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| <b>Identification</b>                          | <b>Subject (code, title, credits)</b>   | <b>PSIR 205: Political Communication</b><br>3 ECTS credits                       |
|  | <b>Department</b>   | Department of Political Science and Philosophy                                   |
|  | <b>Level</b>  | Undergraduate  |
|  | <b>Term</b>   | Fall 2024  |
|  | <b>Instructor</b>   | Kaklik Karimli   |
|  | <b>E-mail:</b>  | kaklik.karimli@khazar.org<br>kaklik.karimli@gmail.com                            |
|  | <b>Classroom/hours</b>  | 11 Mehseti str. (Neftchilar campus), Room YTO<br>Friday 11.50-13.20; 13.40-15.10 |
|  | <b>Office hours</b>   | Saturdays 14:00 (by appointment)   |
| <b>Prerequisites</b>                           | None  |  |
| <b>Language</b>                                | English   |  |
| <b>Compulsory/Elective</b>                     | Compulsory  |  |
| <b>Required textbooks and course materials</b> | <p>McNair, B. (2017). <i>An introduction to political communication</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Norris, P. (2000). <i>A virtuous circle: Political communications in postindustrial societies</i>. Cambridge University Press.</p> <p><b>All reading materials will be available at the shared Google Drive folder.</b></p>  |  |
| <b>Course outline</b>                          | <p>This course examines the relationship between the media, politics and the public. It is my goal to introduce you to the core concepts that will help you bridge your field of study from the perspective of communication and media in this interdisciplinary field. Topics to be covered include the history of the mass media, recent trends in the media, theories of media effects, the implications for politics of changes in media (e.g., the rise of the Internet and social media), the ways in which the news shapes the public's perceptions of the political world, campaign communication, the influence of the media on public policy, and the general role of the media in the political process.</p> |  |
| <b>Course objectives</b>                       | <p>By the end of this course, it is my goal that you will accomplish the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase the theoretical and practical understanding of the relationships between media and politics.</li> <li>- Improve the media literacy skills and become more critical consumers of political contents and discourse.</li> </ul>  |  |
| <b>Learning outcomes</b>                       | <p>By the end of this course, you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify and explain key concepts in political communication and apply that knowledge to communicative situations occurring in the public sphere;</li> <li>- Recognize, define, and analyze how political content shape individual perception and public understanding;</li> </ul>  |  |

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|                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compare the persuasiveness of political actions, and evaluate and differentiate the bias in political consumerism.</li> <li>- Develop technical and soft skills by exercising group and individual projects.</li> </ul>  |   |                       |
| <b>Evaluation</b> | <b>Methods</b>  | <b>Date/deadlines</b>   | <b>Percentage (%)</b> |
|                   | <b>Midterm evaluation</b>   | To be determined by the Dean's Office   | 25%                   |
|                   | <b>Attendance</b>   |   | 5%                    |
|                   | <b>Active participation in debate and group discussions</b>   |   | 10%                   |
|                   | <b>Two Assignments</b>  | Assignment 1. Fact-checking (10%)<br><br>Assignment 2. Hate speech analysis (10%) | 20%                   |
|                   | <b>Quiz</b>   | -   | -                     |
|                   | <b>Final exam</b>   | To be determined by the Dean's Office   | 40%                   |
|                   | <b>Total</b>  |   | 100%                  |
| <b>Policy</b>     | <p><b>Course requirements:</b></p> <p>Attendance at lectures and seminars, active and meaningful participation in conducted sessions, reading of assigned materials before class meetings are the main requirements for this class. The final grade will be based on attendance (5%), active participation in debate and group discussions (10%), two assignments (10% each), midterm exam (25%) and final exam (40%). Reading materials will be available in Google Drive.</p> <p><b>Assignment 1. Fact-checking</b> – This assignment involves conducting thorough verification of information presented in various media outlets, including news articles, social media posts, blogs, and other online content. The objective is to assess the accuracy and reliability of facts, statistics, and statements shared with the public. As part of this task, you will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify potential misinformation, biased reporting, or manipulated data.</li> <li>• Cross-reference sources and validate claims by consulting credible and authoritative references.</li> <li>• Evaluate the context and presentation of the information to ensure it is not misleading or taken out of context.</li> </ul> |   |                       |

- Compile a report that highlights discrepancies, corrections, and validated facts, providing evidence and source citations.

