

## Course Change Information

**What change is being proposed? (If more than one, what changes are being proposed?)**

course title change

request GE status

**What is the rationale for the proposed change(s)?**

title change will better reflect broad content of course

if approved for GE status, it will add to the options that students have to fulfill the Social Sciences Individuals and Groups requirement

**What are the programmatic implications of the proposed change(s)?**

**(e.g. program requirements to be added or removed, changes to be made in available resources, effect on other programs that use the course)?**

no major programmatic implications

ASC students will have an additional option to fulfill Social Sciences Individuals and Groups GE requirement

**Is approval of the request contingent upon the approval of other course or curricular program request?** No

## General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area	Communication
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org	School Of Communication - D0744
College/Academic Group	Social And Behavioral Sciences
Level/Career	Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog	2442
Course Title	Violence in Society and Violence in the Media
<i>Previous Value</i>	<i>Media Violence</i>
Transcript Abbreviation	Violence in Media
<i>Previous Value</i>	<i>Media Violence</i>
Course Description	Issues in the psychology of media presentations of violence.
Semester Credit Hours/Units	Fixed: 3

## Offering Information

Length Of Course	14 Week, 7 Week
Flexibly Scheduled Course	Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component?	No
Grading Basis	Letter Grade
Repeatable	No
Course Components	Lecture
Grade Roster Component	Lecture
Credit Available by Exam	No
Admission Condition Course	No
Off Campus	Never
Campus of Offering	Columbus

## Prerequisites and Exclusions

**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

**Exclusions** Not open to students with credit for 442.

## Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

## Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code	09.0102
Subsidy Level	Baccalaureate Course
Intended Rank	Sophomore

## Quarters to Semesters

Quarters to Semesters	Semester equivalent of a quarter course (e.g., a 5 credit hour course under quarters which becomes a 3 credit hour course under semesters)
List the number and title of current course being converted	Comm 442: Media Violence.

## Requirement/Elective Designation

General Education course:  
Individual and Groups  
The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

### *Previous Value*

*The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units*

## Course Details

**Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes**

- Examine the theoretical and empirical connections between media violence (e.g., violence in TV shows, films, video games, pornography) and societal violence
- Examine the nature of aggressive and violent behavior and how it develops
- Consider both situational factors that promote aggression across individuals and personal factors that account for individual differences
- Conduct detailed studies of the research examining the short term and long term effects of violent media exposure
- Discuss societal and individual approaches to controlling violence and to mitigating the effects of media violence

**Content Topic List**

- Defining Aggression and Violence
- Methods for Studying Aggression and Violence
- Theories of Aggression
- Policy Implications for Media

## Attachments

- COMM442\_GEC.docx: including GEC course assessment plan  
(GEC Model Curriculum Compliance Stmt. Owner: Hughes, Sarah)
- Viol\_Spring2012.doc: Sample  
(Syllabus. Owner: Hughes, Sarah)

**Comments**

**Workflow Information**

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Hughes,Sarah	02/17/2012 12:59 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	McDonald,Daniel Gary	02/17/2012 01:18 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Haddad,Deborah Moore	02/17/2012 02:26 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Nolen,Dawn Jenkins,Mary Ellen Bigler Meyers,Catherine Anne Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal Hogle,Danielle Nicole Hanlin,Deborah Kay	02/17/2012 02:26 PM	ASCCAO Approval

**Media Violence (COMM 442)**  
**Spring 2012**  
**Tuesday and Thursday 10:30 AM – 12:18 PM**  
**Room: xx**

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**Instructor:**

**Name:** Brad J. Bushman, Ph.D.  
**Address:** 3127 Derby Hall, 154 North Oval Mall, Columbus, OH 43210-1339  
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**Office hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 9:00-10:00 AM and by arrangement  
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**Homepage:** <http://www.comm.ohio-state.edu/bbushman>  
**Carmen:** <https://carmen.osu.edu/>

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**Description:** This course examines the theoretical and empirical connections between media violence (e.g., violence in TV shows, films, video games, Internet, sports, music) and societal violence. One cannot fully understand the relationship between media violence and societal violence without first understanding the causes of aggressive and violent behavior. Thus, we begin by examining the nature of aggressive and violent behavior and how it develops. We will consider both situational factors that promote aggression across individuals and personal factors that account for individual differences. Next, we examine in detail the research examining the short term and long term effects of violent media exposure. Finally, we will discuss societal and individual approaches to controlling violence and to mitigating the effects of media violence.

