

COMM 30GS: GLOBAL DIGITAL MEDIA LITERACY
Summer Session I, 2021
Vienna, Austria

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CLASS SCHEDULE

Lecture: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, 9am – 11am
Academic Excursion: Thursday

OVERVIEW

This course focuses on the role of journalism in a global system, and the ways mass media both contribute to and inhibit the development of a viable public sphere and effective political process. With a focus on American as well as international news media, we will examine theories and functions of journalism as well as current issues facing today's news producers. We'll consider the potential of the web as a democratizing force and the changing nature of what's considered news. By exploring traditional journalistic norms in the context of today's communication dynamics (including technology, policy, politics, and culture), we will better understand the challenges, benefits, and limitations of mass media in our global society.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this class, students will be able to:

- describe mass communication systems and the relationship between information, mass communication, and democracy;
- explain how media structures, economics, and legal systems contribute to and/or inhibit media's democratic potential;
- examine how the rich, technologically dense, and ever-changing multitude of information systems and processes are organized institutionally, culturally, and individually to shape, manage, engineer, and bind together social worlds;
- analyze practices, sentiments, and understandings around media messages and media practitioners;
- argue the strengths and weaknesses of mass media and particularly social media in the context of media technologies that are tied up in the global expansion of surveillance capitalism; and
- assess the responsibilities of citizens in the current media environment.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Topics	Texts (see full citations below)	Activities and Assessments	Academic Excursion/ Guest Speakers
1	What Journalism Can/Can't Do for Democracy	<u>Schudson</u> : <i>Journalism: Why It Matters</i> <u>Pickard</u> : <i>Journalism Without Democracy?</i>	Reading quiz 1 Excursion review 1	Austrian Broadcasting The House of Austrian History
2	Disinformation and the Role of Social Media	<u>Vaidhyathan</u> : <i>Antisocial Media</i> <u>Waisbord and Papacharissi</u> : <i>Trump and the Media</i>	Reading quiz 2 Excursion review 2	3-day excursion to Prague CTK, national news agency Czech Television and Radio Transitions, nonprofit organization Walking Tour Political Prague (1968, 1989)
3	Propagandists of the Right and Satirists of the Left	<u>Peck</u> : <i>Fox Populism</i> <u>Young</u> : <i>Irony and Outrage</i>	Reading quiz 3 Excursion review 3 Group project presentations	Former concentration camp Mauthausen
4	Global Dynamics	<u>Powers</u> : <i>NGOs as Newsmakers</i>	Reading quiz 4 Excursion review 4	UN Headquarters International Atomic Energy Agency
5	What Citizens Know about the News	<u>Ashley</u> : <i>News Literacy and Democracy</i>	Reading quiz 5 Excursion review 5 Final exam	Austrian Parliament

References

- Ashley, Seth. *News Literacy and Democracy*. New York: Routledge, 2020.
- Peck, Reece. *Fox Populism*. Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- Pickard, Victor. *Democracy Without Journalism? Confronting the Misinformation Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019
- Powers, Matthew. *NGOs as Newsmakers: The Changing Landscape of International News*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018.
- Schudson, Michael. *Journalism: Why It Matters*. Hoboken: Wiley, 2020.
- Vaidhyathan, Siva. *Antisocial Media: How Facebook Disconnects Us and Undermines Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Waisbord, Silvio, and Zizi Papacharissi, *Trump and the Media*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2018
- Young, Dannagal. *Irony and Outrage: The Polarized Landscape of Rage, Fear, and Laughter in the United States*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.

Summary of Grade Criteria

Reading quizzes	10%
Group project	20%
Class participation	10%
Excursion reviews	20%
Final exam	40%

How you earn your grade

Quizzes: You will take a 5-question quiz on Canvas every week based on the assigned reading. The quizzes are not just designed to test knowledge but to make sure you've familiarized yourself with the main contents of the text. One of the five quiz items asks you to formulate a question about something in the text that you'd like to have clarified or discussed.

Group project: At the beginning of the course, the class will be divided into a number of groups consisting of 3-4 students. Each group will research a key topic area (political economy, the role of technology, political culture, journalistic routines) and prepare a class presentation.

Excursion reviews: For each academic excursion you will write a 200- to 300-word reviews. Writing and critical thinking go hand in hand. This assignment will allow you to explore and reflect upon your observations and experiences in an open and independent way.

Participation: You are expected to come to the lectures and required to attend all academic excursions. You are expected to have read the assigned reading materials and be prepared to talk about the reading material during discussion sessions.

Final exam: Throughout the quarter you'll be reading, thinking and talking about the role of journalism in a democratic system. For the final exam, you will be asked to apply your thoughts, reflections and direct observations from excursions to the current situation.

You must complete all reading quizzes, attend section, and submit all exams in order to pass this course.