
POLITICS & ECONOMICS OF GLOBAL MEDIA in Spring 2021 (PO5026)

Course Code	PO5026	Professor(s)	Matthew Fraser
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	Grenelle 4th floor
Class Schedule	F: 16:55-18:15 in G-102 T: 12:10-13:30 in G-102	Office Hours	Wednesdays 12 pm – 3 pm or by appointment.
Credits	4	Email	mfraser@aup.edu
Semester	Spring 2021	Office Tel. Ext.	0689263247 (mobile)

Course Description

This course examines the political dynamics of the global media system, focusing on the entertainment and pop culture industries. Students will gain a critical awareness of how international flows of information, culture, entertainment and lifestyle values play a powerful role in shaping cultural and political perceptions and realities. The concept of "soft power" is key in examining the influence of Western pop culture as "imperialism" or "globalization". The course examines soft power in various forms: Hollywood movies, television series, pop music, Disney cartoons, Coca-Cola, McDonalds, and social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The instrumental role of pop culture as propaganda will be examined, as well as the phenomenon of "celebrity diplomacy". The course also analyzes the influence of non-Anglo-American pop culture — for example, Turkish soap operas and Korean pop music — and the soft power and propaganda strategies of specific states such as China and Qatar. Finally, the status of American soft power in the post-Trump era is assessed.

Course Learning Outcomes

- gaining a critical understanding of the complex dynamics, issues and stakes in the international system
- gaining a critical understanding in particular of the role and influence of media and pop culture in international relations
- mobilizing concepts such as "soft power" to analyze through case studies how media and culture are instrumentalized politically, economically, and culturally by state and non-state actors
- preparing students professionally for careers in social media, politics, NGOs, and diplomacy

General Education

Course Outline

Please note: This is a tentative schedule which may be revisited as the course progresses.

JANUARY

Week I – 18th – 22nd

Session I

TOPIC: Overview of key themes, concepts and issues.

READINGS: Fraser, *Weapons of Mass Distraction*, Intro; Joseph Nye, “Soft Power and the Information Revolution”. Students should also consult the course blog for presentation case study ideas: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS: Discussion and assignment of in-class presentation topics.

READINGS: “The Champs-Élysées, a Mall of America”, *New York Times* and “Cultures of Liberty”, Mario Vargas Llosa.

Week II – 25th – 29th

Session I

TOPICS: History and Theories: Imperialism, International Relations, Cultural Globalization.

READINGS: Lauren Movius, “Cultural Globalization and Challenges to Traditional Theories”. Also Samuel Huntington, “Clash of Civilizations”. Related articles on course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS: Industrialization, technology, and emergence of media as “soft power”.

READINGS: Joseph Nye, “The Benefits of Soft Power”; “The Soft Power 30” and related articles on course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

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

FEBRUARY

Week III – 1st – 5th

Session I

TOPICS: Movies – Hollywood imperialism? The history and global influence of American movies as a soft power resource. Hollywood and propaganda.

READINGS: Fraser, ch. 3, “Movies”. “Does Hollywood Have a Foreign Policy?”, *Foreign Policy*. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS: Hollywood and American Power.

READINGS: “Screen Propaganda, Hollywood and the CIA”. Case study: *American Sniper* - “American Sniper: Racist Propaganda and American Empire”, *Foreign Policy Journal*. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Week IV – 8th – 12th

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

Session I

TOPICS: Hollywood and China. Influence of Chinese market over Hollywood.

READINGS: “How China’s Censors Influence Hollywood”, *NPR*; and “China’s Hollywood romance turns sour”, *Financial Times*. “Hollywood losing ground to Chinese movies,” Bloomberg. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Week V – 15th – 19th

Session I

TOPICS: Disney and American soft power.

READINGS: “How China bought the keys to Disney’s Magic Kingdom”, *New York Times*; “From Kundun to Mulan: A Political Economic Case Study of Disney and China”, Hongmei Yu. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS: Global television and American soft power. The history of television and emergence of a global TV market. The emergence of Netflix as global steaming service and cultural/political impact.

READINGS: Fraser, ch 2; “Netflix is the most intoxicating portal to planet Earth”, *New York Times*; “Watch it while it lasts: our golden age of television,” *Financial Times*. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Week VI – 22nd – 26th

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

Session I

TOPICS: Television and propaganda. Case study: “Homeland”, accused of Islamophobia, hostile reaction from states such as Pakistan.

READINGS: Articles on course blog; “The Holes in Homeland”, *Foreign Affairs*; “Homeland’s Crisis of Conscience”, *The Atlantic*. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

MARCH

Week VII – 1st – 5th

Session I

TOPICS: Global television – non-Western. Case study: Turkish soap operas.

READINGS: Articles on course blog: “Reading Turkish politics from a soap opera”, *Foreign Policy*; “Turkish soap operas’ portrayal of women stirs controversy”, *PRI*. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS: Geopolitics of Television News – all-news wars: CNN, BBC, France24, Al-Jazeera.

READINGS: Fraser, ch. 2; course blog articles: “International Broadcasting: waves in the web”, *The Economist*; “Is the United States losing the global information war?”, *International Journal of Communications*. Case study: Qatar and Al Jazeera. “The Two Faces of Al Jazeera,” *Middle East Quarterly*. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Week VIII – 8th –12th

Session I

TOPICS: Music & Global Politics.

The emergence of pop music as political instrument, starting with jazz as an American instrument of Cold War policy. The politicization of rock music in the global anti-war protest movement in the 1960s. The politicization of hip hop music and impact in non-Western cultures.

