student earning 900 points for the course would receive a .90 (900/1,000) or 90% (or an A-) for the course. For any individual assignment, you can divide the total number of possible points by the number of points that you received on the assignment to tally your percentage score for the assignment. For example, on the midterm exam, a student earning 180 out of a possible 200 points would receive a .90 (180/200) or 90% on the exam.

Grading Overview:

- Opening Exercises: 10 points each
- Discussion Forums: 120 points each
- Midterm Exam: 200 points
- Final Exam: 300 points

Grading: Detailed Breakdown:

- Opening Exercises:
 - Discussion Forum: 10 points
 - Syllabus Quiz: 10 points
- Unit 1
 - None
- Unit 2
 - None

Unit 3

Discussion Forum: 120 points

Unit 4

Discussion Forum: 120 points total

Midterm Exam Units 1-4: 200 points

Unit 5

Discussion Forum: 120 points

Unit 6

Discussion Forum: 120 points

Final Exam Units 1-6: 300 points

Grade Distribution

Grades for the course will be distributed as follows:

Grade	Minimum	Maximum
A	93	100
A-	90	92
B+	87	89
B	83	86
B-	80	82
C+	77	79
C	73	76
C-	70	72
D+	67	69
D	63	66
D-	60	62
E	0	59

Please note: There is no extra credit offered in this course.

My Expectations and Requirements

Time and Workload: This course has the same credit value as a regular semester-length course, so I will expect you to put in the same amount of time and effort as you would in a semester-length course. Since this is only a 4-week course (one week of a semester-length course corresponds to roughly one and a half weekdays in this 4-week course), I expect that you will spend **at least 5 hours per day Monday through Friday** working on this course. While there are strict due dates throughout the course, it is structured so that you can work when you have the time, so while I do not require that you work on weekends or holidays, you may choose to use that time to spread out your workload.

In both condensed and semester-length courses, you are responsible for completing all readings and assignments completely, excellently, and on time. However, in this condensed, fully online course, you will be responsible for completing these readings and assignments in a condensed timeframe. In other words, this course will have the same reading and assignment load as a semester-length course. As such, it is imperative that you can dedicate consistent and adequate time to this course for the **entire four weeks** that it runs. If you are planning to be on vacation or

otherwise out of town during this course, you will not be able to adequately complete this course unless you have reliable internet access and 5 hours per day to complete the course requirements as outlined in this syllabus.

Independent Learning: This course differs from semester-length courses not only in length but also in responsibility. There is no regularly-scheduled, structured time during which this class meets. You are responsible for logging into the Blackboard system and completing the readings and assignments and interacting with the lectures, the professor, and the other students. While it is always true that learning requires a student's active participation and engagement, it is especially true in this online format.

Communication: While it is true that independent learning is a crucial element of this course, you are not alone. I will send you important information via *Announcements*, *E-mail*, and *My Grades*. You should check the "Announcements" section and your e-mail at least daily. You also have access to other resources as outlined in the "Getting Help" section of this syllabus.

Readings: This course is built on a set of readings that I have carefully selected to raise a number of either related or mutually exclusive problems and questions and to provide a wide-range of answers to these problems and questions. I expect that you will carefully read each of these readings, take notes on these readings, and spend time thinking about these readings. This is where much of the work for this class will take place, and you will not be able to do well in this course without putting the work in here. More importantly, if you do not do all of the readings, you will miss out on valuable learning experiences. College is a time to read a variety of ideas and viewpoints. While you may seem extremely busy now, it is likely that you will not have as much time in the future to devote to such concentrated reading. Take the time now to do the reading, so you do not regret the missed opportunity later in life. If you have not already encountered these resources, I encourage you to read Mortimer J. Adler's book *How to Read a Book* and Paul N. Edwards' article "How to Read a Book" (<http://pne.people.si.umich.edu/PDF/howtoread.pdf>). Reading is not the type of skill that is completely mastered once and for all; instead it is a skill that must constantly be developed, and these resources help us all to constantly read better.

Discussion Forums: As you probably already noticed, participation is a large part of the grade for this course. Participation in this setting takes the form of discussion forums. (You can find the due dates for these forums in the "Calendar and Due Dates" section of this syllabus as well as in the individual units, which can be found in the weekly learning modules, and you can find a more detailed discussion of what is to be included in a good post in the "Course Assessments" section of this syllabus.)

