Media, Politics and Power in the Digital Age
DPI-659 Fall 2016 Syllabus

Class time: MW 1:15-2:30pm
Class location: Land Hall, 4th Floor Belfer Center

Last updated 26 Aug 2016
Please note that this syllabus is a DRAFT and is subject to change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Course Assistants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nicco Mele</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<td>Taubman 268</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant: Sarah Daniel</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sarah_Daniel@hks.harvard.edu">Sarah_Daniel@hks.harvard.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>OFFICE HOURS: Visit <a href="http://nicco.org/hours/">http://nicco.org/hours/</a> to book an appointment on Monday or Wednesday between 3:00 and 5:00pm (15-minute slots)</td>
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Class Description
From Obama's use of the Internet to drive his presidential campaign victory to the upheaval of the Arab Spring, digital technology is challenging and changing established institutions on a number of fronts. This course introduces students to the history of the Internet and the emerging technologies that are defining the Digital Age with an emphasis on the role of technology in political and advocacy campaigns. The course will cover a wide range of issues related to technology's impact on political campaigns and political advocacy including: persuasion in political campaigns using digital media; media coverage and social networks in political campaigns; online fundraising in political campaigns; data collection and data targeting in voter turn-out. We will be reviewing in detail the role of technology in the 2008, 2012, and 2016 US Presidential elections.

Class Goals
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 foundational digital comprehension and a digital toolkit that will enable students to use and apply their digital knowledge in their professional and personal lives.

Teaching Philosophy
To understand the Digital Age, you need to live it. In addition to the assigned readings, students will be expected to use the online tools that are discussed. Only by participating in the online digital culture can students begin to understand the changing nature of the media landscape and glimpse the future.
1. Deliverables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Grading %</th>
<th>How to submit</th>
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| Blog Posts            | Blog Post 1 due 09/12/16  
Blog Post 2 due 09/26/16  
Blog Post 3 due 10/03/16  
Blog Post 4 due 10/17/16  
Blog Post 5 due 11/9/16   
Blog Post 6 due 11/21/16  
Blog Post 7 due 11/28/16  | 20%       | On your own blog that you will set up             |
| Class Participation   | Throughout semester                                                      | 15%       | In-class and on your Twitter account              |
| Digital Comprehension | 10/05/16                                                                 | 20%       | In-class                                         |
| Test                  |                                                                           |           |                                                  |
| Digital Tool Kit      | Throughout semester  
(10 individual tasks)                                                     | 10%       | CA’s will survey you for your usernames etc.      |
| Final Major Deliverable | 12/14/16                                                             | 35%       | Via email                                        |

No hardcopy of deliverables are to be submitted and are due at 11.59pm by the due date. Any request for an extension needs to be directed to Professor Mele and/or CA’s.

**Blog Posts (20%)**

You will be required to write six blog posts throughout the semester.

- Four blog posts will review the readings for that week, covering 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.
- One blog post will be a review of an existing Wikipedia article.
- One blog post will be an outline of your final major deliverable.

Each blog post must be a minimum of 500 words and a maximum of 750 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. Each blog post should also link to another outside permalink (preferably on another blog) as part of your response.

The blog posts will be marked on a check / check plus / check minus basis.

Additional guidance and details will be provided in class and on the class page in Canvas ([https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/18871](https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/18871)).
Class Participation (15%)
There are three components of class participation:

- Attendance in class
- Class discussion: Each week you will be expected to participate in a rigorous classroom discussion of the key concepts and readings.
- Twitter: You will be expected to Tweet two articles or blog posts a week on a digital topic of interest to you or the class, and as we move closer to the end of the semester you should also think about issues related to your final paper. Alternatively if you are at a digital related event at HKS, Harvard, MIT etc., you can also Tweet salient quotes or issues raised at the event. Your Tweets should be tagged using the class #hashtag (#mppdigital), to ensure you receive credit. Interesting and relevant Tweets on the #mppdigital feed will be discussed at the beginning of each class.

Digital Comprehension Test (20%)
In Class 10 there will be a test assessing comprehension of the material being covered. The test will include a mix of multiple choice and short answer and will be aimed primarily at vocabulary and key foundational concepts from class and the readings. The test will take the entire class, with no other material being covered that day.

