ICIR 225 Global Media, Social Change and International Relations

Course Description & Aims:
This course examines the social and political impact of global media networks and transnational information flows. It includes an overview history of mass media, with attention being given to technologies, business models and the growth of global information flows. Students also consider the role of mass media in shaping public perceptions and the rise of complex debates surrounding media oversight, regulation and control. The latter half of the course looks at a range of contemporary developments: the promise and consequences of digitalization; the advent of global consumer culture; public diplomacy and transnational advocacy; conflict management and recent concerns over truth decay and the erosion of public culture. The role of global media in the formation of transnational civil society and discursive politics between states will also be examined.

The development of the media as a global socializing force; the creation of a global market place; the information age; the power of the media in society and politics; the new global media culture. Students will understand; analyze; assess the importance of global opinion and discursive politics in shaping debates and policies.

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Assessment

Position paper debate	10%
Film Review	10%
Take-Home essay	30%
Case Study	20%
Final Exam	30%

Course Learning Objectives

At the completion of the course the student will be able to:

1. Recount the history of mass media and explain some of the principal benefits and major concerns arising from globalized information flows.
2. Understand and critique the justifications for state ownership and regulatory oversight of the media.
3. Understand the role of media in the formation of public policy, the conduct of international diplomacy and the promotion of national culture.
4. Explain the role of the media and mediation in the formation and empowerment of epistemic communities, the development of transnational advocacy and the promotion of global standards.
5. Provide concrete examples of how national political authority has been transformed by international media and discursive politics.
6. Explain contemporary concerns arising from the advent of new and social media as platforms for the transnational dissemination of commercial and political information.

Topic No.	Topic
1	Introduction: global media, social change and international relations
	Some Theories: Habermas, Gramsci, Adorno, McCluhan, Appadurai
2	Technologies, models, distribution networks
	Genres and paradigms: news, entertainment, celebrity, advertising
3	Nation-building, censorship, propaganda
	UNESCO and the NWICO debate
4	Technological change and digital activism
	Surveillance and regulatory mechanisms
5	Advertising and global consumer culture; market segmentation and the invention/promotion of consumer lifestyle
	Data mining, profiling and political campaign marketing
6	Nation branding and competitive identities
	Tourism and the commodification of culture
7	Public diplomacy and global public opinion
	Identity management exercise
8	Media advocacy and the promotion of global standards
	Example A: Media Advocacy and the Thai fishing industry
9	Example B: Naming and Shaming: Hun Sen
	Student case study presentations
10	'Hearts and minds': warfare and public opinion management
	Entertainment media and soft power
11	Game Cultures and IR
	Gaming and soft power
12	Truth decay? A Discussion
	Small group review

Assessment Methods & Criteria

1. **Position paper debate (10%)** - In week three, students write and present a (three-page) position paper on the historic ESCAP/NWICO debate over global information flows.

2. **Film Review (10%)** - In week four, students will submit a (two-page) review/critique of one of three films: *Dear Censor*, a BBC Documentary on British censorship; *Brexit: An Uncivil War*, a documentary on the use of social media data-mining during the Brexit referendum; or *Stare into the Lights My Pretties*, a film on screen culture and new media.

3. **Take Home Essay (30%)** In week six, students will be given a take-home mid-term assessment. Completed (four-page) essay are due back in week seven.

4. **Case Study (20%)** In week ten, students will present and write a short (3-page) paper on an example of transnational media advocacy. The aim of the exercise is to consider how global media is used to promote agendas in countries around the world. Students will be asked to conduct a brief content analysis of press coverage for a country that has been repeatedly subject to negative media coverage. They should identify key issues and explain the specific agendas of advocates.

5. **Final Exam (30%)** Students will be given a choice of essays based on material covered in the latter half of the course.

Introduction and Media Theory

Topic description: In the first week, the students will be introduced to the course, instructor expectations and assessment criteria. They will also be introduced to a number of relevant, course-related theories and theoreticians.

Expected learning outcomes: To understand the scope of the course and some of the theoretical concerns and debates related to mass media and its impact on politics and society

Resources:
- Adorno, Theodor (1997). Culture industry reconsidered. In Marris, Paul and Thornham, Sue. *Media studies: A reader*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 24-29
- Habermas, Jurgen (1997). The public sphere. Marris, Paul and Thornham, Sue. *Media studies: A reader*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 55-59.
- Lippman, Walter (1922). Excerpt from *Public Opinion,* discussion of manufacturing consent
- McLuhan, Marshal (1997). The medium is the message. Marris, Paul and Thornham, Sue. *Media studies: A reader*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 30-34.
- Appadurai – film clip and discussion of mediated "scapes"
- Gramsci – film clip, discussion of hegemony and soft power

Recommended film:
- *Dear Censor*, BBFC Documentary, Video Nasties.

