
DIGITAL ADVOCACY: WITHIN/ WITHOUT BORDERS in Spring 2021 (PO5016)

Course Code	PO5016	Professor(s)	Fatima Aziz
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-4th floor
Class Schedule	M: 13:45-15:05 in G-002 W: 12:10-13:30 in G-002	Office Hours	Wednesdays 13:30-14:30pm or by appointment
Credits	4	Email	faziz@aup.edu
Semester	Spring 2021	Office Tel. Ext.	N/A

Course Description

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The radical potential of new communication media is often thought of as bringing about new political possibilities and formations. The course explores multiple ways that social movements, advocacy organizations, and activists use new media to intervene, and intervene in the design of new media, across the globe. Case studies will be used to move back and forth between theory and practice, where studying the practice will inform the theory, and vice-versa. What new avenues can digital media provide for the flourishing of political and associational life? How and why do these media sometimes fail to live up to their claims of democracy and liberation?

Course Learning Outcomes

This course aims to equip students with knowledge and skills to confidently answer the following questions by the end of the course: What is the relationship of advocacy and activism to policy processes and social change?

How is advocacy and activism being practiced in the digital age? And what tools and strategies are being used to intervene/practice?

In particular cases and campaigns, how important is international and local networking, as well as technological savvy and strategy?

How does attention control, persuasion and influence work via particular rhetorical choices in particular contingent situations?

How do particular forms of advocacy relate to theories of power, communication, democracy and social and policy change?

General Education

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GRADUATE PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

-This course aims to equip students with knowledge and skills to confidently answer the following questions by the end of the course:

- How are advocacy and activism being practiced in the digital age?
- What tools and strategies are being used to intervene/practice?
- In particular cases and campaigns, how important is international and local networking, as well as technological savvy and strategy?
- How do particular forms of advocacy relate to theories of power, communication, democracy and social and policy change?

The course fulfills the following learning objectives:

- understand and be able to use qualitative and/or quantitative Communications research methodologies
- be aware of key issues in debates about globalization and their relationship to forms of global media and culture
- develop critical perspectives on the major concepts and theories in Media Studies, Communication Studies and Cultural Studies
- develop practical competence in a field of contemporary communications

Course Outline

COURSE SCHEDULE:

JANUARY

Week II – 25th – 29th

Topic: DEFINING DIGITAL ADVOCACY, DIGITAL ACTIVISM

January 24th – last day to drop/add courses online

FEBRUARY

Week III – 1st – 5th

Topic: CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING OF DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURES & PARTICIPATION

Week IV – 8th – 12th

February 8th – 10th, Mini break 1, (no classes)

Week V – 15th – 19th

Topic: CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL MEDIA & PUBLIC SPHERE

Week VI – 22nd – 26th

Topic: CONSEQUENCES OF DIGITAL SURVEILLANCE APPLICATIONS AND YOUTH

February 24th – 28th, Mini break 2, (no classes)

MARCH

Week VII – 1st – 5th

TOPIC: HASHTAG ADVOCACY & POTENTIAL FOR GLOBAL MOVEMENTS

Week VIII – 8th – 12th

TOPIC: BLACK LIVES MATTER / VIEWING: WHOSE STREET?

Week IX – 15th – 19th

Midterm Projects/ In-Class INDIVIDUAL Presentations

March 17th, Mid-semester

March 19th, Mid-semester grades due

Week X – 22nd – 26th

TOPIC: SURVEILLANCE, PRIVACY, DATA HARVESTING, DIGITAL ACCESS

Week XI–29th – 2nd

TOPIC: FAR RIGHT ONLINE & FAKE NEWS

April 2nd, last day to withdraw from a course.

Last day to choose the CR/NC grading option. April 5th, Easter Monday (no classes)

April 6th, Faculty retreat (no classes)

APRIL

TOPIC: GDPR & PERSONAL DATA

Week XIII – 12th – 16th

TOPIC: GLOBAL ADVOCACY

Week XIV – 19th – 23rd CASE STUDY GROUP – PRESENTATION

Week XV – 26th – 30th IN CLASS INDIVIDUAL WORKSHOP

FINAL EXAM: MAY 3RD 18:30

April 28th, Last day of classes. April 29th, – May 2nd, Reading days (May 1st,

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STATEMENT

As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is strongly committed to effective English language mastery at the graduate level. Most courses require scholarly research and formal written and oral presentations in English, and AUP students are expected to strive to achieve excellence in these domains as part of their course work. To that end, professors include English proficiency among the criteria in student evaluation, often referring students to the university Writing Lab where they may obtain help on specific academic assignments. Proficiency in English is monitored at various points throughout the student's academic career, most notably during the admissions and advising processes, while the student is completing general education requirements, and during the accomplishment of degree program courses and senior theses.