**Course format:** You are expected to master the material covered in the readings and lectures, and to participate actively in class discussion. The lectures in this course are designed to supplement the readings. As such, you can expect lectures to present ideas that are not necessarily covered in the readings. Lecture slides will be available on the Carmen webpage at least 24 hours before each lecture. However, not all of the slides shown in lecture will be on Carmen (so come to class). If you miss a class, get notes from a fellow student (please don't ask me or the TAs for the notes).

**Prerequisites:** None, but Introductory Psychology (Psych 100) plus Psychology of Childhood (Psych 550), Social Psychology (Psych 325), and Communication in Society (Comm 200) are recommended. The course draws heavily on psychological research and theory concerning human information processing, social behavior, development, and learning as well as communication studies research on persuasive communication, media content, and children's use of media.

**Course webpage:** The course web page is on Carmen: <https://carmen.osu.edu/> It contains the syllabus, announcements, readings, PowerPoint slides, and grades.

**Readings:** There is no textbook for this class. Instead, journal articles and book chapters are posted on the class web page (see schedule below). Please read these BEFORE you come to class.

**Exams:** There are four exams. Each exam will contain 50 multiple choice items (worth 1 point each) and 2 short answer items (worth 3 points each). The final exam will be offered twice, once the last day of class (primarily for graduating seniors) and once during finals week. The final exam is not comprehensive. **YOU MUST BRING A PHOTO ID AND SOFT-LEAD PENCIL TO EACH EXAM.**

**Academic misconduct:** Academic misconduct, such as plagiarism or fabrication, will not be tolerated. The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct. If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If this committee determines that you have violated the University's Code of Student Conduct, the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University. If you have any questions about this policy or what constitutes academic misconduct, please see the following web page:  
<http://oaa.osu.edu/coam.html>

**Classroom civility:** Students are expected to attend every lecture. Students are also expected to be respectful of the professor, teaching assistants, and other students. Please don't come to class late or leave early. Please don't engage in disrespectful behavior (e.g., listening to iPods, newspaper reading, crossword puzzling, talking, web browsing, eating, drinking, sleeping, snoring). Please turn off cell phones. My TAs and I reserve the right to dismiss disruptive students from lecture.

**Grading:** The following curve will be used to assign grades: 25% A, 30% B, 25% C, 13% D, and 7% E. The final curve will also contain +/- grades (e.g., 10% B+, 10% B, 10% B-). The curve is meant to protect YOU in case my exams are really difficult (e.g., the curve guarantees that the top 25% of students will earn an A, even if my exams are really bad). However, if an actual percentage gives you a higher grade, I will use that instead. I will use the following standard percentages:

A:	93-100%	C:	73-76%
A-:	90-92%	C-:	70-72%
B+:	87-89%	D+:	67-69%
B:	83-86%	D:	60-66%
B-:	80-82%	E:	<60%
C+:	77-79%		

I will round your final score (e.g., 89.5 will be 90; 89.4 will be 89) **Please do NOT ask me to raise your grade, even if you just barely missed the next highest grade. It is against OSU policy to change a grade for any reason other than a clerical error.**

### Tentative Schedule

MONTH	DATE	DAY	TOPIC	READINGS
MAR	27	TUE	Defining aggression and violence; Is violence increasing over time?	Bushman, B. J., & Huesmann, L. R. (2010). Aggression. In S. T. Fiske, D. T. Gilbert, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), <i>Handbook of social psychology</i> (5th ed., Ch. 23, pp. 833-863). New York: John Wiley & Sons.
	29	THUR	Methods of studying aggression and violence	Ellsworth, P. C. & Gonzalez, R. (2003). Questions and comparisons: Methods of research in social psychology. In M. Hogg & J. Cooper (eds.) <i>Sage handbook of social psychology</i> (pp. 24-42). London: Sage Reis, H. T., & Gosling, S. D. (2010). Social psychological methods outside the laboratory. In S. T. Fiske, D. T. Gilbert, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), <i>Handbook of social psychology</i> (5th ed., Ch. 5, pp. 82-114). New York: John Wiley & Sons.
APR	3	TUE	Is aggression innate or learned? Theories of aggression	Bandura, A. (1983). Psychological mechanisms of aggression. In R. G. Geen & E. Donnerstein (Eds). <i>Aggression: Theoretical and empirical reviews</i> (pp. 1-40). New York: Academic Press. Buss, D. M., & Duntley, J. D. (2006). The Evolution of Aggression. In M. Schaller, J. A. Simpson, & D. T. Kenrick (Eds.). <i>Evolution and social psychology</i> (pp. 263-285). Madison, CT, US: Psychosocial Press.
	5	THUR	Anger management	Bushman, B. J., Baumeister, R. F., & Stack, A. D. (1999). Catharsis, aggression, and persuasive influence: Self-fulfilling or self-defeating prophecies? <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i> , 76, 367-376. Bushman, B. J., & Baumeister, R. F. (2011). Anger management. <i>Insight, Issue 12</i> Denzler, M., Förster, J., & Liberman, N. (2009). How goal-fulfillment

