Communication and Politics is an issues-oriented course that explores the impact of social media on contemporary politics and new forms of (digital) media power. Beginning with a discussion of key perspectives on politics and communication, the course will examine what happens when the real world of politics is suddenly immersed in a new order of communication, including social media and digital devices—the inclusive, participatory, app-driven world of Twitter, YouTube and Facebook. We will ask not only what happens to traditional understandings of political identity (Canadian and international) in the new era of social media, but also what happens to television, radio and newspapers and, indeed, to the meaning of citizenship itself when everyone is wired into the “global village,” instantly aware of crises near and far, and enabled by digital devices that provide connectivity 24/7. The course will approach communication and politics by discussing the writings of key contemporary media scholars as well by exploring several case studies in the area of politics and communication that highlight contemporary debates including changes in technologies of contemporary political campaigns, the future of surveillance, digital democracy, investigative journalism today and transformations in issues related to work, warfare and political resistance in a world driven at the speed of social media.

Required Readings:


Digital Sites: www.ctheory.net, www.pactac.net,
http://www.pactac.net/wires/acontents.html

Grading and Assignments:
Take-Home Mid-Term Examination, Value: 25% (Due: Feb. 12th)
Research Paper (15-18 pages): Value: 35% (Due: March 5th)
Take-Home Final Exam, Value: 30% (Due: March 26th)
Participation: 10%

*No late papers will be accepted without a medical note. A print copy of your research paper must be submitted by the due date, March 5, 2019.
CLASS SCHEDULE

Jan. 8th: Introduction to Communication and Politics

Jan.15th: Power and Communication in Digital Society
Readings:
David Taras, Digital Mosaic, Chp. 1: “The New Structure of Media Power”
Astra Taylor, The People’s Platform, “Preface”

Case Study: How Soft Power Shapes Politics
“We’re Designing Minds” http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/marketplace-phones-1.4384876

“Where is the Boundary between your Phone and your Mind,” Kevin Lincoln for PS Mag: https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/dec/09/tech-mind-body-boundary-facebook-google

Reference: Donna Haraway, “A Cyborg Manifesto”
https://faculty.georgetown.edu/irvinem/theory/Haraway-CyborgManifesto-1.pdf

Readings:

Case Study: “The Slot Machine in your Pocket,”
http://www.spiegel.de/international/zeitgeist/smartphone-addiction-is-part-of-the-design-a-1104237.html

Jan.29th: Politics in the Age of Connectivity: Twitter, YouTube, Facebook: Why Resurgent Nationalism in a Time of Media Fragmentation?

Readings:
-D. Taras, Digital Mosaic, Chp. 4: “Me-Media and Political Connectedness [or Not]: Cable, Blogs and YouTube” and Chp. 5: “Connecting and Disconnecting on the Social Media Frontier”
- Sherry Turkle, “Alone Together”
(http://www.ted.com/talks/sherry_turkle_alone_together

Case Studies:
Framing the Narrative: Twitter and Political Communication
“How Trump Uses Twitter Storm to Make the Political Weather”
https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/dec/02/how-trump-uses-twitter-storms-to-make-the-political-weather


Disinformation Campaigns: “New report on Russian disinformation prepared for the Senate, shows the operation’s scale and sweep,” https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2018/12/16/new-report-russian-disinformation-prepared-senate-shows-operations-scale-sweep/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.c552b3a8305f

Feb.5th: “Fake News?” Journalism in the Data Storm
Readings:

Case Study Topic: Power in Information Society
Reading: James Tully, ‘Communication and Imperialism,’ (http://www.ctheory.net/articles.aspx?id=508)

Feb.12th: (Take-Home Mid-Term Exam Due)

Theme: Investigative Journalism Today: The Politics of Truth, Power and Violence (Against Journalists)

1. Internal Consortium of Investigative Journalists (https://www.icij.org)
2. The Surveillance Society (interview with Edward Snowden), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5yB3n9fu-rM

5. Street Journalism in Network Society
Gregory Sholette, “Occupology, Swarmology, Whateverology: the city of (dis)order versus the people’s archive” (http://artjournal.collegeart.org/?p=2395)

Feb. 19th: READING BREAK

Feb. 26th: Clashing Trends in Communication and Politics:
Readings: D. Taras, Chp.9, “Finding Citizenship in the Digital Mosaic,”
Astra Taylor, Conclusion, “In Defense of the Commons: A Manifesto for Sustainable Culture”

March 5\textsuperscript{th}: The Real World of Connectivity: The Internet as “Playground and Factory”

\*\textbf{Note: Research Paper Due}

March 12\textsuperscript{th}: Digital Democracy and the “Information Bomb”
\textbf{Readings}: Astra Taylor, \textit{The People’s Platform}, Chp.3, “What We Want” & Chp.4 “Unequal Uptake”

March 19\textsuperscript{th}: Pirate Media: Fast Data and the “Attention Economy”

March 26\textsuperscript{th}: Take-Home Final Exam

April 2\textsuperscript{nd}: Communication and Politics: Key Trajectories

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\textbf{PERCENTAGE GRADING SCALE}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passing Grades</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90 – 100</td>
<td>Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>85 – 89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>80 – 84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>77 – 79</td>
<td>Very good, good and solid performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>73 – 76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>70 – 72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>65 – 69</td>
<td>Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60 – 64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50 – 59</td>
<td>Marginal Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 – 49</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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4
| N   | 0 | 0 – 49 | Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental. |

1. The percentage grading scale applies to all Faculties at the University of Victoria.  
2. The percentage grades should be associated with a letter grading schema.  
3. A percentage grade for an N grade should be assigned in the following manner:  
   N GRADE: If a student has not completed the exam, or has not completed the course requirements, but has submitted course requirements that total more than 49% of the total grade for a course, an instructor will assign a percentage grade of 49%.

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is intellectual honesty and responsibility for academic work that you submit individually or as a member of a group. It involves commitment to the values of honesty, trust and responsibility. It is expected that students will respect these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research and service. Therefore, plagiarism and other acts against academic integrity are serious academic offences.

The responsibility of the institution - Instructors and academic units have the responsibility to ensure that standards of academic honesty are met. By doing so, the institution recognizes students for their hard work and assures them that other students do not have an unfair advantage through cheating on essays, exams, and projects.

The responsibility of the student - Plagiarism sometimes occurs due to a misunderstanding regarding the rules of academic integrity, but it is the responsibility of the student to know them. If you are unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing your sources, ask your instructor. Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a record on the student’s transcript, or a suspension. It is your responsibility to understand the University’s policy on academic integrity, which can be found on pages 32-34 of the undergraduate calendar.

Please see the (revised) academic integrity policy: [http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2018-01/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html](http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2018-01/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html)

Course Evaluation:
Your feedback on this course would be very much appreciated. Towards the end of term you will have the opportunity to complete a confidential course experience survey (CES) regarding your learning experience. The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. When it is time for you to complete the survey, you will receive an email inviting you to do so. If you do not receive an email invitation, you can go directly to [http://ces.uvic.ca](http://ces.uvic.ca). You will need to use your UVic NetLink ID to access the survey, which can be done on your laptop, tablet or mobile device. I will remind you nearer the time, but please be thinking about this important activity, especially the following three questions, during the course.
1. What strengths did your instructor demonstrate that helped you learn in this course?
2. Please provide specific suggestions as to how the instructor could have helped you learn more effectively.
3. Please provide specific suggestions as to how this course could be improved.