Additional guidance and details will be provided in class and on the class page.

Digital Tool Kit (10%)
In order to build a robust digital tool kit, you will be assigned various online activities throughout the semester, including:

1. Create a LinkedIn account
2. Join the DPI659 Google Group
3. Create a Twitter account
4. Create a bit.ly account
5. Buy your own URL
6. Set up your own blog
7. Establish a Google Group
8. Roll out a Google AdWords campaign
9. Create a Wikipedia account
10. Create a Storify account

Additional guidance and details will be provided in class and on the class page.

Major Final Deliverable (35%)
You are to complete either a:

- Research paper, OR
- Online strategy document, OR
- Make a significant contribution to Wikipedia

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 12 to 15 pages long, double-spaced and be cited using the APA format.
**Online Strategy Document**: Tying together the concepts from the class, develop an online strategy document for a real or hypothetical client. Many students have specific organizations they are involved with that can serve as clients. Therefore, this assignment can be a vehicle for exploring the topics of the class in relationship to an existing organization. The online strategy document should be 12 to 15 pages long, double spaced, and formatted in the POST format, as outlined by John Bernoff (co-author of The Groundswell):

- **P** is People. Don’t start a social strategy until you know the capabilities of your audience.
- **O** is objectives. Pick one. Decide on your objective before you decide on a technology. Then figure out how you will measure it.
- **S** is Strategy. Strategy here means figuring out what will be different after you’re done. Imagine the endpoint and you’ll know where to begin.
- **T** is Technology. Once you know your people, objectives, and strategy, then you can decide with confidence.

**Make a significant contribution to Wikipedia**: Choose a policy area you have expertise in, engage with the Wikipedia community and make a significant contribution of at least 3,000 words. A major part of the deliverable is to use the article talk page and other forums on Wikipedia to ensure the contribution is meaningful, enduring and in line with the norms in the community.

**Grading**: Regardless of your choice of final deliverable, 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: http://mediapoliticspower.com

2. **Readings and Books**

The readings are detailed on the class schedule. The readings fall into four major buckets:

- Excerpts from books and HBS case studies are available online through Canvas
- Web articles, blog posts, YouTube videos available online (see the links in the syllabus, also on the class website)
- Five books that you should purchase (available from the Coop or Amazon. Amazon has both new and used options):

3. **Class Logistics**

**Class Website**
The class page is located through Canvas, at [https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/18871](https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/18871).

It will be updated each week (for information relating to the next week), by 11:59pm each Friday with any relevant details for the following week.
Questions
If you do have a question for Nicco or the CAs on any issue, big or small, content or technical related – just email nicco_mele@hks.harvard.edu or within the Canvas messaging system and you will be answered as soon as possible. Usually it will be in a few minutes/hours, with a maximum of 24 hours.

Grading
You will be updated on your grades throughout the semester, which will allow you to both track your performance and ensure you have completed all the deliverables.

HKS and Harvard events related to Media, Politics and Power in the Digital Age
Throughout the semester there will be a number of practitioners, thought leaders and academics that will speak at events on issues related to the class. While it is optional you are encouraged to attend and highlight takeaways from these events in class discussion, in your blog post and final papers. The events will be announced in class.

Mid Semester Feedback
Mid semester all students will be asked for feedback on the class in order to make any improvements. The results will be shared with all student and recommendations implemented.

URL purchase and Blog creation
Students can use any domain registry or blogging platform they wish, and can use a URL and/or a Blog that they have already established. For those who do not have a URL we can recommend www.godaddy.com or www.namecheap.com, as cheap and user friendly domain registrars. For a blogging platform, previously students have overwhelmingly used www.wordpress.com, which they have found easy to use and customize. Wordpress.com also allows you to buy your URL through them.