*The guideline will be provided.*

**Assignment 2. Hate speech analysis** – This assignment focuses on identifying, analyzing, and addressing instances of hate speech in various media outlets, social media platforms, and other public communication channels. The aim is to understand the forms, targets, and effects of hate speech while exploring strategies to mitigate its impact. You will be required to:

- Collect examples of hate speech from selected media or online platforms.
- Analyze the language, context, and intent behind the speech, identifying the key groups or individuals targeted.
- Evaluate the social, political, and cultural consequences of the speech, considering both the immediate and long-term impacts on the targeted community and the general public.

*The guideline will be provided.*

**Attendance** – Attendance is mandatory in this class. Excuse for absence should be informed a day before the class. Unexcused absences will result in deductions of participation points (2 absences equal to and lead to 1-point deduction out of 5 overall attendance points). Missing 30% (nine) or more class meetings without a valid excuse (health issue or family emergency) will automatically end up getting “F” for this course. More than mere attendance, students are expected to actively participate in the classes, ask and answer questions in the course of our discussions.

**Office Hours** - I will hold regular office hours (see above) during which I encourage you to contact me to discuss course-related matters. If your schedule does not permit contacting me during the formal office hours, please let me know and I will attempt to arrange an alternative time by appointment. Please do take advantage of this resource to ask questions or clarification, seek additional information, and so forth. It is my job to make sure that you have every opportunity to learn the course material, and I will make every effort to do so. However, it is also incumbent upon you to seek help when you think you need it. If you do not seek input when your grades indicate you need it, there is little I can do to help you.

**Student Use of Technology in the Classroom** - Although I believe the use of laptops or phones can be used for productive purposes in class, they primarily serve as distractions – both to those who use them, and those nearby. Usage of devices in a responsible manner is acceptable, however

usage of the device in a manner that is distracting to others (using email or social media, watching movies, playing games) will not be acceptable.

**Tentative Schedule**

| <b>Date/Day</b><br>(subject to change if necessary, on holidays) | <b>Topics</b>  | <b>Readings</b>   |
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| <b>Week 1</b>  | Introduction to the course                             | <p>McNair, "Introduction to Political Communication", read pp. 3-15.</p> <p>Gisela Gonçalves, Political Communication, read pp 1-8.</p> <p>Brian McNair, The media as political actors, read pp. 289-303.</p> <p><i>Recommended film:</i> All the President's Men (1976). Through investigative journalism, two Washington Post reporters uncover the Watergate affair and bring down President Nixon's men.</p>  |
| <b>Week 2</b>  | Media effect: The influence of Media on Public opinion | Graber and Dunaway, Chapter 11, "Media Influence on Attitudes and Behavior," pp. 485-514.   |
| <b>Week 3</b>  | Media effect: Agenda setting theory                    | Iyengar, S., & McGrady, J. (2007). <i>Media politics: A citizen's guide</i> . New York: ww Norton, read pp. 254-273.  |
| <b>Week 4</b>  | Political Communication in Digital Age                 | <p>Ralph Schroeder, Book Title: Social Theory after the Internet, Ch. <i>Media systems, digital media and politics</i>, 2.5 Digital media and politics in China and India, READ pp.51-59</p> <p>Gil de Zúñiga, H., &amp; Chen, H. T. (2019). Digital media and politics: Effects of the great information and communication divides. <i>Journal of Broadcasting &amp; Electronic Media</i>, 63(3), READ 365-368.</p> <p><i>Recommended, not mandatory:</i></p> <p>Tufecki, Z. &amp; Wilson, C. (2012). Social media and the decision to participate in political protest: Observations from Tahrir Square. <i>Journal of Communication</i>, 62(2), 363-379.</p> |

