Course Description
This seminar critically examines the central role of digital media in today’s world by engaging a selection of key themes at the conjunction of comparative politics and digital media. The course will first familiarize you with digital media and its development across the globe by examining the history, key concepts and theories, and methodological approaches related to the rise of digital media. We will examine the debates about the political implications of digital media, particularly its impact on state-society relations in both democratic and authoritarian regimes. For instance, we will cover themes like digital media and electoral politics, digital media and social activism, digital media and revolutions, digital media and e-government & governance, as well as cyber security and cyber warfare. You will also have the opportunity to include any theme that you are particularly interested in by writing and presenting a research paper on a topic of your selection. I expect to have one-on-one meetings with you to help with your project.

Course materials to buy:


Rebecca MacKinnon, Consent of the Networked: The Worldwide Struggle for Internet Freedom (Basics Books)


Additional readings will be distributed by the instructor or available online. You are also recommended to read on traditional media systems and politics. Approach the instructor for suggestions.

** If you have a disability and require reasonable classroom accommodations, please see me after class. **
Course Requirements and Grading Criteria

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Attendance and Participation (15%) You are expected to attend classes regularly. Absences will be excused only in cases of health problems or family emergencies with the appropriate documentation. Please contact the instructor immediately if you have any emergent situation. If you miss more than 1/3 of the classes, you will fail the course automatically. No electronic device will be allowed except note taking.

Reading Responses (20%) Write responses (3-4 pages, double spaced) to the assigned readings for the weeks of your choice and email them to the class by 5 p.m. three days before the relevant seminar. The reading responses may take a variety of forms, but should include basic ideas and arguments of the readings, and more importantly your own questions, comments, and reflections. You are also welcome to draw on materials outside assigned readings.

Book Review (25%) Write a 2000-word book review of one or more books related to the course. In the essay, you shall summarize the argument, compare/contrast the book to course readings and other studies, and offer your own critique. Focus on analysis/critique and develop one coherent theme rather than providing a “laundry list” of comments. The book review is due APRIL 24 in class.

Research Paper (40%) Write a paper on a topic of your choice. The paper should start with an empirical or theoretical puzzle, present relevant hypotheses based on existing literature, and test your hypotheses with empirical data. You can produce a full-fledged research paper or a solid research design. You are expected to present your project for feedback from the class before submitting the final paper. Please email your proposal or paper to the class beforehand and include your major concerns and the types of comments and suggestions you are seeking. The research paper is due 6:15pm (EST) May 4th, 2015.

Note: If you are submitting the same paper to two or more courses, please make sure that the paper meets the expectation of each course. Failing to do so may result in lower grades from both/all courses.

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. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.
CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1  1/8: Welcome! Course Introduction


WEEK 2  1/15 Digital Media, Web Spirits, and Digital Sovereignty


# Rebecca MacKinnon, Consent of the Networked: The Worldwide Struggle for Internet Freedom (Basics Books), Ch. 8, 9 and 10.

Discussants:  1)        2)

WEEK 3  1/22  Digital Media and Power in Cyberspace

# Lawrence Lessig, Code: Version 2.0 (Basic Books, 2006).


Discussants:  1)        2)

WEEK 4  1/29  Digital Media and Politics: A Quick Survey


Discussants:  1)        2)

WEEK 5  2/5  The Power of Digital Media?


Discussants:  1)        2)
WEEK 6  2/12  Men Are Not Born Equal in Digital Era


Discussants:  1)        2)

WEEK 7  2/19 Digital Media, Democracy, and Electoral Politics


Discussants:  1)        2)

WEEK 8  2/26  Digital Media and Social Movements


Discussants: 1) 2)

WEEK 9  3/6  Digital Media and Arab Spring


Discussants: 1) 2)

WEEK 10  SPRING BREAK

WEEK 11  3/19  The Power and Limits of the Internet in China


Discussants: 1) 2)
WEEK 12  3/26  Digital Media and E-Governance


Discussants:  1)  2)

WEEK 13  4/2  Cyber Terrorism and Cyber Warfare

# John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt (eds.), *Networks and Netwars* (Rand Corporation 2001)

Discussants:  1)  2)

WEEK 14  4/9 Digital Media and Research Methods Innovation


Discussants:  1)  2)

WEEK 15  4/16  Class Presentation (OR TBA)

WEEK 16  4/24  Class Presentation