				decreases aggression. <i>Journal of Experimental Social Psychology</i> , 45, 90-100.
	<b>10</b>	<b>TUE</b>	<b>EXAM 1</b>	<b>None</b>
	12	THUR	Age and gender differences in aggression	Archer, J. (2004). Sex differences in aggression in real-world settings: A meta-analytic review. <i>Review of General Psychology</i> , 8(4), 291-322. Cote, S., Vaillancourt, T., LeBlanc, J., Nagin, D. W., & Tremblay, R. E. (2006). The development of physical aggression from toddlerhood to pre-adolescence: A nation wide longitudinal study of Canadian children. <i>Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology</i> , 34(1), 71-85.
	17	TUE	The dark triad of personality: Narcissism, Psychopathy, and Machiavellianism	Bushman, B. J. & Thomaes, S. (in press). When the narcissistic ego deflates, narcissistic aggression inflates. In W. K. Campbell & J. D. Miller (Eds.), <i>Handbook of narcissism and narcissistic personality disorder</i> . New York: Wiley. Jones, D. N., & Paulhus, D. L. (2010). Different provocations trigger aggression in narcissists and psychopaths. <i>Social Psychological and Personality Science</i> , 1(1), 12-18.
	19	THUR	Frustration and other unpleasant events; Social rejection and ostracism	Berkowitz, L. (1989). Frustration-aggression hypothesis: Examination and reformulation. <i>Psychological Bulletin</i> , 106, 59-73. Leary, M. R., Twenge, J. M., & Quinlivan, E. (2006). Interpersonal rejection as a determinant of anger and aggression. <i>Personality and Social Psychology Review</i> , 10(2), 111-132.
	24	TUE	Alcohol and other drugs	Berman, M. E., McCloskey, M. S., Fanning, J. R., Schumacher, J. A., & Coccaro, E. F. (2009). Serotonin augmentation reduces response to attack in aggressive individuals. <i>Psychological Science</i> , 20(6), 714-720. Giancola, P. R., & Corman, M. D.

				(2007). Alcohol and aggression: A test of the attention-allocation model. <i>Psychological Science</i> , 18(7), 649-655.
	<b>26</b>	<b>THUR</b>	<b>EXAM 2</b>	<b>None</b>
MAY	1	TUE	Cultural influences on violence and aggression; Weapons effect	Nisbett (1993); Anderson, C.A., Benjamin, A.J., & Bartholow, B.D. (1998). Does the gun pull the trigger? Automatic priming effects of weapon pictures and weapon names. <i>Psychological Science</i> , 9, 308-314.
	3	THUR	How violent are the media and why do people consume it?	Bushman, B. J., & Whitaker, J. (2010). Like a magnet: Catharsis beliefs attract angry people to violent video games. <i>Psychological Science</i> , 21(6), 790-792. Weaver, A. J., & Wilson, B. J. (2009). The role of graphic and sanitized violence in the enjoyment of television dramas. <i>Human Communication Research</i> , 35(3), 442-463.
	8	TUE	Myths and facts about violent media	Anderson, C.A., Berkowitz, L., Donnerstein, E., Huesmann, R.L., Johnson, J., Linz, D., Malamuth, N., & Wartella, E. (2003). The influence of media violence on youth. <i>Psychological Science in the Public Interest</i> , 4, 81-110. Gentile, D. G., Bushman, B. J., Swing, E. L., & Anderson, C. A. (2011). <i>Doubt is the product: Opinion versus science in the interpretation of media violence research</i> . Manuscript under review
	10	THUR	Religion, violence, and the media	Bushman, B. J., Ridge, R. D., Das, E., Key, C. W., & Busath, G. L. (2007). When God sanctions killing; Effect of scriptural violence on aggression. <i>Psychological Science</i> , 18, 204-207. Das, E., Bushman, B. J., Bezemer, M. D., Kerkhof, P., & Vermeulen, I. E. (2009). How terrorism news reports increase prejudice against outgroups: A Terror Management account. <i>Journal of Experimental Social Psychology</i> , 45, 453-459.