Overview History of the Mass Media

Topic description: This week we consider how communications technologies have transformed society with emphasis being given to: the growth of mass media industries and markets; the rise of networked communications; the advent and development of film distribution networks; and the rise and development of broadcasting networks. Students will be apprised of arguments for and against public and private ownership. They will also learn how the private, commercial model came to dominate mass media in the United States, giving rise to a host of information genres and institutions including news, entertainment, celebrity and advertising.

Expected learning outcomes: An understanding of the extent to which mass media was from the outset a business activity conducted by, and largely in support of, business interests in the industrialized world

Resources:
- Herman, Edward and McChesney, Robert (1997): *Global media*, New York: Continuum.
- Woodier, Jonathan (2008). *The media and political change in Southeast Asia*. Northhampton: Edward Elgar.

Cross-border Information Flows and Regulatory Authority

Topic description: In week three, students analyze a historic dispute that arose within the confines of the UN system in the late 1970s over the origin and control of global information flows. Triggered by the concerns of newly independent states, the New World Information and Communications Order (NWICO) debates brought to the fore a range of issues that remain relevant today: Western dominance of global media and global information flows; the frequent misrepresentation of non-Western peoples and interests; and the deleterious impact that lopsided information flows have on Third World development efforts.

Expected learning outcomes: An understanding of the complex arguments and debates surrounding questions of free information flows and governmental regulatory oversight

Resources:
- McBride Commission Report (1980). *Many voices one world.* Paris: UNESCO.

Activities:
- Presentation of position papers
- In-class debate.

Digitalization, New Media and Shifting Regulatory Regimes

Topic description: This week, the class will examine the promises and problems of digital communications and new media. Discussion will center upon initial anticipation that web-based communication would decentralize global media enterprise, providing greater access and giving rise to more balanced flows of information. Students will also consider how positive developments have been offset by the emergence of new media monopolies, stepped-up commercial information flows and sophisticated state surveillance techniques.

Expected learning outcomes: To understand the extent to which new media technologies have both partially addressed and further exacerbated earlier concerns about the consequences of global media and global information flows.

Resources:
- Freedom House (2018). The rise of digital authoritarianism. (https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/freedom-net-2018/rise-digital-authoritarianism).
- Green, Lelie (2010). *The Internet: An introduction to new media*. Oxford: Berg.
- Schaffar, W. (2016). New social media and politics in Thailand: The emergence of fascist vigilante groups on Facebook. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, *9* (2), 215-234.

Recommended film:
- Additional films for home review: *Brexit: An Uncivil War*; *Stare into the Lights My Pretties*

Discussion:
- Social Media, Data Mining and Cambridge Analytica

Globalization and Consumer Culture

Topic description: In this week, we will consider one of the more obvious outcomes of stepped-up global information flows – the expansion of consumer lifestyle marketing and advent of a global consumer culture. AI-backed market research and segmentation are now an integral part of internet advertising campaigns designed to sell products, services and ideas. Global advertising is also reshaping gender aesthetics, giving rise to hybrid global standards and ideals.

Expected learning outcomes: An awareness of the extent to which the Internet is reworking global consumption and global marketing; an understanding of lifestyle marketing and its multiple strategies

Resources:
- For discussion: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dCyug_2SAM
- For discussion: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGniZ07Kf84
- For discussion: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MnSGSVlf7Zo
- Nielson Marketing Segment Narratives

(https://www.nielsen.com/content/dam/corporate/us/en/docs/solutions/segmentation/prizm-premier-segments-may-2015.pdf)
- Tribaling.com blog.
- Williams, Raymond (1997). Advertising: The magic system. Marris, Paul and Thornham, Sue. *Media studies: A reader*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 461-465.

Activity:
- Market-segment self-identification

Competitive Identities

Topic description: In this week, students will discuss the role of media in nation-building, nation-branding and the promotion of competitive national identities. Governments around the planet now make use of intangible cultural resources and mediated national narratives to promote tourism, encourage investment and develop markets for locally produced products. To build and maintain as international reputation, they are also increasingly obliged to counter-spin negative representations.

Expected learning outcomes: an understanding of the extent to which global media and marketing techniques are utilized in the construction and promotion of national identities and cultures

Resources:
- Anholt, Simon (2007). *Competitive identity: The new brand management for nations, cities and regions*. New York: Palgrave.
- Reputation Institute Survey Data: Country RepTrack Data. (https://www.reputationinstitute.com/)

Activity:
- In small groups, students will be asked develop global promotional campaigns for some of the planet's least reputable governments.

