About the Course

From the role of media in Trump's presidential campaign and his upset victory to the Arab Spring digital technology is challenging and changing established institutions on a number of levels. This course focuses on the role of technology in politics. A wide range of issues related to technology's positive and negative impacts will be assessed during this class. We will use readings, videos, and online discussions to understand issues that include: if the internet can promote democracy; surveillance and control online; the 2016 Presidential campaign; destruction of paper journalism; online consumerism; online harassment and trolling; the internet as a platform the elite can use to erase histories of their mal-influence to maintain power; and digital religions [E1].

It has been designed to make learning easy and accessible to students who are travelling or will be working long hours over summer. Accordingly, students have the option of participating in chatroom sessions on Laulima on Saturday, 5.00 to 6.15pm **OR** Sunday, 4.00 to 5.15 pm (HAST). Course reading material and videos have been assigned with a view to aid comprehension regardless of your past academic background of the key issues facing social media use in society today.

This course has Contemporary Ethical Issues (E) and Writing Intensive Focus (WI) designations.

Contemporary ethical issues are fully integrated into the main course material and will constitute at least 30% of the content. At least 8 hours of class time will be spent discussing ethical issues. Through the use of lectures, discussions, and assignments, students will develop basic competency in recognizing and analyzing ethical issues; deliberating on ethical issues responsibly, and making ethically determined judgments."

Course Objectives:
- Developing writing skills
- Learning key concepts in the field with a view to developing a critical eye for the news
- Developing familiarity with the new media environment, including search skills and a clearer sense of privacy concerns
- Achieve a broad understanding of ethical issues facing us online
- The class is designed to give students an essential understanding of and familiarity with the full spectrum of digital communications. After the class, the student should have a basic technical literacy, appropriate for any professional in communications, political, or policy work, and broad knowledge of current and emerging trends. This will include putting together a digital toolkit that will enable students to use and apply their digital knowledge in their professional and personal lives.

Class Assignments [E4 & E5]

Digital Tool Kit (10%):
Students will create:
1. Create a LinkedIn account (in order to help you network with other professionals, academics, and researchers)
2. Create a Twitter account
3. Set up your own blog, which you will consistently update in accordance with our class discussion.
4. Set up a google group to participate in Week 6 class simulation

Class Participation (35% in total) [W3] [E5]
There are three components of class participation:
• Attendance in online chatroom (5%)
• Chatroom discussion (20%): Each week you will be expected to participate in a rigorous online classroom discussion of the key concepts and readings [W1 & W4] I will provide questions based on the readings and chair the discussion. The online chatroom will be accessible on Laulima. Students have a choice to meet on Saturdays from 5.00 to 6.15 pm (HAST) or to meet online on Sundays from 4.00 to 5.15 pm. Because this course if writing intensive, students are expected to generate atleast 4 pages worth of class discussions in the online chatroom during the course. Secondly, students are expected to have completed a minimum of 8 hours of online chat room participation. Inability to meet this requirement will lead to a failed grade.
The instructor will be present in the chat room with the students and a set of questions will be given to aid discussion. Further on-line chats will be chaired, and the student will continue to receive meaningful inputs, suggestions, and feedback during each chat session. [E1, E5 &W2]

•Twitter (10%): You will be expected to Tweet two articles or blog posts a week on a digital topic of interest to you or the class. You can also post blogs or articles relevant to your research paper towards the end of the summer class. Your Tweets should be tagged using the class hashtag (#pols315digital), to ensure you receive credit. [W1 & W4]
Interesting and relevant Tweets on the #pols315digital feed will be discussed at the beginning of each class. [W2]

Blog Posts (10% in total) [W1 & W3]
You will be required to write five blog posts throughout the summer class. Four blog posts (10%) will review the readings of a week you will choose based on your interest. As bloggers you will need to make sure that your posts cover these three major points:
• Summarize (highlight the main arguments of) the readings for the week.
• Analyze/evaluate (tear apart, react to, find problems or contradictions with, give strengths of, explain why you agree or disagree with) the readings.
• Synthesize (place in relation to, bring together themes with, say what one author would say to another) that week's readings with the previous week's.

Each blog post must be a minimum of 400 words and a maximum of 500 words. An important part of your blog posts is referencing other blogs that you are reading or blogs that are referenced in the assigned readings. The blog posts will be checked each week and feedback will be provided individually. The blogs must be submitted on Friday by 6.00 pm (HAST).
Students will be given individual feedback on each blog they submit. MS Word documents will be emailed to the student containing blog feedback every Saturday. This way the students will have feedback on their prior work and will have time to incorporate it in the weekend on-line chats. [W2 & W4].