	15	TUE	EXAM 3	None
	17	THUR	Violence in sports, music, and music videos	<p>Anderson, C. A., &amp; Carnagey, N. L. (2009). Causal effects of violent sports video games on aggression: Is it competitiveness or violent content? <i>Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 45</i>, 731-739</p> <p>Fischer, P., &amp; Greitemeyer, T. (2006). Music and aggression: The Impact of sexual-aggressive song lyrics on aggression-related thoughts, emotions, and behavior toward the same and the opposite sex. <i>Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 32</i>(9), 1165-1176.</p>
	22	TUE	Violent video game effects	<p>Anderson, C. A., Shibuya, A., Ihori, N., Swing, E. L., Bushman, B. J., Sakamoto, A., Rothstein, H. R., Saleem, M., &amp; Barlett, C. P. (2010). Violent video game effects on aggression, empathy, and prosocial behavior in Eastern and Western countries: A meta-analytic review. <i>Psychological Bulletin, 136</i>(2), 151-173.</p> <p>Ferguson, C. J., &amp; Kilburn, J. (2010). Much ado about nothing: The misestimation and overinterpretation of violent video game effects in Eastern and Western nations: Comment on Anderson et al. (2010). <i>Psychological Bulletin, 136</i>(2), 174-178.</p> <p>Huesmann, L. R. (2010). Nailing the coffin shut on doubts that violent video games stimulate aggression — Comment on Anderson et al. (2010). <i>Psychological Bulletin, 136</i>(2), 179-181.</p> <p>Bushman, B. J., Rothstein, H. R., &amp; Anderson, C. A. (2010). Much ado about something: Violent video game effects and a school of red herring — Reply to Ferguson and Kilburn (2010). <i>Psychological Bulletin, 136</i>(2), 182-187.</p>
	24	THUR	Violent and non-violent	Malamuth, N., Linz, D., Heavey, C., Barnes, G., & Acker, M. (1995).

			pornography	Using the confluence model of sexual aggression to predict men's conflict with women: A ten year follow-up study. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i> , 69, 353-369. Kingston, D. A., Fedoroff, P., Firestone, P., Curry, S., & Bradford, J. M. (2008). Pornography use and sexual aggression: The impact of frequency and type of pornography use on recidivism among sexual offenders. <i>Aggressive Behavior</i> , 34(4), 341-351.
	29	TUE	Reducing violent media effects. Policy implications	Ch. 13-14; Nathanson, A. I. (1999). Identifying and explaining the relationship between parental mediation and children's aggression. <i>Communication Research</i> , 26(2), 124-143. Pollard Sacks, D., Bushman, B. J., & Anderson, C. A. (2011). Do violent video games harm children? Comparing the scientific amicus curiae "experts" in Brown v. Entertainment Merchants Association. <i>Northwestern University Law Review: Colloquy</i> , 106, 1-12.
	31	THUR	EXAM 4	None
JUNE	4-7	MON	FINAL EXAM	ne

### Helpful Hints on How to Get the Most Out of This Course

**ATTEND CLASS.** Bright, highly motivated students who have superior study skills can learn alone most of the material in the readings — enough to do quite well on exam questions that cover the material in the readings. However, although I will not review most of the readings material in lectures, a considerable amount of material that is not in the readings will be presented during classes. Research has shown that one of the best predictors of grades is class attendance, and even the brightest students gain more insight by attending classes regularly.