READINGS: Fraser, *Weapons*, ch. 3; “Jazz Diplomacy in the Cold War”, Pierangelo Castagneto; “Music is the real language of cultural diplomacy”, *The Guardian*; “America’s hip hop foreign policy”, *The Atlantic*; and “Hip Hop Diplomacy”, *Foreign Affairs*. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS: Pop music and “nation branding”. Case studies: K-Pop and EuroVision.

READINGS: “How the Korean government make K-Pop a thing”, NPR. “The geopolitics of Eurovision”, *New Statesman*; and “13 Times Eurovision got super political”, POLITICO. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Week IX – 15th – 19th

Session I

TOPICS: Modern art as Cold War propaganda. How the CIA used Abstraction Expressionism to promote American ideals.

READINGS: Articles on course blog: “Modern was a CIA weapon?”, *The Independent*; “Was modern art a weapon of the CIA?”, BBC; and “Abstract Expressionism and the Cold War,” Irving Sandler, *Art in America*. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS: Fame and Celebrity. The power of “fame” as a political resource internationally. The linkages between celebrity and global politics through movies and television, pop music etc. Are celebrities helpful or a hindrance? Case study: George Clooney vs the Sultan of Brunei.

READINGS: “Celebrities in International Affairs”, Oxford Handbook. “The Proliferation of Fame”, Tyler Cowen. “China’s censors have a new target: celebrity news,” *New York Times*. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

March 17th, Mid-semester

March 19th, Mid-semester grades due

Week X – 22nd – 26th

Session I

TOPICS: Celebrity Diplomacy – The institutional dimension of celebrity diplomacy. Celebs as “goodwill ambassadors” — eg. Angelina Jolie and Wonder Woman. Implications for international organizations such as the UN and NGOs working in development.

READINGS: “Taking Celebrity Diplomacy Seriously in International Affairs”, Andrew Cooper. “Does celebrity diplomacy really work”, *The Independent*; Mark Wheeler, “UN Goodwill Ambassadors and Messengers of Peace”. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS: Student presentations

READINGS: Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Week XI–29th – 2nd

Session I

TOPICS: Sports, Globalization and National Branding

READINGS: “The Center of the World”, *Foreign Policy*. “Sports, War, and Ideological Imperialism”, Gerald Gems. “Sportswashing: How Saudi Arabia lobbies the US’s largest sports bodies” and “Saudi Arabia embraces Western sports to rehabilitate its global image”, *New York Times*. “Qatar: Investing in sporting success as a domestic and foreign policy tool,” Danyel Reiche. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS: Student presentations

READINGS: Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

APRIL

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

Last day to choose the CR/NC grading option.

Week XII – 5th – 9th

April 5th, Easter Monday (no classes)

April 6th, Faculty retreat (no classes)

Session I

TOPICS: The “French Exception”. France as a global “soft” power. How much political clout does France have internationally based on its culture? Clash between traditional French values and American fast food culture. Case study: Starbucks/McDonald’s in France; luxury goods, Alliance Française.

READINGS: Sophie Meunier, “Anti-Americanism in France”; Philippe Rogers, “History of French Anti-Americanism”; “French anti-Americanism: spot the difference”, *The Economist*; and related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Week XIII – 12th – 16th

Session I

TOPICS: Islam and globalization in Arab/Muslim world. The “clash” between Western values and the Islamic sphere — how can we understand it? The Ottoman empire, its collapse, and Western colonial legacy. The recent emergence of “neo-Ottomanism” under Erdogan in Turkey. A reassertion of Turkish “soft power” in the region? Also, the cultural linkages between the West and Arab states: Louvre and Sorbonne in the Gulf.

READINGS: Huntington’s “Clash of Civilizations”; “The Making of Islamophobia Inc.”, *Foreign Policy*. Also see “Qatar wields and outsized influence in Arab politics”, New York Times; Why Saudi Arabia hates Al Jazeera so much”, *Washington Post*. On Turkey, “Turkey’s shift from soft power”, USC; and Senem Cevik, “The Rise and Fall of Turkish Soft Power”. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS: Student presentations.

READINGS: Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Week XIV – 19th – 23rd

Session I

TOPICS: Chinese soft power. The role of “panda diplomacy” and the Confucius Institute in China’s global soft power strategy.

READINGS: “China’s soft power offensive”; “China’s Soft and Sharp Power”, Joseph Nye. “Confucius Institutes and the Globalization of China’s Soft Power,” USC Center for Public Diplomacy; and “America’s universities are welcoming China’s Trojan Horse,” *Foreign Policy*. “China’s challenge to democracy”, *Wall Street Journal*. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS: Japan as global soft power: *kawaii* culture of “cuteness”. **Korea and the global influence of K-pop.**

READINGS: “A Rising Korean Wave”, *New York Times*; and “South Korean soft power in the Middle East”. Sharon Kinsella, “Cuties in Japan” and “Cult of the Cute”, *Financial Times*. Related articles on the course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

Week XV – 26th – 30th

Session I

TOPICS: American soft power in the post-Trump era

READINGS: “No Mr. President, You’ve Weakened America’s Soft Power,” Joseph Nye, *New York Times*; “We Can Recover Our Soft Power,” Joseph Nye. Related articles on course blog: <http://globalmediaclass.wordpress.com>

April 28th, Last day of classes,

April 29th, – May 2nd, Reading days (May 1st, holiday)

May 3rd – 12th, Final Exam

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

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.

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 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.

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.

Grading Policy

GRADING

20% - in-class participation and discussion leading

20% - case study presentation.

20% - 2 written assignments (750 words each).

40% - research paper (4,000 - 5,000 words, using assignments as research).

Other

This syllabus is subject to change. In particular, news articles and/or chapters may be added during the term as media coverage of issues and events develops. All reading will be posted on Blackboard or on the course blog and students will be notified of any changes.