

**PS 5070 MEDIA & POLITICS**  
Dr. Phillip Ardoin and Dr. Tatyana Ruseva  
**Spring 2014**

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**Class time:** Mondays 6:15-9:00 pm

**Dr. Phillip Ardoin** ([ardoinpj@appstate.edu](mailto:ardoinpj@appstate.edu))

**Dr. Tatyana Ruseva** ([rusevatb@appstate.edu](mailto:rusevatb@appstate.edu))

**Classroom:** Belk Hall 013

**Office hours:** MW 10-4:30pm

**Office hours:** MW 3:30-4:30

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**Course Description:** This class examines the relationship between politics, society and the current traditional and non-tradition communication technologies with a particular focus on “social media.” These technologies are often regarded with fear or awe; the purpose of this class is to break down the mythologies of media and politics and assist you with developing methods of analysis and critical understanding of these issues.

**Required Readings:**

- MacKinnon, Rebecca. 2012. *[Consent of the Networked: The Worldwide Struggle For Internet Freedom](#)*. Basic Books, Perseus Books Group, New York, NY.
- Rainie, L., and Wellman, B. 2012. *[Networked: The New Social Operating System](#)*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA
- Standage, Tom. 2013 *[Writing on the Wall: Social Media - The First 2,000 Years](#)*.
- Gainous, Jason and Wagner, Kevin M. 2013. *[Tweeting to Power: The Social Media Revolution in American Politics](#)* (Oxford Studies in Digital Politics).
- Cohen, Jeffrey. 2008. *[The Presidency in the Era of 24-Hour News](#)*.
- Pariser, Eli. 2012. *[The Filter Bubble: What the Internet is Hiding from You](#)*.
- Additional readings will be posted on [AsULearn](#)

**Grading Formula:**

- Midterm Exam - In-Class (25%)
- Final Exam - Take-Home (25%)
- Reaction papers (4 papers) (25%)
- Assignments (10%)
- Participation (15%)

**Grading Scale** (rounded to the nearest number):

|                |                |                |                        |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|
| 97 - 100 = A+  | 93 - 96.9 = A  | 90 - 92.9 = A- | 87 - 89.9 = B+         |
| 83 - 86.9 = B  | 80 - 82.9 = B- | 77 - 79.9 = C+ | 73 - 76.9 = C          |
| 70 - 72.9 = C- | 67 - 69.9 = D+ | 63 - 66.9 = D  | 60 - 62.9 = D- <59.9=F |

Academic Integrity/Disabilities/Attendance Policies: This course abides by the ASU course syllabi policy & procedures described on the academic affairs website: <http://academicaffairs.appstate.edu/syllabi>  
If you have any questions or concerns with this policy, you should contact us within the first week of class.

**Exams (50%)** – There will be 2 exams in this course. The exams will cover all material discussed in class and covered in the assigned readings. The midterm exam will constitute 20% of your course grade and will be an in class essay exam conducted in the department's computer lab. The final comprehensive exam will constitute 25% of your course grade and will be a take home essay exam.

**Reaction Papers (25%):** You are required to write **2** reaction papers during the first half of the semester and **2** reaction papers during the second half of the semester. Your reaction papers must be uploaded to our AsULearn web page by midnight the evening before class. This provides us with the opportunity to review your reaction papers prior to class. We urge you not to wait until the last few weeks of each half of the semester to write your reaction papers. If you wait until the last few weeks and are unable to submit a paper, you will simply receive a zero for the paper. Do not ask us to allow you to write an additional paper during the second half of the semester due to your irresponsibility or unfortunate circumstance.

**Reaction Paper Guidelines:** The purpose of the reaction papers is to have you *critically* address one or more of the major concepts put forward in the assigned readings of the week. **We do not want a summary of the readings**, we want a CRITICAL ANALYSIS. A good reaction paper will begin with a **brief** summary of the major points or findings of the reading, it will note the contribution of the readings to the literature and/or implications of the author's findings within the field of study, it will also discuss the weaknesses in the author(s) analyses/conclusions and possibly suggest alternative methods of analysis, and finally provide suggestions for future research on the topic. When developing your critique of the assigned readings, you are encouraged to integrate the readings from other weeks, other classes, and even readings that were not assigned in class. It is suggested that you look at the class AsULearn webpage for examples of book reviews. Your reaction papers should be 4-6 pages in length. They must be typed (10-12 pt font) and you must use a standard citing/bibliography format.

**Assignments (10%)** Several assignments will be assigned throughout the semester related to the readings. **We will NOT accept any late assignments.** Please do not request an exception to this rule due to your irresponsibility or unfortunate circumstance.

**Participation (15%)** This is a seminar class. *Learning takes place through the exchange of ideas within the classroom as well as reading assigned material.* As a learning experience, the seminar will depend heavily on the quality of class participation and student interaction. It is essential that members of the seminar attend all sessions, participate actively in classroom discussions, and complete all required readings prior to class. **In this graduate seminar, passive participation ("just being there") will not suffice for a passing grade in participation.** We will randomly select students to comment on the readings, others' assessment of it, and their own critique. Students are expected to respond to the questions posed by their colleagues as well as by the professors.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE**

### **Week 1: Introductions and Class Review; Media and the Public Sphere (1/13)**

- PBS: Milestones in the History of Media and Politics
- Rainie, L., and Wellman, B. 2012. *Networked: The New Social Operating System*. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA (Chapters 1 - 4) - *AsUlearn*
- Habermas, J., Lennox, S., and Lennox, F. 1964. The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article. *New German Critique*, No. 3, 49-55
- **Watch Video:** TED Talk by Clay Shirky: How the Internet will (one day) transform government
- **Assignment 1:** Create a Twitter Account and **follow** at least 10 accounts with a direct or indirect relation to politics. Bring to class the list of 10 accounts you are following with a single sentence defining each account. If you already have a Twitter account, then you can simply list 10 “politico” accounts you follow. You do not need to create a new account.