**STUDY READINGS EARLY.** Some lectures overlap information from the readings, but even for lecture material that is not redundant with the readings, you will learn best by reading and studying the assigned readings by the date on which they are indicated on the syllabus. I will assume in lectures that you have studied the assigned readings, and hence will not focus unnecessarily on terms and concepts that are well defined in the readings. There will be exceptions to this because in some lectures I choose to

emphasize particular concepts that are covered in the readings or concepts that the readings do not cover very well. However, lack of emphasis or coverage during lectures does not mean lack of importance of material in the readings. You should also try to complete assigned readings several days before an exam. Studying early leaves much more time for resolving difficulties and reviewing the material -- repetition is a fundamental principle of learning.

**READ, STUDY, AND TAKE NOTES "ACTIVELY."** Research shows that many individuals read and write passively, that is, without thinking about the meaning of what they are reading. In reading and studying textbook-type material, everyone (professors included) must read actively and as a result somewhat slowly. You must try to understand what you are trying to learn within the framework of what you have already learned. Research shows that learning is much more effective if new information is related to old information. Not only must you work on reading material actively, but you must also stay mentally active during class. Passively writing down what is on the screen or what I say in class without thinking about it — about how it fits with previous material in earlier classes or earlier in that lecture — will not help you learn or understand the material. **You should also rewrite your notes as soon after class as possible.** This takes time, but it will help you remember the material.

**BEFORE BEGINNING A READING, ACTIVELY STUDY THE SUMMARY FIRST.** Page through the reading, looking at headings and illustrations (e.g., tables, figures) actively to gain a good general understanding of major themes and ideas before you carefully read it. These major ideas serve as part of the framework for you to organize the more detailed information if you are to gain a good overall understanding.

**OUTLINE EACH READING.** By outline, I mean that you should take organized notes on the reading as you go through it the first time, just as if you were taking notes on a lecture. **Research shows that taking good notes requires active thinking and is much superior to helping you learn any material to underlining or highlighting text.** If you take good notes on readings, you should be able to study primarily from these notes without having to reread material. In the long run, that will save you time, particularly as you become more and more skilled (through practice) at taking quality notes on readings. These notes and your lecture notes should be reviewed as many times as feasible in preparation for each exam.

**ALTER YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDYING.** Research consistently shows that college students greatly underestimate the effort and time it takes to do a quality job of learning the new and complex material that is a part of most of your courses. Academic experts generally agree spending **at least 2-3 hours per week outside of class per credit hour** is the norm for good achievement. However, if the course is particularly difficult or if your skills are not as great as the typical students', you will likely need to spend even more time to do well in the course. Thus, in this course you should spend **at least 10-15 hours per week outside of class** learning the course material.

**KEEP THE BIG PICTURE IN MIND.** Not only must you learn quite an amount of information that you might consider rather detailed, but you should also strive to understand the broader themes and context at all times. Keep in mind what you have learned in previous readings and lectures. Themes work best when understood together

rather than in isolation. In fact, individuals who, after a course is completed, have gone back and reread the textbook, report considerably greater understanding of material partly because the context has changed.

**IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, ASK THEM.** Class time is not the appropriate time for specific questions about reading material that you are unclear about, although good questions that extend or broaden what you have read or heard in the lectures are strongly encouraged during classes. Such questions enrich class in general. For more detailed questions, seek me out after class, during office hours, or make an appointment.

**IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS, SEEK SOLUTIONS EARLY.** For example, if you do poorly on an exam, see me at that time (instead of later in the course). In addition, the office of Counseling and Consultation Service offers a variety of services aimed at helping students resolve personal difficulties and acquire the skills, attitudes, and knowledge that will enable them to take full advantage of their experiences at the Ohio State University. It is located at the Younkin Success Center (4<sup>th</sup> Floor), 1640 Neil Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210, phone: 614-292-5766, email: [ccs@studentlife.osu.edu](mailto:ccs@studentlife.osu.edu), web page: <http://www.ccs.ohio-state.edu/> If I can help you or point you in the right direction, I certainly will, but you must ask for help first.

This syllabus is available in alternative formats upon request. Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to the instructor and seeking available assistance in a timely manner. Any student who feels he/she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the office for disability services at 292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

## **GEC Proposal for COMM 442 (Violence in Society and Violence in the Media)**

This course is currently called “Media Violence,” but I would like to change the title to “Violence in Society and Violence in the Media” because violent media is only one factor that contributes to violence in society. As a GEC course requirement, I think a broader course would be better.

