Bachelor in Communication sciences and culture

Course title:	New Media for Participatory Democracy
Course year:	3
Semester:	1
Course code:	17245
Scientific sector:	INF/01
Lecturer:	Alexandra Budabin, Contract Professor, Faculty of Education Alexandra.Budabin@unibz.it
Module:	no
Lecturer other module:	
Credits:	6
Total lecturing hours:	45
Total Hours of availability for students and tutoring:	18
Office hours:	from Monday to Friday on request; other hours to be announced during the course
Attendance:	According to the regulation
Teaching language:	English
Propaedeutic course:	none
Course description:	This course belongs to the "di base" Area and explores the connections between new media, citizens, and politics by familiarizing students with the different applications of Information and Communication Techonologies (ICTs) on elections, advocacy, development, and international affairs. Using a political science perspective, this course will treat both institutions and citizens as objects of study for which the medium of the internet is a communication tool for actors to achieve their goals and advance their interests. Power dynamics across different agents (actors) within national and international arenas will be explored to analyze contentious areas of participatory debates including e-democracy, free speech, surveillance, opinion-making, and digital activism. In the first part, students will learn various concepts and theoretical frameworks for considering informational infrastructures and detecting the presence of narratives and counter-narratives, both the textual and visual dialogues, in digital space. In the second half, students will gain the basic skills of planning and assessing websites and social media profiles of electoral campaigns, e-government, civic organizations, internet media, transnational networks, and social movements.
Specific educational objectives:	This course aims to give an overview of the study of media and politics with a focus on participation, broadly construed. The course adopts a political science perspective but draws deeply from communications and sociology. The objectives of the course include inculcation of critical

	visual and discourse analysis of the role of communication in national and international politics. As an English language offering, this course will pay special attention to advancing oral, presentation, and written skills for an academic environment.
List of topics covered:	Social science methods for the study of participatory democracy and new media culture Web 2.0; New media's interactions with old media; Social movements and new media; Protest camps/progressive campaigns and new media; New media and political participation; New media and development/humanitarianism; Human rights and slacktivism; elections, digital divides/net neutrality; User-generated content citizen journalism.
Teaching format:	Lectures, discussions, group and individual assignments, lab exercises, participation in an online forum, FUBmoodle.
Learning outcomes:	*Knowledge and understanding* • Knowledge of the key concepts, debates, and issues related to new media and participatory culture • Familiarity with academic approaches to the study and analysis of theories of communication and governance *Applying knowledge and understanding* • Ability to adopt political science perspectives to an analysis of the role of communications • Ability to detect and explain practices and dynamics across political actors, media, and citizens that have been disrupted by new media *Making judgments* • Advance critical and autonomous thinking in considering the role of communication in our social and political lives • Ability to apply social science research to contemporary policy questions and internet practices *Communication skills* • Recognize the basic structure of academic research and writing • Ability to craft arguments and analysis in different types of low and high stakes writing assignments • Ability to deliver research findings in oral presentations • Ability to actively participate in debates and discussion both in class and online *Learning skills* • Develop basic principles of planning and evaluating the ICT materials of political and social groups • Gain experience in collaborative strategizing and critical thinking
Assessment:	• Classroom participation, individual/group exercises, e-forum (25%) • Short oral and written assignments (25%)

	• Final paper (50%)
Evaluation criteria and criteria for awarding marks:	Overall assessment will be based on successful completion of classroom and online participation, exercises, lab tasks, and other assignments. These tasks will evaluate the ability to critically analyze individually and as a group. This includes the application of course themes and arguments to new phenomena and the establishment of original positions. The ability to communicate clearly and persuasively, both through oral and written means, to the class and professor will also be assessed. A final paper that examines a particular ICT medium, actor, and issue area as it relates to the study of media and politics. The evaluation will include the development of an original argument, use of diverse sources, construction of an outline, peer review, and the preparation of a final draft.
Required readings:	Selected chapters and excerpts from: *E-Democracy: A Group Decision and Negotiation-Oriented Overview*, David Rios and Simon French *New Media* (4th edition), Terry Flew *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, Henry Jenkins *The Media, Political Participation and Empowerment*, Edited by Richard Scullion, Roman Gerodimos, Daniel Jackson, Darren Lilleker *Media and Development,* Martin Scott *Networks of Outrage and Hope*, Manuel Castells *DIY Citizenship: Critical Making and Social Media*, Edited by Matt Ratto and Megan Boler Other required readings will be made available during the course.
Supplementary readings:	Course professor will suggest additional readings resources for preparation of individual/group exercises and final paper.