4. Class Schedule, Readings and Deliverables

Week 1 (Shopping) Monday 29 August 2016
Shopping Day
• No readings
• No deliverables

(Class 1) Wednesday 31 August 2016
History of the Internet and The Groundswell
Readings
• BOOK: Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations, by Shirky (Chapters 1)
• OPTIONAL BOOK: (for those with no blogging experience either as a blogger or as a consumer of blogs) “Essential Blogging” by Doctorow et al (Chapter 1 only) http://bit.ly/Q0Yf1b

Deliverables
• Digital Tool Kit 1: Set up a LinkedIn account and connect with Nicco Mele
• Digital Tool Kit 2: Set up a Twitter account, class hashtag is #mppdigital
• Digital Tool Kit 3: Set up a bit.ly account
• Additional guidance will be provided in class and on the class page

Week 2
Monday 5 September 2016
NO CLASS – LABOR DAY

(Class 2) Wednesday 7 September 2016
DNS - Servers – ICANN - Security

Readings
- **BOOK:** The Groundswell, by Li and Bernoff (Chapters 1, “Why the Government and Why Now?” and 3, “The Social Technographics Profile”) [http://a.nicco.org/2bL5ZDO](http://a.nicco.org/2bL5ZDO)
- **ARTICLE:** “World War 3.0” by Gross in Vanity Fair [http://vnty.fr/NPcP9U](http://vnty.fr/NPcP9U)
- **BOOK:** Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations, by Shirky (Chapters 2, 3 and 4)

Deliverables
- Digital Tool Kit 5: Buy URL
- Digital Tool Kit 6: Set up your blog
- Additional guidance will be provided in class and on the class page

Week 3

(Class 3) Monday 12 September 2016
Web 2.0 - APIs

Readings
- **BLOG:** “What Is Web 2.0” by O’Reilly on his Blog. [http://a.nicco.org/2bgqZ4C](http://a.nicco.org/2bgqZ4C)
- **BOOK:** Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations, by Shirky (Chapters 5 and 6)

Deliverables
- Blog Post 1: Shirky / Web 2.0

(Class 4) Wednesday 14 September 2016
Google Search

Readings
- **BOOK:** Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations, by Shirky (Chapters 7, 8)

Deliverables
- Digital Tool Kit 7: Set up your own Google Group
- Additional guidance will be provided in class and on the class page

Week 4

(Class 5) Monday 19 September 2016
Google SEO

Readings
• **BOOK:** Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations, by Shirky (Chapters 9, 10, 11)

**Deliverables**
- Digital Tool Kit 8: Roll out your Google AdWord campaign
- Additional guidance will be provided in class and on the class page

(Class 6) **Wednesday 21 September 2016**

**Social Networking**

**Readings**
- **BOOK:** Net Smart: How to Thrive Online, by Rheingold (Chapter 5, “Social Has a Shape: Why Networks Matter”) [http://a.nicco.org/2bsIMJ6](http://a.nicco.org/2bsIMJ6)
- **BOOK:** Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives, by Christakis and Fowler. (Chapter 8, “Hyperconnected”) [http://a.nicco.org/2bzdVfo](http://a.nicco.org/2bzdVfo)

**Deliverables**
- No deliverables

**Week 5**

(Class 7) **Monday 26 September 2016**

**Privacy and The Filter Bubble**

**Readings**
- **ARTICLE:** “Are we stuck in filter bubbles? Here are five potential paths out” by Stray in Neiman Journalism Lab. [http://bit.ly/Qq6gza](http://bit.ly/Qq6gza)
- **ARTICLE:** Everything You Need to Know about Net Neutrality. Timothy Lee, Vox. May 2014.
- **ARTICLE:** Cut that Link: The European Court of Justice forces Google to Remove Links to Some Personal Information by The Economist. May 2014.

**Deliverables**
- Blog Post 2: Social Networking, Net Neutrality and The Filter Bubble

(Class 8) **Wednesday 28 September 2016 – GUEST LECTURER**

**Open-Source**

**Readings**
- **VIDEO:** “How the Internet will (one day) transform government,” by Shirky. Ted Talk. [http://bit.ly/1qBqRiG](http://bit.ly/1qBqRiG)

**Deliverables**
- Digital Tool Kit 9: Create your own Wikipedia account
- Additional guidance will be provided in class and on the class page

**Week 6**

(Class 9) **Monday 3 October 2016**

**Wikipedia**
Readings

- **BOOK:** The Wikipedia Revolution: How a Bunch of Nobodies Created the World’s Greatest Encyclopedia, by Lih. (Chapters 5, 7 and 8)

Deliverables

- Blog Post 3: Evaluation of a Wikipedia entry of your choice (include your Wikipedia account name in the post)

