INTL 4665: Global Politics and Digital Media
Dr. Rongbin Han
(hanr@uga.edu)
Assistant Professor
(TR, 11:00-12:15; MLC 245)
Office Hours: Thursdays 14:00-15:00 pm or by appointment (322 Candler Hall)

**See the instructor if you have a disability that needs classroom accommodations.**

Course Description and Objectives
This course introduces students to the complicated relationship between digital media and politics in contemporary world. Through the semester, we will examine, with particular focus on the United States and China, how democratic and non-democratic regimes shape the institutions and functions of digital media and how digital media, in a variety of forms, influence domestic politics and foreign relations. We will also discuss a series of important implications of the expansion of new media in democratic, authoritarian and transitioning regimes.

Course Materials (Available in UGA Library or ELC)

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria
Final Grade Ranges:

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<th>Grade</th>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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Attendance and Participation (20%; Attendance 10%; Participation 10%)
Attend classes regularly. One absence is allowed for ANY reason. Additional absences will only be excused with legitimate reasons and documentation (ex. doctor’s note). The course is discussion based. You are required to read and reflect upon assigned readings before coming to class. You are also encouraged to participate electronically through our course ELC platform through online discussion.

Presentation and Reflection Essay (30%, 10% each presentation and 5% each reflection essay)
You are expected to do two 10-minute mini presentations on the dates you select. The presentation shall be based on the readings, but can go beyond. You shall present the most important points in the readings in your own words and clarify these points with original examples if necessary. You are encouraged to use PowerPoint slides or handouts to facilitate your presentation, and shall try to engage the class. The presentation is graded based on the preparedness, organization, clarity, and interactivity. The reflection essays—maximum 3 pages, double spaced—are based on your presentations. They shall not be laundry list summary of the readings. Summarize the reading in one page and put more emphasis on critically evaluating the readings and advancing your own arguments. Stay focused rather than picking up many points without any single one of them articulated sufficiently.

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1 The syllabus is a general plan for the course; updates and revisions may be necessary.
Digital Media Experiment (20%)  
You are required to generate at least three entries of online content (in any format) on topics such as the readings and ongoing local, national, or global socio-political events. You are also expected to promote the content online and use all the means you feel comfortable to increase your readership/viewership. Based on your experience, write a 1500-word (maximum) summary report, which shall include the following sections: URLs or screenshots of the content you’ve generated (only URLs if they are publicly accessible), your content generation and circulation strategies and outcomes (time posted, circulation on different platforms, number of clicks, comments, etc.), your findings of the experiment (what makes certain content popular or unpopular: the type of content/ the format of content/ framing/ circulation platforms, and so forth?), and your more general reflections on the power and limitations of digital media, social media an politics, and so forth. It is due December 3rd.

Digital Media Case Report (30%)  
Pick one (or more than one, if you intend to do a comparative study, which is highly encouraged) digital media event/phenomenon—broadly defined—and write a case report that is around 3000 words (double spaced, maximum 15 pages). Explain the event/phenomenon (what, who, when, how and why) and highlight the role of digital media—in what ways the new ICTs have made a difference; how are the actors involved taking advantage of the Internet to different degrees? How are big companies and the state playing a role in the process? You may choose any topic to work on—Lady Gaga, KONY 2012, Presidential Campaign cases, ISIS, Occupy Wall Street movement, and so forth. In the report, please explain how you see how digital media has (or has not) changed the socio-political life today. You shall talk to the instructor before finalizing the selection of topic. You are expected to submit a one-page project plan before November 5th and the final report on December 13th.

Important Deadlines

- September 22nd: Digital Media Experiment online content 1
- October 13th: Digital Media Experiment online content 2
- November 5th: Digital Media Experiment online content 3; Digital Media Case Report Plan Due
- December 3rd: Summary of Digital Media Experiment due
- December 13th: Digital Media Case Report due

Grade Dispute:

If you have any questions about your exam grade, you shall report to the instructor within one week from the time you receive the grade. You need to present a written appeal explaining why you think your grade should be changed. Please also bear in mind that disputing grade may end up with higher, lower or no change in your grade.