Blog Post of an Outline of your Research Paper (10%) [W3]
In addition to the four expected blog posts, you are expected to post an additional blog post on the outline of your research paper.
Students will be provided with prompt feedback on the research outline blogs via Google documents. Google docs provide a platform for editing outlines and chatting with the student at the same time. This will help the students understand the changes they are being asked to make and importantly the reason behind the changes as well.

Major Final Deliverable (35%) [W1 & W3]
You are to complete a research paper. Conduct research on an online trend or digital media in which you have some interest. Collect articles and books written about the topic and read them. Analyze them, and synthesize their meaning. If there is a shortage of written material about your topic, conduct original research. Draw a conclusion about the direction of the trend or technology. The paper should summarize and synthesize the state of the trend or technology and make an argument. It should be 6 to 7 pages long, double-spaced and be cited using the APA format [W4].

Students will be provided with a research paper rubric explaining in detail what is required of them. Additionally, a section of the online chatroom will be dedicated to explaining the rubric to the students and giving them a chance to ask questions. Lastly, they will be encouraged and given

a choice to provide completed drafts of their paper well in advance of the paper submission deadline for instructor feedback.

Grading: For all your assignments big or small, you will be evaluated on the comprehensiveness of your analysis and review, clarity of the argument (where applicable), format and written composition. Additional guidance and details will be provided in class and on the class page.

Grading Scale:
A – 92 - 100 B- – 80 – 81 D+ – 67 - 69
A- – 90 – 91 C+ – 77 – 79 D – 62 - 66
B+ – 87 - 89 C – 72 – 76 D- – 60 - 61
B – 82 – 86 C- – 70 – 71 E – 59 and below

Policy on Misconduct
There will be a strict no-acceptance policy on PLAGIARISM. Any instance of Plagiarism will earn you an 'F'. Plagiarism is the use, without acknowledgment, of the intellectual work of other people, and the act of representing the ideas or discoveries of another as one's own in written work submitted for assessment. To copy sentences, phrases or even striking expressions without acknowledgment of the source (either by inadequate citation or failure to indicate verbatim quotations), is plagiarism; to paraphrase without acknowledgment is likewise plagiarism. Where such copying or paraphrase has occurred the mere mention of the source in the bibliography shall not be deemed sufficient acknowledgment; each such instance must be referred specifically to its source. Verbatim quotations must be either in inverted commas, or indented, and directly acknowledged."
Students should familiarize themselves with this information, so that what is and is not acceptable is clearly understood.

Readings [E1, E3 & E4]:

Week 1

Ch1. And Ch. 3. Zittrain, Jonathan. 2008. The Future of the Internet – And How to Stop It[RS1]. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press [can be downloaded for free online at http://futureoftheinternet.org/download

Week 2

Excerpts to be decided. W. Lance Bennett. 2012. News: The Politics of Illusion[RS2], 8th edition. New York: Longman Publishing.

Video:

How Facebook Changed the World: Arab Spring Part - 1, [RS3]BBC Documentary. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7WNd-Zm0K9A

Week 3

Ch. 3 and Ch. 4. Shirky, C. (2008). Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations[RS4], Penguin Books: New York.

Video:
Journalism: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (HBO), Published August 07th, 2016, Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bq2_wSsDwkQ

Week 4

Ch. 3 and Ch. 5. Sunstein, Cass. 2007. Republic.com 2.0[RS5]. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Week 5

Ch. 2. Phillips, Whitney. 2015. This Is Why We Can't Have Nice Things: Mapping the Relationship between Online Trolling and Mainstream Culture. [RS6]MIT Press: Cambridge.

Week 6

Ch. 2 and Ch. 5. Taylor, Astra. 2014. The People's Platform: Taking Back Power and Culture in the Digital Age. [RS7]

Class simulation: collectively envisioning a future with an alternative business model. How will they think of internet users as citizens and not as paid or unpaid digital laborers?

Week 7

Ch. 1, Ch. 4 and Ch. 5. Mossberger, Karen. Tolbert, Caroline. And McNeal, Ramona. 2007. Digital Citizenship: The Internet, Society, and Participation. [RS8]MIT Press: Cambridge.

Week 8

Ch.1 and Ch. 6. Han, Sam., and Mohamed Nasir, Kamaludeen. 2016. *Digital Culture and Religion in Asia.* Routledge: New York.

Week 9

Roth, Lorna., Ch. 16. 'Reflections on the Colour of the Internet', and Sottas, Eric. And Schonveld, Ben. Ch. 8 'Information Overload: How increased flows affect the work of the Human rights movement'[RS9] in 2000. Hick, Steven. Halpin, Edward. and Hoskins, Eric. (Eds). *Human Rights and the Internet.* Macmillan Press Ltd: London.