(Class 10) Wednesday 5 October 2016

In-Class Digital Comprehension Test

Readings

- No readings

Deliverables

- No deliverables

Week 7

Monday 10 October 2016

NO CLASS – COLUMBUS DAY

(Class 11) Wednesday 12 October 2016

Press: Production and Consumption of News

Readings


Deliverables

- Digital Tool Kit 10: Create a Storify account and a social media story

Week 8

(Class 12) Monday 17 October 2016

Press: Business of News

Readings

- **BLOG:** “Newspapers and Thinking the Unthinkable,” by Shirky on his Blog http://bit.ly/MemDgH.
- **BLOG:** “Readings from news execs,” by Winer on his Blog. http://bit.ly/M2G1as
- **ARTICLE:** “Confidence Game - The limited vision of the news gurus” by Starkman in Colombia Journalism Review. http://bit.ly/NPfBw0

Deliverables

- Blog Post 4: Press (Business Models / Production and Consumption of News)
Week 9
(Class 14) Monday 24 October 2016
Online Politics and Advocacy
Reading
- **BOOK**: The MoveOn Effect by David Karpf, (Prologue - Chapter 2 (pages xi to 51))

**Deliverables**
- No deliverables

Week 10
(Class 15) Wednesday 26 October 2016
Online Fundraising
Reading
- **BOOK**: The MoveOn Effect by David Karpf, (Chapter 3 – 4, pages 52 to 101)

**Deliverables**
- No deliverables


Deliverables
• No deliverables

(Class 17) Wednesday 2 November 2016
Politics: Persuasion 1
Readings
• REPORT: “Did Twitter Kill the Boys on the Bus: Searching for a Better Way to Cover a Campaign,” by Hamby.

Deliverables
• No deliverables

Week 11
(Class 18) Monday 7 November 2016
Politics: Persuasion 2
Readings
• BOOK: The Victory Lab by Sasha Issenberg, Prologue – Chapter 4 (pages 1 to 106).

Deliverables
• No deliverables

(Class 19) Wednesday 9 November 2016
Politics: GOTV
Readings
• HBS CASE: “Barack Obama: Organizing for America 2.0,” by Piskorski and Winig
• BOOK: The Victory Lab by Sasha Issenberg, Chapter 5 – Epilogue (pages 107 to 322).

Deliverables
• Blog Post 5: Politics (Persuasion / GOTV)

Week 12
(Class 20) Monday 14 November 2016
Review of 2012 Campaign
Readings

- ARTICLE: “Inside the Cave” PDF from Engage Research - http://enga.ge/dl/Inside_the_Cave.pdf

Deliverables

- No deliverables

(Class 21) Wednesday 16 November 2016

HKS Case Study: Social Media and the Planned Parenthood / Susan G. Komen for the Cure Controversy

Reading
http://a.nicco.org/2bBoXyp

Deliverables

- No deliverables

Week 13

(Class 22) Monday 21 November 2016

Politics: The Arab Spring

Readings

- BOOK: Revolution 2.0, by Wael Ghonim. (Chapters 3, 4, 5)
- BOOK: The Net Delusion: The Dark Side of Internet Freedom, by Morozov. (Afterword only)
Deliverables
- Blog Post 6: Politics (The Arab Spring, Press & Privacy)

Wednesday 23 November 2016
NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING RECESS

Week 14
(Class 23) Monday 28 November 2016
Press & Privacy: WikiLeaks, the NSA and Edward Snowden

Readings
- BOOK: No Place to Hide, by Glenn Greenwald. (Introduction and Chapter 3)
- BOOK: Consent of the Networked: The Worldwide Struggle For Internet Freedom, by MacKinnon. (Chapter 5)
- ARTICLE: “The Ecuadorian Library” by Bruce Sterling http://a.nicco.org/bsterling
- OPTIONAL BOOK: No Place to Hide, by Glenn Greenwald. (Complete text)

Deliverables
- Blog Post 7: Outline of your final major deliverable
- Additional guidance will be provided in class and on the class page

(Class 24) Wednesday 30 November 2016
Skills: Technical Project Management

Readings

Deliverables
- No deliverables – work on your final deliverable!

Final Deliverable Due: 14 December 2016
Final Grades Due: 6 January 2017