### **Week 2: No class on 1/20 – MLK Day**

### **Week 3: Digital Democracy & The Evolving Public Sphere (1/27- TR)**

- Hindman, Matthew. 2009. *The Myth of Digital Democracy*. Princeton University Press (Chapters 1, 5, 6, 7, pp: 82-154).
- Farrell, H. and Drezner, DW. 2008. The power and politics of blogs, *Public Choice* 134: 15–30.
- Kwak, H., Lee, C., Park, H., and Moon, S. 2010. What is Twitter, a Social Network or a News Media? Paper presented at the *International World Wide Web Conference Committee* (IW3C2), April 26–30, 2010, Raleigh, North Carolina, USA.

### **Week 4: The Presidency in the Era of 24-Hour News by Cohen (2/3- PA)**

### **Week 5: Attention Cycles and Media Framing (2/10- TR)**

- Downs, Anthony. “Up and Down with the Ecology: The Issue Attention Cycle”. *Public Interest*, 28 (1972: Summer) pp.38-50
- Entman, R. 1993. Framing: Towards Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, Volume 43, Issue 4, pp: 51–58.
- Nelson, T., Clawson, R., and Oxley, Z. 1997. Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Conflict and Its Effect on Tolerance. *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 91, No. 3 (Sep., 1997), pp. 567-583.
- Hart, P.S. (2010). One or many? The influence of episodic and thematic climate change frames on policy preferences and individual behavior change. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51-58.

(READINGS CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

- Coleman, R. (2010). Framing the pictures in our heads: Exploring the framing and agenda-setting effects of visual images. In P. D'Angelo & J. A. Kuypers (Eds.), *Doing framing analysis: Empirical and theoretical perspectives* (pp. 233-261). NY: Routledge.
- **Watch Video:** Nisbet, M. 2012. Effects of Mass Media on the Political Process. [Watch here.](#)

**Week 6:** The Filter Bubble: What the Internet is Hiding from You, Eli Pariser (2/17- PA)  
The Economist, "Move over, Siri: Predictive intelligence", Nov. 30, 2013

**Week 7: Media Bias and Political Polarization (2/24- TR+PA)**

- Baum, M., and Groeling, T. 2008. New Media and the Polarization of American Political Discourse. *Political Communication*, 25:345–365.
- Prior, M. 2005. News vs. Entertainment: How Increasing Media Choice Widens Gaps in Political Knowledge and Turnout. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 49, No. 3, pp. 577-592.
- Feldman, L. et al. (2011). Climate on Cable: The Nature and Impact of Global Warming Coverage on Fox News, CNN, and MSNBC. *International Journal of Press/Politics*.
- **Watch Video and Discuss In Class:** Revkin, A. (2011). Conveying the Climate Story. [Watch here](#)

**Week 8:** In Class - Midterm Exam (3/3)

**Week 9:** Writing on the Wall: Social Media - The First 2,000 Years by Tom Standage (3/17- PA)

**Week 10:** Politics and the Twitter Revolution by Parmelee and Bichard (3/24 -PA)

**Week 11: Political Movements, Technology, and Social Change (3/31- TR)**

- Shirky, Clay. [The Political Power of Social Media: Technology, the Public Sphere, and Political Change](#). *Foreign Affairs*, Jan/Feb. 2011, 90(1), pg. 28.
- Brossard, D. & Scheufele, D.A. 2013. Science, New Media, and the Public. *Science*, 339, 40-41.
- Gladwell, Malcom. [Small Change: Why the revolution will not be tweeted](#). *The New Yorker*, Oct. 4, 2010.
- Morozov, Evgeny. 2011. *The Net Delusion: The Dark Side of Internet Freedom*. New York: Public Affairs (Selected chapters, TBA).

**Week 12:** New Media and Elections (4/7 -PA)

**Week 13: The Struggle for Internet Freedom (4/14- TR)**

- MacKinnon, Rebecca. 2012. *Consent of the Networked: The Worldwide Struggle For Internet Freedom*. Basic Books, Perseus Books Group, New York, NY.
- Stepanek, M. [The Snowden Leaks: Turning the Outside In](#). *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Nov. 1, 2013.

**Week 14: EASTER BREAK**

**Week 15: The Networked Society and Human Relationships (4/28 – TR & PA)**

- Rainie, L., and Wellman, B. 2012. *Networked: The New Social Operating System*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA – Chapters 8, 9, 10 and 11
- Turkle, S. 2012. The Flight from Conversation. *NY Times*, April 21, 2012.
- Tufekci, Z. 2012. Social Media's Small, Positive Role in Human Relationships. *The Atlantic*, April 25, 2012.
- Aral, S., and Walker, D. 2012. Identifying Influential and Susceptible Members of Social Networks. *Science* 337, 337-341 (July 2012).
- **Watch Video and Discuss In Class:** Barry Wellman (2012), "Connected Lives: The New Social Network Operating System", University of Arkansas, Clinton School of Public Service (4/14/2009). Watch here.

**Take-Home Final Exam (TBA) -- You will be provided 3-5 days to complete your exam.**