

MEDIA AND POLITICS REFLECTIVE ESSAY GUIDELINES

Updated December 2019

Purpose of Assessment

The goal of the essay is to prompt the student to consider the interdisciplinary connections between classwork, concepts, and experiences associated with the minor. The student should use this opportunity to clearly and succinctly communicate an original written narrative that is supported by proper use of sources and evidence, strong organization, and effective style. In particular, thinking about the interdisciplinary connections in relation to one's own learning journey is key to success in this assignment.

Guidelines for Essay

The essay should be no more than 3,500 words, but no less than 2,000 words. It should focus less on a chronological survey of the courses taken and more on thematic links between coursework, concepts, and experiences. Over the course of this essay, the student should identify and explain these connections, apply these ideas in-depth to a relevant example, and engage in self-reflection about his or her learning experience.

Rubric Components

The essay should cover the following three components, in an original, well-organized, coherent, and clear manner:

Thematic links: What ideas and concepts have formed a common theme or themes across your coursework in Media and Politics? The political power of documentary film? The concept of “identity” or “social constructivism”? A pattern in the politicization of media? A commitment to speak truth to power? What idea has left the greatest impression on you, or shaped your understanding of the relationship between politics and media? Identifying this thematic link and explaining how and why you have done so forms the core of your essay and oral presentation; it is the key step in the process of organizing the disparate material you have encountered in Media and Politics in a cohesive way.

Relevant example: What object, media artifact, phenomenon, or experience has crystalized this theme for you? Have you been involved in organizing or participating in an event? Has your experience with a local (e.g., the blockade) or international (e.g., Brexit) issue of contemporary importance galvanized your understanding of the relationship between media and politics? How have your extra-curricular experiences (such as an internship, residency, or job) helped you better understand key issues in media and politics? Did this experience clarify your thinking about the interrelationship between media and politics in the real world? Find an example of something tangible that focuses and clarifies your theme for your audience. How does this example express the theme that you found across your learning experience in the Media and Politics minor?

Reflection and self-assessment: What does your experience with the Media and Politics minor mean to you? How did your understanding of the relationship between media and politics change over the course of the minor/certificate? What influenced and shaped those changes? What will you do differently now? What will you *do* now? Discuss and evaluate the trajectory of your learning during the Media and Politics minor. Make it personal and bring it alive for your audience. At all times remember, this is your learning experience, and we want to hear about what it means to you.