AUP ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses. Covid-19 temporary amendments:

Students studying at The American University of Paris are still expected to attend ALL scheduled classes.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students will have the option of attending classes remotely when special circumstances apply. For example, when students are placed under quarantine by the French authorities or by their doctor, or when students present symptoms of Covid-19 and are directed, by their doctor or the AUP Health Office, to remain home. It is still the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that their professor might have set in the course syllabus. In particular, Students attending remotely from distant Time Zones should check with their professors about the specific attendance policy for remote learners. Attendance at all exams is mandatory. In all cases of missed course meetings, the responsibility for communication with the professor, and for arranging to make up missed work, rests solely with the student. Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may also recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level. Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

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Grading Policy

GRADING POLICY:

Case Study Presentation: Students will give one short (about 10 mins) group presentation on a case study of their choosing, and will facilitate a class discussion connecting the case to the readings: 20% (ONE PRESENTATION)

Assignments: Reading Responses & Write-Ups of Assigned Talks: Most weeks you will write a reflection on the readings due at 9 am the day of class. These should take you about 30-45 minutes to complete each and be about 1-3 paragraphs in length. Summarize in what you think the thesis/primary argument of each reading is ("key takeaways") and one or two critical question(s) you have for discussion. What are aspects of the readings you found interesting and would like to discuss? What parts of the readings were confusing that you would like to spend more time on?

You are also encouraged to share related articles, videos or applications you'd encourage the

rest of the class to know about. 20%. (3 + 1 ON A GUEST TALK)

Midterm project: Case-Study, STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS (SWOT) analysis: Attend or participate in at least one advocacy or activism meeting or event. This can be a student group, a protest, a community organization, and NGO. OR an analysis of a mobile application, a website or a documentary of your choice or viewed in class.

You will then write a report back (2-5 pages) and prepare a presentation for the class: How did you find out about this event/application/documentary?

Was it shared online?

How does this group use (or not use) digital tools to advertise and to do their advocacy work?

What would you recommend to them? How could they use them more, better, or differently?

Are there tools that might work better for them? Are there times when they should or should not be using them?

Explain why you think this, detail the relationship between their advocacy goals and their use of digital tools, and draw on at least 5 course readings. Think about this as performing a “SWOT” analysis of the group’s use of digital tools. 20%

In-class workshopping of your own project, including presentations: 10%

Attendance and daily participation: 10%

FINAL PROJECT: This can be a

- traditional research paper (about 20 pages) or

- a creative/media/digital storytelling project with a short-written explanation (5 pages). The media project can take many forms but must be substantial and have gone through “research” and editing phases. (Possible formats: Videos for an advocacy campaign, a podcast episode, an interactive website, a new platform, an op-ed, an infographic etc.) You will present your in-progress project to the class for work shopping towards the end of the semester, and a final presentation at the end of the class. 20%

POLICIES, ETC.

Conduct/classroom policy Please be courteous and respectful at all times. You may disagree with someone, but please do so politely (a good way to start is by saying “I can see your point.”) Make sure you attempt to understand each other before you contribute to the discussion. à You must check your AUP email once per day for important announcements.

NO CELL PHONES ALLOWED DURING CLASS. Please only use your laptop as a necessary for notes or relevant research. If I feel that use of laptops is taking away from our attention in the classroom, I will ask you not to use laptops in class and instead to take notes by hand.

All readings will be available on blackboard. **IMPORTANT NOTES ON ASSIGNMENTS.** Work may NOT be submitted by email. It must be submitted on Blackboard and (when appropriate) in printed copy. ALL written work, including papers and reading responses, must use correct citations. Any work without complete and correct references in MLA, APA, or Chicago format will NOT be accepted. It is your responsibility to learn correct citational methods if they are unfamiliar. Work submitted late will be penalized by a fraction of a letter grade per day, ie. A becomes A-, A- becomes B+, etc. Any work found to be plagiarized will automatically receive a zero and may result in an F for the course. It is your responsibility to understand how to avoid plagiarism. First assignments will be monitored for writing skills, and students whose writing needs to improve will be referred to the Writing Lab before the following assignments will be accepted for grading.

Other
