
SPEAKING OUT & LOGGING IN: DIGITAL PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC in Fall 2020 (CM1099FB5)

Course Code	CM1099FB5	Professor(s)	Jessica Feldman
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	305 Grenelle
Class Schedule	F: 16:20-17:55 in PL-4 W: 10:50-12:25 in G-102	Office Hours	online, by appointment
Credits	4	Email	jfeldman@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2020	Office Tel. Ext.	n/a

Course Description

Life online increasingly effects our political world: bots are “stealing” elections, hackers who leak government secrets are alternately hailed as heroes or traitors, protests are organized as facebook events and twitter threads turn into impassioned debates that span remote locations. How has the growth of networked communication changed politics? What are the perils and promises of online participation for democracy? This course studies emerging technology and current events, but asks old questions about what it means to participate in a public. It addresses problems of access, safety, literacy, and inequality that reemerge in new forms. This course brings together key concepts in media studies and democracy theory to think about our roles as citizens in the digital age: as we come of age in a networked society, what new opportunities and responsibilities do we have as globally connected citizens and political actors?

This course is part of the *Democracy, Participation and Digital Life in Times of Crisis* (FB5). The other course connected to this FirstBridge is *Democracy: From Athens to Zuccotti Park*, taught by Prof. Julian Culp. The Reflective Seminar of this FirstBridge meets every Friday, 14h30-16h05, and is co-taught by Prof. Jessica Feldman and Prof. Julian Culp

Course Learning Outcomes

General Education

Course Learning Outcomes

- To grasp and express key core concepts in democratic theory and media/communication studies
- To understand and reconstruct scholarly texts in political theory and media/communication studies
- To analyze and evaluate conceptual and normative political arguments
- To develop and convincingly argue for one's own position on democratic participation in a digitalized world
- To develop a politically-informed digital literacy that allows students to analyse, critique, and practice this position, both on- and off-line

Integrated Inquiry Learning Outcomes for this Course

- **Local and Global Perspectives:** Students will enhance their intercultural understanding of languages, cultures, and histories of local societies and the global issues to which these relate.
- **Exploring and Engaging Difference:** Students will think critically about cultural and social difference; they will identify and understand power structures that determine hierarchies and inequalities that can relate to race, ethnicity, gender, nationhood, religion, or class.
- **Civic and Ethical Engagement:** Students will demonstrate awareness of ethical considerations relating to specific societal problems, values, or practices (historical or contemporary; global or local) and learn to articulate possible solutions to prominent challenges facing societies and institutions today so as to become engaged actors at various levels in our interconnected world.

FirstBridge Learning Outcomes

- Students will enhance their information literacy, acquiring an understanding of how information is produced, and discovering how to evaluate, create and use it effectively and ethically. Students will develop an awareness of the conversational nature of scholarship and be able to identify appropriate secondary sources to conduct effective research.
- Students will develop public speaking and presentation skills in order to participate effectively and appropriately in academic discussion and as community leaders, in a professional and engaging manner that can convey complex information.
- Students will be able to appreciate place as a site of knowledge, to interrogate the multiple meanings of place and develop a more informed and sensitive understanding of interactions between people and their physical environment.
- Students will learn to formulate questions that can lead to greater learning and productive individual and group research projects.

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- Students will strengthen the concrete skills and aptitudes to be successful at AUP and beyond, such as study skills and time management, the mindsets that lead to lifelong learning, and desired classroom behaviors and interpersonal skills.

Course Outline

Course Schedule

Our schedule may be adjusted to accommodate opportunities such as guest speakers, relevant events in Paris, new publications, trips, etc. and to give ample time for discussions and workshopping.

Assignments schedule

Reading Responses are due when the readings are due. (Usually every class!) **For**

Wednesday's morning class, they are due by 9 am Paris time. For Friday's afternoon class, they are due by noon Paris time.

Reflection Notes are due *the class after* a visit/trip/lecture

Final Project Proposal & Presentations are due Nov 27

Final Project Bibliography and Outline is due Dec 11

Final Project is due Dec 16

Week 1: Introduction to the Course, Participation & Democracy

Wed Sept 23: Introductions of people and topics. Who are we? What are Media & Communications Studies? What do they have to do with Democracy?