So what counts as good discussion forum participation? You will be required to make an initial post before you can see the other students' postings. I expect that this original post is a well-written, complete, and thoughtful answer to the provided question or prompt. These initial posts should show a good grasp of the main points of the readings and, if applicable, the points of disagreement among the readings. I may also ask you to provide your opinion on the readings. You should always use evidence to support your opinions in these cases.

After this initial post, you will also have access to my "lectures." I encourage you to interact with these before making any other posts. This interaction may cause you to revise or enlarge your understanding of the readings or how the readings relate to the question or prompt provided. My notes here are meant to highlight and supplement the readings and not to replace them.

After this initial post, you will also have access to all of the posts in the forum. I expect that you will respond to other students' posts in respectful and thoughtful ways. Discussion here should also focus on the readings, but I again encourage you to marshal evidence to substantiate your opinions on the readings. In these discussions, I encourage you to remember prior readings of the course and to integrate them into the discussion. You should check these discussion forums regularly and often to see how other students responded to your posts, to see what new posts have been made, and to add new posts of your own. Each discussion forum will specify the minimum number of required response posts, but always keep in mind that every post must be well written, substantive, original, and thoughtful and that more than the minimum requirement of posts is always encouraged. I may post in these forums from time to time to play devil's advocate or to ask different questions, but these posts should always be viewed as avenues for further discussion rather than the final word. Regardless of whether or not I write in the forums, my "lecture notes" provide my interpretation of the readings as I highlight the parts of the readings that are most relevant for our course, so you should always read them carefully.

Writing: All writing for this course (whether in discussion forums or for other written assignments) should follow the rules of standard English. Do not use slang, texting-speak, emoticons, or the like. Additionally, I encourage you to regularly consult a style guide (e.g., *The MLA Style Manual*, *The Chicago Manual of Style*, Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style*, or the like: many of these can be found online or you may wish to purchase a physical copy) to ensure proper grammar and spelling, which will always account for part of your grade.

For all writing in this course, always use proper citation (to both the text and to the appropriate page number in the text). I do not care which style of citation that you use as long as it properly corresponds with one of the accepted academic forms of citation. As a reminder citations should be used for all quotations but also in those instances where you are summarizing or paraphrasing from the text. Since the discussion forum will always refer to common readings, I will accept in-text citations (please include page numbers) without a bibliography unless you choose to also include a reading that is outside of the required texts (though this should only be done to buttress your discussion of the readings for our course and not to replace them).

In the same way that this course encourages you to hone your reading skills, it also encourages you to further develop your writing skills.

Life Skills: Whether you enter politics, the nonprofit sector, or business, it is likely that you will be required to digest a large amount of information in a short amount of time. Further, you will likely then need to synthesize that material and write a structured, targeted, critical summary of the information that you just read. This course will help you hone the skills necessary to succeed at both of these tasks. As to the first task, sometimes I will alert you to the information that you can skim, but sometimes I will assume that you will read strategically so that you properly balance the need to comprehend important details with the goal of understanding the overall flow of the argument (the two resources listed under the "Readings" section above will help you to understand how to read strategically in this way). Then, the discussion forums and the exam essays will provide you with the platforms to synthesize the material that you read. You will be asked to combine the information into a more coherent whole rather than merely provide disconnected summaries of each individual part. My lecture notes will demonstrate this for you, but they will not do all of the work for you. I want to help you develop these skills for yourself, which requires you to actually practice them.

Lecture Notes: This brings me to my next point. My lecture notes will not regurgitate the important details of the readings. I will assume that you ascertained them in your reading of the texts. As such, I will not provide power points with bullet points of the major ideas and concepts. Instead, I will begin to synthesize the information. Often, I will explain why I chose the readings that I did and why I grouped them together as I did. At times, I will point out disagreements in the texts that we need to puzzle over. Other times, I will introduce other arguments that augment or contradict the texts that you have read. In short, my lecture notes are an important tool for synthesizing the readings, but they are not a replacement for the readings themselves nor are they a replacement for your own work towards synthesis.

Quizzes and Exams: Obviously, these will be open note and open book. However, you will not have time to search for the answers. I assume that you will either know the material or will be familiar enough with the readings that you will have a rough idea of where to find those few answers about which you are not quite sure. **NOTE:** Blackboard has a tendency to kick you out of a quiz or exam if you have more than one browser tab/window open, so make sure you only have the quiz or exam tab open. More details about the quizzes and exams appear in the "Course Assessments" section of this syllabus.