Public Diplomacy and the Management of Global Opinion

Topic description: In the modern age, diplomacy is a publicly-mediated affair conducted in English for a global audience. Official news pronouncement and reports are distributed and archived on web portals, providing governments around the planet with a digital presence on the Internet. The advent of public diplomacy, the contested discursive practices it has engendered and the growth of institutions dedicated to measuring and monitoring global public opinion are the topics of this week's lectures and discussions.

Expected learning outcomes: Understanding the role of public diplomacy and transnational discursive politics in the formation of global public opinion; appreciating the growing impact of global opinion on domestic politics

Resources:
- Fischer, Frank (2003). *Reframing Public Policy: Discursive Politics and Deliberative Practices*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pew Global (https://www.pewglobal.org/)

Media Advocacy and the Promotion of Global Standards

Topic description: In week 8, we will consider the rise of epistemic communities and transnational civil society groups and their role in cross border media advocacy and the promotion of global standards. Students will also examine the politics implicit in rankings systems and external ratings.

Expected learning outcomes: an understanding of the extent to which media advocacy networks shape public understandings and determine agendas in international relations

Resources:
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_international_rankings Using Wikipedia list of international rankings students working in small groups will be asked to determined and explain the significance and underlying suppositions of a particular global ranking.
- Uhlin, Anders (2001). The transnational dimension of civil society: Migration and independence movements in Southeast Asia. In Beckman et al. *Civil society and authoritarianism in the third world*. Stockholm: Akademitryck AB.

Case Studies

Topic description: To help student better understand the politics of transnational media advocacy as they develop their own case studies, students will be asked to consider two examples from the Asian region: the press coverage and attenuated external pressure brought to bear on Thailand to end human trafficking in the local fishing industry; and the critical media attention given to corruption in Hun Sen's Cambodia.

Expected learning outcomes: an understanding of the evolving role of NGOs, INGOs and transnational civil society groups in framing international relations agendas through media advocacy.

Resources:
- Bruno Munser Fund (https://www.bmf.ch/en/homepage/) site assessment
- Environmental Justice Foundation (https://ejfoundation.org/) site assessment
- Global Witness (https://www.globalwitness.org/en/) site assessment

Activities:
- Student project specific research
- Student case study presentation.

Warfare, Entertainment Media and the Management of Public Opinion

Topic description: In week ten, students will consider the relationship between security concerns and censorship regimes. Using case studies from the United States, the class will examine how propaganda and classification regimes have yielded to sophisticated media management techniques such as military press conferencing, embedded journalism, and the use of entertainment media to promote favorable views of the armed forces and overseas campaigns.

Expected learning outcomes: an understanding of the sophisticated media management and manipulation techniques currently employed by the United States and other governments in conflict situations

Resources:
- Forensic Architecture (https://www.forensic-architecture.org/)
- Larson, Eric and Savych, Bogdan (2006). *Misfortunes of war: Press and public reactions to civilian deaths in wartime*. Santa Monica: Rand.

Game Cultures

Topic description: Produced for the global market place, digital games often affirm the innate superiority of American military force and the desirability of American military intervention overseas. In week eleven students will be asked to consider how games rewrite military history, lend legitimacy to illegal military actions and impact upon international relations. They will also consider the ever-closer relationship between modern warfare and game culture.

Expected learning outcomes: an understanding of how entertainment media and gaming culture figure in international relations.

Resources:
- Hjorth, L. and Chan, D. (2009) Gaming cultures and place in Asia Pacific. New York; Routledge.
- Machin, D and Van Leeuwen, Theo (2007). Discourses of War in *Global Media Discourse: A Critical Introduction*. New York: Routledge. 74-104.

Activities:
- Students will critical analyze gaming samples brought in by the instructor. They will also briefly present their own sample.

Truth Decay

Topic description: Have technological developments and accelerated cross-border information flows undermined the shared truths of an earlier age? With reference to a Rand Corporation study on Truth Decay, students will be asked to consider the matter. The week will also be used to summarize the main themes of the course and help students prepare for a final essay examination.

Expected learning outcomes: an understanding of a recent debate over how global media networks are reworking politics and civil discourse in the United States and Europe

Resources:
- Kavenaugh, J. and Rich, M. (2018). Truth decay: An initial exploration into the diminishing role of facts and analysis in American public life. Santa Monica: Rand Corp.

Activities:
- Review Session - In small groups, students will develop their own exam questions for review.