Visit from Alexis Dang (Study Trips)

Fri Sept 25: Reflective Seminar: What is a Reflective Seminar?

Fri Sept 25: Basic Frameworks & Origins of the Internet (Theoretical, Political, and Technical)

Week 2: Surveillance, Tracking, and Tracing: the good, the bad, the ugly

Wed Sept 30: Surveillance of Protestors, Data Colonialism

Fri Oct 2: Reflective Seminar

Fri Oct 2: Case Study: Contact Tracing apps for Covid-19 (a comparison)

Week 3: Direct Democracy, Participation & Digital Tools

To Be Determined: visit to hackerspace in Paris

Wed Oct 7: Tools Designed for Participation, Radical Software, Open Source & P2P

Fri Oct 9: Reflective Seminar: **Michael Stoepel (Library Sciences) workshop on Evaluating Information (1 of 2)**

Fri Oct 9: Participation in Designing Tools, *Hacking Diversity*, Postcolonial Computing, Participatory Design

Week 4 : Digital: Public Spheres, Civil Societies, Municipalism: Participation & Inclusion

Wed Oct 14: Digital Public Sphere and its problems, *Whose Global Village?*

Fri Oct 16 : Reflective Seminar: **Testing Apps for Digital Participation (TBC)**

Fri Oct 16: Digital Civil Society, Local municipalism

Week 5: Institutions, Laws, Representation, Constitutions, Elections

Wed Oct 21: Digitally Distributed & Crowdsourced Constitutions and Laws

Fri Oct 23: **Study Trip to the Assemblée Nationale**

Fri Oct 23: Readings due on Representatives and Elections

Week 6: Distorted Discourse

Wed Oct 28: Free Speech, Hate Speech, Homophily and Diversity

Fri Oct 30 Reflective Seminar: **Michael Stoepel workshop on Evaluating Information (2 of 2)**

Fri Oct 30: Post Truth and Fake News, Content Moderation

TBD: visit from Professor Jayson Harsin

Week 7: U.S. ELECTION, Education & Digital Literacy

Wed Nov 4: Discussion of U.S. election: What just happened and how did online tools effect it?
Related readings or viewing.

Fri Nov 6: **DAY TRIP to the National Education Museum in Rouen**

Fri Nov 6: Readings due on Digital Literacy and Digital Divide

Week 8: FALL BREAK

Week 9: Elites and Authority

Wed Nov 18: Media Elites & Tech Elites

Fri Nov 20: **Study Trip to Station F in Paris**

Fri Nov 20: Additional readings due on Tech Elites, Silicon Ideology

Week 10: Power & Resistance: Digital Advocacy & Organizing

Wed Nov 25: Digital Organizing (for activism and advocacy)

Fri Nov 27: Reflective Seminar: **Michael Stoepel workshop on Finding Information**

Fri Nov 27: **Final project Proposal due, presentation & workshopping of proposals**

Week 11: Power & Resistance: Digital Protest & Assembly

Wed Dec 2: Digital Assembly

Fri Dec 4: Reflective Seminar

Fri Dec 4: Cyberactivism

Week 12: Power, Participation, Futures

Wed Dec 9: The Military Industrial Complex, Alternative Democratic Visions

Fri Dec 11: Reflective Seminar

Final Project Bibliography and Detailed Outline due

Fri Dec 11: In-class workshopping of final project, answering questions

FINAL EXAMS & PAPER

Mon 16 Dec: Final Paper Due, Short final presentations of your research & group discussion

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.

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 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.

Grading Policy

Course requirements and grading

- Students will give one short (about 5-10 mins) presentation on a reading of their choosing: 10%
- Assignments: Reading Responses & Report-Backs of Assigned Visits/Talks: 20%
- Final project proposal & presentation: 10%
- Draft bibliography and outline: 10%
- Final Paper: 20%
- Final Presentation/Discussion: 10%
- In-class workshopping. You will be evaluated based on your constructively critical engagement with other students' projects, ability to connect their work to texts and concepts from class as appropriate, engagement with conceptual questions: 10%
- Attendance and daily participation: 10%

Assignments schedule

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Final Project is due Dec 16

Assignments

Reading Responses: Most weeks you will write a reflection on the readings. These should take you about 30-45 minutes to complete each. Summarize in 1-2 sentences what you think the thesis/primary argument of each reading is ("key takeaways") and one or two 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.