Submission of Assignments: All work for this course **must** be submitted as stated in the instructions and in agreement with the requirements listed in the "Course Assessments" section of this syllabus. I **will not grade** work that is submitted via other channels. Under extreme circumstances (e.g., you cannot access Blackboard), you may e-mail your assignment to me so that I have a time stamp that proves you had the work completed on time, but even then I **will not grade** the work until it has been properly submitted.

Backup Plan: Since this course is entirely online, you must have consistent and reliable access to the internet. However, I also require that you have a backup plan in case your primary computer or internet access is incapacitated or otherwise unavailable. It is your responsibility to have a viable backup plan that will enable you to complete the requirements of the course and to complete them on time. You may be able to find a computer with internet access at your local library or university or you may be able to borrow one from a family member or friend. As these backup options may not be available 24-7, it is a good idea to complete assignments ahead of time whenever possible.

Course Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					23 Opening Exercises	24
25	26	27	28 Initial Forum Posts (Unit 3)	29	30 Final Forum Posts (Unit 3)	31

1	2	3	4 Initial Forum Posts (Unit 4)	5	6 Final Forum Posts (Unit 4) Midterm Exam: Units 1-4	7
8	9	10	11 Initial Forum Posts (Unit 5)	12	13 Final Forum Posts (Unit 5)	14
15	16 Initial Forum Posts (Unit 6)	17 Final Forum Posts (Unit 6)	18 Final Exam: Units 1-6			

NOTE: All dates are due dates, but in most cases you may complete the assignments ahead of time. Assignments are due by 11:59pm on the date assigned. As per the syllabus, there is a grace period for the Midterm Exam, so it will not be considered late if it is submitted by 11:59pm on Sunday, January 8.

There are no discussion forum posts to be completed for Units 1 or 2.

All times listed here and throughout Blackboard are EST (Eastern Standard Time).

Academic Honesty

Under no circumstances should you submit someone else's work as your own. This includes, but is not limited to: copying text from another student or the professor on quizzes, exams, or discussion forum posts, copying text from internet sites (e.g. Wikipedia, Sparknotes) (additionally, for this course, there is no need to read or cite these sources at all), or other sources without quotation marks and full citations, or submitting your own work from another course.

Cheating on an exam or plagiarizing written work will result in course failure and referral of the case to a university committee. For more information, please see the undergraduate bulletin: http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html.

Additional Resources

Reasonable Accommodation

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please notify the Director of Disabled Student Services (Business Administration 120, 518-442-5490). That office will provide me with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations (<http://www.albany.edu/disability/current.shtml>).

If you wish to discuss academic accommodations for this course, ***inform me at the beginning of the term***. Reasonable accommodations are generally established well in advance and are rarely granted retroactively.

Writing Center (Humanities 140)

The writing center provides tutorials on writing essays and improving language skills (ESL). Visit their website at: <http://www.albany.edu/writing/>.

Academic Support Services (Library Room 94)

Academic support services arrange individual and group tutorials as well as study skills workshops on time management, how to improve your concentration, essay exam skills, listening skills, and overcoming procrastination. Visit their website: <http://www.albany.edu/oaee/index.shtml>.

Netiquette

Though this course is conducted entirely online, I expect the same behavior and decorum that is expected in an in-class course. The discussion forums are analogous to in-class participation, so the same standards of respect apply. While I hope that the forums facilitate healthy discussion and even debate, those discussions and debates should always center on the ideas alone. Therefore, there should be no personal attacks, obscene language, or the like. Of course, these same standards apply to any other public or private communication in the course.

I reserve the right to delete any postings or comments on any public part of the site that I deem inappropriate, and continuing to post inappropriately will result in penalties including but not limited to failure of the assignment, deregistration from the course, and referral to the university. Please review the rules of netiquette as found

<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/elearning/blackboard/student/netiquette.php> and

<https://usm.maine.edu/ctel/blackboard-netiquette>. These rules are not exhaustive and some do not apply in this setting (it is generally a good idea to refrain from using emoticons in classroom and professional settings, for example), but it is a good starting place to fulfill the general principle of respect as outlined above. In those instances where the suggestions from the site above conflict with requirements outlined in this syllabus, always follow the requirements of the syllabus.