

# ***COMM3342: Special Topics: Children & Media***

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## **Course Information**

**Spring Semester, 2016**

**Class meeting:** Monday & Wednesday, 11:30 – 12:45pm

**Class location:** ATC 1.305

**Professor:** Kristin Drogos

**Email:** [kristin.drogos@utdallas.edu](mailto:kristin.drogos@utdallas.edu)

**Office:** ATC 4.909

**Office hours:** TBD and always by appointment

Email is the best way to contact me. I try to respond to student emails within 24 hours Monday through Friday.

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## **Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions**

There are no pre-requisites for this course.

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## **Course Description**

*Special Topics: Children & Media* will examine the role of media in the lives of children. Special attention is given to developmental difference in how children process and respond to the media. Major areas of consideration include children's responses to media violence, educational media, and play with media.

Each topic is examined in terms of major issues, research findings, and theoretical explanations of the findings.

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## **Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

In this course, students will:

1. Understand developmental differences of children's processing and attention to media
2. Read and evaluate published empirical studies on educational media
3. Apply knowledge gained in class to create educational media

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## **Required Textbooks and Materials**

- All readings are on [e-reserves](#) or on eLearning.

## Assignments & Academic Calendar

Date	Topic	Reading due
1/11/2016	Intro Day	
1/13/2016	How do we research children?	Keenan & Evans, Research Methodology
1/18/2016	NO CLASS, MLK Day	No reading
1/20/2016	Media habits & child development	Strasburger et al. (2014) Ch 1: Children and adolescents: Unique audiences (eLearning)
1/25/2016	Media habits & child development	Keenan & Evans, Theories of Cognitive Development
1/27/2016	Attention, Processing and Formal features	Valkenburg & Vroone (2004)
2/1/2016	Attention, Processing and Formal features	McKenna & Osoff (1998)
2/3/2016	Violence	Strasburger et al. (2014) Ch 4: Media Violence
2/8/2016	Violence	Strasburger et al. (2014) Ch 4: Media Violence
2/10/2016	Violence	Boyatzis & Matillo (1995)
2/15/2016	Violence and fear	Harrison & Cantor (1999)
2/17/2016	Advertising	Strasburger et al. (2014) Ch 2: Advertising
2/22/2016	Educational and prosocial	Strasburger et al. (2014) Ch 3: Prosocial and Educational Media
2/24/2016	Educational and prosocial	Fisch, Truglio, & Cole (1999)
2/29/2016	Educational and prosocial	E/I study (eLearning)
3/2/2016	Educational and prosocial & Project	No new readings
3/7/2016	Midterm Review	
3/9/2016	Midterm	
3/14/2016	Spring Break	
3/16/2016	Spring Break	
3/21/2016	Project workshop	Lit review readings on eLearning
3/23/2016	Project workshop	No new readings
3/28/2016	Children's Play	Singer & Singer, Ch 2
3/30/2016	Children's Play	Singer & Singer, Ch 3
4/4/2016	Children's Play	No new readings
4/6/2016	Videogame Play	Prot et al. (2014) The Positive and Negative Effects of Video Game Play
4/11/2016	Identity Play	Berk, Ch 11 (eLearning)
4/13/2016	Identity Play	boyd, Ch 1 (eLearning)
4/18/2016	TBD/ Wiggle Room Day	TBD
4/20/2016	Project Workshop	
4/25/2016	Project Presentations	
4/27/2016	Project Presentations & Conclusions	

## Grading Policy and Course Requirements

Research Leader	15%
Midterm	20%
Group Project	20%
Final	20%
In class and homework	15%
Attendance	10%

Course grades are based on the following percentages out to two decimal places:

A	94-100%	C	73-76%
A-	90-93%	C-	70-72%
B+	87-89%	D+	67-69%
B	83-86%	D	63-66%
B-	80-82%	D-	60-62%
C+	77-79%	F	59% and below

**Research Leader.** Students will work in teams of two to create a short presentation (5 to 7 minutes long) featuring the review and evaluation of an empirical social scientific study specifically about educational television. A more detailed assignment sheet will be distributed.

**Exams.** The midterm exam will be in class and will draw upon the lectures and readings to date. The final exam format is TBD, It will be a cumulative exam, drawing upon all course material.

**Makeup Exams.** All exams are to be taken on the designated exam dates at the designated exam time. Make-up exams are allowed only in the case of an extreme emergency. In the rare event that an emergency arises, it is the student's responsibility to: (1) inform the professor prior to the scheduled due date or exam time, and (2) provide the professor with *written documentation* of the emergency (e.g., medical note from a certified physician). Examples of events that do not qualify as emergencies include: transportation problems, conflict with work schedule, important family vacation, or computer problems.

**Group project.** Students will begin working on a group project in the middle of the semester. The project will ask students to re-tool a children's television program to make it more educational. These projects will occur in teams of three students. The goal of the project is to demonstrate an understanding of both the medium and the message and a facility with the course concepts discussed. The main elements of the group project will consist of a group presentation and a paper. A detailed assignment sheet will be distributed at a later date.

**In-class work.** Throughout the semester, the professor will pose questions to students during class time. Students will have several minutes to free-write responses to these questions. There will be several in-class responses throughout the semester. These questions may cover concepts being discussed in class or course reading. In the event of an unexcused absence, you cannot make up an in-class response.

**Homework.** A few times throughout the semester the professor will give you a specific assignment for homework. Instructions will be given for each assignment.

**Attendance and participation.** Class sessions will involve discussions of assigned readings as well as individual and group activities. Therefore, attendance and participation is an essential element to your success in this class.

- Students are required to sign an attendance sheet each class, which stands as the official record of attendance.
- If you are more than 15 minutes late to class you will be considered absent.
- You get one free missed absence. After one absence contact me **before** class if you need to be absent for an illness or emergency. If you contact me after class it will be considered an unexcused absence.

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## Course & Professor Policies

**Classroom citizenship.** This class shall maintain professional language use. Sexism, ageism, racism, homophobia, transphobia, disrespect toward religion or any other affiliation will not be tolerated. It is important that this class becomes a comfortable place for everyone. Let us strive to use language that is inclusive of all people.

**Electronic devices in class.**

**Laptops and tablets.** Unless otherwise stated, use of laptops and tablets is prohibited during class time.

**Cell phone.** Silence your phone during class time. Use of a cell phone during class time for any purpose (texting, checking email, etc.) will be noted on the attendance sheet and taken into account when calculating your course grade.

**Accommodations.** If you would like to discuss academic accommodations, please contact the professor during her office hours or via email at the beginning of the semester.

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## Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus.

Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

***The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.***