Reflections on Visits/Trips/Talks etc.: You will be expected to take notes (by hand) at all field trips/visits/lectures we attend. Afterwards, please synthesize your notes into one page, with some key questions and take-aways. What stood out for you? What shocked you? What bothered you? What are some new ideas you have, or new things you learned? What are some lingering questions? This assignment can be in "notes" format. **This is due the class after the event, at the same time as the Reading Response.** It should take you 10-20 minutes, maximum, as long as you took notes at the event!

In-Class Presentations: You will be asked to deliver a brief (5 minute) individual presentation once during our course. Think of this presentation as a "show-and-tell" inspired by the week's readings. Your goal is to:

a) Summarize the THESIS of your chosen reading. In other words, what is the most important

thing this reading can teach us? Write it out in no more than three sentences in your own words. You do not need to summarize the whole reading. Assume everyone has read it and is ready to talk about it!

b) Bring in one MEDIA EXAMPLE that exemplifies, illustrates, problematizes, or otherwise speaks to the article's thesis. For example, you could bring in a current news article, a clip from a documentary, an object from an archive, a photograph, a YouTube video, a work of art, an exhibition, an advertisement, a book, a website, an audio clip, etc. Use your media object to help unpack the reading and to spark an interesting discussion with your peers.

c) Bring at least TWO QUESTIONS about your reading/object, and use these to ignite our discussion. Your job is not to lecture. Instead, your job is to start a compelling discussion, and help guide it throughout the class. Questions might address concepts you found confusing, provocative passages in the readings, or problems you have with the author's arguments. You could ask how a particular reading relates or compares with another reading from the class syllabus.

Final Project Proposal: This can be a page or less, in paragraph form or bullet points. Make sure you answer all of these questions:

- What is the question you want to answer in your research? Why is this important? (This can narrow and develop over the course of your research.)
- What is your THESIS (aka, your theory about what the answer will be, or the thing you want to prove.)
- HOW are you going to research this?
- WHAT TEXTS from class (mine & Julian's) do you expect to draw from (this can change in the course of the work on the project, but take a guess now.)
- WHY these texts? What do they say that is important to contextualize your question and argument?
- What else do you need to find out from library research to answer your question? Are there other sites of research that you will use (online forums, real life?) Where will you begin your research?

Eventually you will have to write an outline of your paper. You might want to try a draft of this now, but it's not required. It will change as you do more research. Be prepared to present this to the class (a simple powerpoint of a few slides). Also prepare questions to ask of the class (and me) to help you develop it.

Final Project Outline and Bibliography: This should be a detailed outline of the sections of your paper and what will be covered in them, followed by a fully formatted bibliography of the texts you will use. Be prepared to talk through this with the class, and any difficulties you have encountered or expect to encounter.

Final Research Paper: This paper should use our course readings, talks, visits, and topics as a background for the analysis of an object of study related to the class topics. Class and outside readings will serve as grounds for analysing/critiquing/appreciating primary research material. The paper should be organized in a scholarly format: introduction to topic/research question, literature review on topic, method of analysis, presentation of data, analysis of data, conclusion that discusses contribution to existing literature on the topic, and bibliography. Your argument must incorporate ideas and citations from this course (at least 3) and Professor Culp's course (at least 2), as well as at least 5 outside sources taken from library research. This paper should be roughly 3000 words, and include a minimum of 10 references in the bibliography.

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.
- You must check your AUP email once per day for important announcements.
- NO CELL PHONES ALLOWED DURING CLASS (unless we are using them for learning)
- All readings will be available on blackboard.

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Covid-19 temporary amendments:

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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*.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STATEMENT:

As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is strongly committed to effective English language mastery at the undergraduate 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.

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, Harvard, 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.

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- 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