For over 25 years I have studied factors that make people more aggressive, including exposure to violent media (e.g., TV programs, films, books, music, video games). I taught this same course at the University of Michigan for 7 years, and it was a favorite course for students to take. The enrollments climbed from about 80 to about 200 during the time I taught the course. I taught it for the first time at Ohio State Spring Quarter 2011, and 21 students took the course. I would like to make this a GEC course so more people can be exposed to the topic, from a broader range of backgrounds. I believe that the more different types of people can learn about the causes of aggressive and violent behavior, the more they will be able to control their own aggressive impulses, and the more peaceful society will become.

This course is available to all undergraduates; it is not restricted to communication majors. There are no prerequisites for the course. Below I address how this course will meet the “Expected Learning Outcomes” and “Individuals and Groups Expected Learning Outcomes.”

### **Expected Learning Outcomes:**

#### **1. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they are applied to the studies of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies.**

The course will review important theories from the fields of psychology and communication that are related to violence in society and violence in the media. We will examine the factors that influence violence and aggression between individuals, groups, organizations, and societies.

The assigned readings are relevant articles from peer-reviewed journals on relevant topics. I believe that students at this level should be reading primarily sources (i.e., journal articles) rather than secondary sources (i.e., textbooks).

Although the class will likely be quite large (when I taught it at the University of Michigan it enrolled about 200 students), I still believe that exams should include short essay items as well as multiple choice items. The short answer questions give students a chance to write and state things in their own words. The short essay items will be from the assigned journal articles. Thus, students will be able to say in their own words what the research studies found. There will be four exams, each with two short essay items. Thus, students will complete eight short essays during the course.

To give students some first hand experience with experiments, I will also

conduct some in class experiments with students. In addition, I will show them filmed experiments on violence aggression, including some I have done for television programs (e.g., *ABC News 20/20*).

**2. Students understand the behavior of individuals, differences and similarities in the contexts of human existence (e.g., psychological, social, cultural, economic, geographic, and political), and the processes by which groups, organizations, and societies function.**

This course will focus on the aggressive and violent behavior of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies. Scientific theory and research can help us understand what factors contribute to aggression and violence, and how to reduce it. One topic we consider is whether violence and aggression are due to nature, nurture, or both.

**3. Students develop abilities to comprehend and assess individual and social values, and recognize their importance in social problem solving and policy making.**

In Freud's (1930) view, aggression constitutes the single biggest obstacle to the civilized way of life, because he thought it represented an innate, instinctive source of human conflict and destruction, which he saw as inherently inimical to peaceful human coexistence. This course is to the social problem of violence and aggression. It is also relevant to public policy issues, such as the recent (27 June 2011) Supreme Court case on violent video games.

**(1) Individuals and Groups Expected Learning Outcomes:**

**1. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they are applied to the study of individuals and groups.**

The first few course lectures are about scientific methods and theories. Several examples will be given so students understand how the social science methods and theories can be applied to individuals and groups.

**2. Students understand the behavior of individuals, differences and similarities in social and cultural contexts of human existence, and the processes by which groups function.**

Several topics will examine individual differences in aggression and violence. For example, we will discuss the dark triad of personality — psychopathy, narcissism, and Machiavellianism. We also discuss honor cultures, which exist in the southern United States, Latin America countries, and the Middle East.

**3. Students develop abilities to comprehend and assess individual and group values, and recognize their importance in social problem solving and policy making.**

This course will consider individual and group values about violence and aggression, such as in honor cultures. We will discuss several issues related to public policy (e.g., death penalty, gun control, regulation of violent sexual content, and violent media, including violent video games). For example, I published a recent article about the recent (27 June 2011) U.S. Supreme Court decision on violent video games (Pollard Sacks, Bushman, & Anderson, 2011).

**2. A course assessment plan, which explains how one will assess the effectiveness of the course in achieving the expected learning outcomes over time, rather than how individual student grades will be assessed.**

Three main sources of assessment will be used. First, the course will be assessed via feedback from colleagues. In particular, colleagues will evaluate the course readings, lecture slides, and examinations to ensure they are appropriate for a GEC class. Third, I will embed items in my exams that measure students' knowledge gain in certain areas. Third, I will assess students' perceptions that the course is meeting the objectives of the GEC category (in the form of an online quiz given at the end of the quarter).

**3. A course syllabus (see attachment)**

**References**

Freud, S. (1930/1961). *Civilization and its discontents* (standard ed.). London: Norton.