Media coverage of elections and politics is crucial to the exercising of democracy. Yet criticism of media and political coverage abounds, as do more general reflections on media that try to help us understand how it serves or fails us. Some charge bias, for example, others lack of substance, others oversimplification. The 2012 fall semester is a perfect time to examine this criticism as well as these analyses. We will read a variety of articles and books about media, politics, and current issues. We will closely follow political and election coverage in all forms of media in order both to test and understand what our theorists and critics say. We will also view a variety of documentary and feature films that try to address politics, media, and elections from both actual and fictional perspectives. Students will also be expected to pay close attention to election media coverage in newspapers and magazines, on the Internet, and on radio and television.

Required work includes active class participation, several short response papers, a possible survey, one longer paper, and a final examination.

Edward Gubar has taught this course in both Fall 2004 and 2008, as well as a variety of HHCC writing and literature courses over the past twenty-five years, and was a faculty member in the School of Journalism for more than twenty years. His fiction and journalism have appeared in a variety of publications. He also directs the Hutton Honors College Undergraduate Grant Program.

**COURSE TEXTS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**
- Brock & Rabin-Hayt, *The Fox Effect: How Roger Ailes Turned a Network into a Propaganda Machine*
- Chomsky, *Media Control, Second Edition: The Spectacular Achievements of Propaganda*
- Clements, *Corporations Are Not People: Why They Have More Rights Than You Do and What You Can Do About It*
- Coulter, *Demonic: How the Liberal Mob Is Endangering America*
- Gitlin, *Media Unlimited*
- Gladstone, *The Influencing Machine*
- Hindman, *The Myth of Digital Democracy*
- Kovach & Rosenstiel, *Elements of Journalism (2007)*
- McChesney & Pickard, *Will the Last Reporter Please Turn out the Lights: The Collapse of Journalism and What Can Be Done To Fix It*
- Patterson, *Out of Order*
- Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*
- Prior, *Post-Broadcast Democracy*
- Schudson, *Discovering the News*
- Reid, *The Healing of America*
- Szanto, *What Orwell Didn’t Know: Propaganda and the New Face of American Politics*

**FILMS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**
- *All the King’s Men*
- *The Manchurian Candidate*
- *Election*
- *The Ides of March*
- *The Candidate*
- *Wag the Dog*
- *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*
- *Network*
- *Under Fire*
- *Game Change*
- *Primary Colors*
- *The Best Government Money Can Buy*
- Other documentaries
- We will also spend several Thursday nights watching general TV coverage as well as coverage of live events