Academic Honesty:

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University’s academic honesty policy, “A Culture of Honesty,” and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in “A Culture of Honesty” found at: www.uga.edu/honesty. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Plagiarism will NOT be tolerated. Approach the instructor if you are unclear about what is plagiarism.
CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1
August 11 (Thursday) Welcome! Course Introduction

Surveying Media and Politics across the Globe

Week 2
August 16 (Tuesday) Comparative Framework

August 18 (Thursday) The Case of Israel
# Hallin and Mancini, Comparing Media Systems beyond the Western World, Ch. 2.

Week 3
August 23 (Tuesday) News Production in the U.S.

August 25 (Thursday) Media Effects in the U.S.

Additional Readings:

Week 4
August 30 (Tuesday) Understanding China’s Media System

September 1 (Thursday) Commercialization, Reform and Investigative Journalism

Additional Readings:
# Stockmann, Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China, Ch. 3
The Digital Era

Week 5
September 6 (Tuesday) History of Social Media

September 8 (Thursday) Introducing Theory

Week 6
September 13 (Tuesday) Digital Divide

September 15 (Thursday) Network Neutrality

Week 7
September 20 (Tuesday) Governing the Internet

September 22 (Thursday) Big Internet Corporations

Week 8

September 27 (Tuesday) Hacking and Hacker Practice

September 29 (Thursday) Digital Media and Privacy
* Bianca Bosker, “Randi Zuckerberg: Anonymity online has to go away,” Huffington Post (July 27, 2011).

Week 9

October 4 (Tuesday) Web 2.0

October 6 (Thursday) Digital Media and News Production
* Paul Starr, “Goodbye to the Age of Newspapers (Hello to a New Era of Corruption),” New Republic (March 4, 2009).
* Economist, “Social Media: The people formerly known as the audience,” (July 7th, 2011).

Additional Readings:
Week 10
October 11 (Tuesday) Digital Media and Governance

Additional Reading:

October 13 (Thursday) E-Government

Week 11
October 18 (Tuesday) Digital Media and Contentious Politics

October 20 (Thursday) Arab Spring and beyond

Week 12
October 25 (Tuesday) Cyber Politics in Strong Authoritarian Regimes: Cyber Activism

**Additional readings:**


**October 27 (Thursday) Cyber Politics in Strong Authoritarian Regimes: State Responses**


**Week 13**

**November 1 (Tuesday) Cyber Politics in China: Media and Political Attitudes**


**Additional readings:**


**October 3 (Thursday) Cyber Politics in China: Implications on Political Change?**


# Stockmann, *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China*, Ch. 11.

**Additional readings:**


**Media and Politics beyond National Borders**

**Week 14**

**November 8 (Tuesday) Freedom and Security: Wiki Leaks, NSA, and Snowden**


**November 10 (Thursday) Cyber Warfare**

# Martin C. Libicki, Cyberdeterrence and Cyberwar (RAND Corporation), Ch. 6 and 7.

**Week 15**

**November 15 (Tuesday) Terrorism in the Digital Age**

# Michele Zanini and Sean J.A. Edwards, “The Networking of Terror in the Information Age,” in John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt (eds.), *Networks and Netwars* (Rand Corporation 2001), Ch. 2.
# Phil Williams, "Transnational Criminal Networks," in John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt (eds.), *Networks and Netwars* (Rand Corporation 2001), Ch. 3.

Additional Readings:
# Dorothy E. Denning, "Activism, Hacktivism, and Cyberterrorism: The Internet as a Tool for Influencing Foreign Policy,” in John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt (eds.), *Networks and Netwars* (Rand Corporation 2001), Ch. 8.

**November 17(Thursday) Digital Media and Transnational Social Movements**

# Luther P. Gerlach, “The Structure of Social Movements: Environmental Activism and Its Opponents,” in John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt (eds.), *Networks and Netwars* (Rand Corporation 2001), Ch. 9.

**Week 16 Thanksgiving, No Class**

**Week 17**

**December 1 (Tuesday) Digital Media in International Crises: Ukraine Crises/ISIS**

No readings assigned – Please check out the coverage by mainstream media and social media and come to the class and discuss.


**December 3 (Thursday) Summary of Semester**

No readings

Digital Media Case Report Due– December 13th (8:00-11:00)