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| <b>Week 5</b> | Populism and the Media   | Ch.2. A short history of different populisms, read pp.36-48.<br>Ch.4. Populism and the Media, read pp.66-81.   |
| <b>Week 6</b> | Propaganda<br><br>Assignment: Fact checking of the Media Content | Smith, B. Lannes (2021, January 24). propaganda. Encyclopedia Britannica. <a href="https://www.britannica.com/topic/propaganda">https://www.britannica.com/topic/propaganda</a><br><br>Sproule, J. M. (2001). Authorship and origins of the seven propaganda devices: A research note. <i>Rhetoric &amp; Public Affairs</i> , 4(1), 135-143.<br><br>Woolley, S. C., & Howard, P. (2017). Computational propaganda worldwide: Executive summary.<br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction: Computational Propaganda Worldwide</li> <li>• Russia: The Origins of Digital Misinformation</li> </ul><br>Additional recommended website to visit, and related paper to read:<br><a href="https://www.infowars.com">https://www.infowars.com</a> |
| <b>Week 7</b> | Misinformation and Disinformation                                | Carme C, Héctor S.M, & Richard Y., <i>The impact of disinformation on democratic process and human rights in the world</i> , pp. 2-8.<br><br>Journalism, “Fake news”& Disinformation, <i>Module 2</i> , pp.45-52.<br><br>Additional recommended readings:<br><br>Freelon, D., & Wells, C. (2020). Disinformation as political communication. <i>Political Communication</i> , 37(2), 145-156.<br><br>Dean Jackson, <i>Issue Brief: Distinguishing Disinformation From Propaganda, Misinformation, And “Fake News”</i> , International Forum for Democratic Studies.  |
| <b>Week 8</b> | Mid-term Exams   |  |

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| <p><b>Week 9</b></p>  | <p>Political Public Relations</p> <p><b>Assignment 1. Fact-checking</b></p> | <p>Kiousis, S., &amp; Strömbäck, J. (2014). 13 Political public relations. <i>Political communication</i>, 249-262.</p> <p>McNair, Introduction to Political Communication, Brief history of Political Public Relations, read pp. 118-123.</p>   |
| <p><b>Week 10</b></p> | <p>Political Advertising and Campaign</p>                                   | <p>McNair, “Introduction to Political Communication”, READ pp. 85-99.</p> <p>Kaid, L. L., &amp; Holtz-Bacha, C. (Eds.) (2006). <i>The SAGE Handbook of Political Advertising</i>. SAGE Publications.</p> <p>Paletz, D. L., Owen, D. M., &amp; Cook, T. E. (2013). <i>American government and politics in the information age</i>. Flat World Knowledge. Ch. <u>11.2 Media and Election Campaigns</u>.<br/> <a href="https://saylordotorg.github.io/text_american-government-and-politics-in-the-information-age/s15-02-media-and-election-campaigns.html">https://saylordotorg.github.io/text_american-government-and-politics-in-the-information-age/s15-02-media-and-election-campaigns.html</a><br/> Political Advertising Archives:<br/> <a href="http://www.livingroomcandidate.org">http://www.livingroomcandidate.org</a></p>   |
| <p><b>Week 11</b></p> | <p>Political rhetoric and Hate speech</p>                                   | <p>Political Rhetoric: 5. The Three Means of Persuasion:<br/> <a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-rhetoric/#DefiRhet">https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-rhetoric/#DefiRhet</a></p> <p>Classifying and Identifying the Intensity of Hate Speech:<br/> <a href="https://items.ssrc.org/disinformation-democracy-and-conflict-prevention/classifying-and-identifying-the-intensity-of-hate-speech/">https://items.ssrc.org/disinformation-democracy-and-conflict-prevention/classifying-and-identifying-the-intensity-of-hate-speech/</a></p> <p>How hateful rhetoric connects to real-world violence:<br/> <a href="https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-hateful-rhetoric-connects-to-real-world-violence/">https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-hateful-rhetoric-connects-to-real-world-violence/</a></p> <p>Additional recommended reading:</p> |

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|                |   | Chapter 1. What is Hate Speech?:<br><a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hate-speech/">https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hate-speech/</a>  |
| <b>Week 12</b> | The Impact of Regime Type on Media<br><br><b>Assignment 1. Hate speech analysis</b> | Chalaby, Jean K.: Public Communication in Totalitarian, Authoritarian and Statist Regimes: A Comparative Glance. In: Kirill Postoutenko (Hg.): Totalitarian Communication – Hierarchies, Codes and Messages. Bielefeld: transcript 2010, S. 67–89. DOI:<br><a href="https://doi.org/10.25969/mediarep/12402">https://doi.org/10.25969/mediarep/12402</a> .<br><br>The misuse of social media platforms and other communication channels by authoritarian regimes: Lessons learned, 3.3 Russia’s interventions in Georgia, pp.33-39.<br><a href="https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2021/653658/EXPO_IDA(2021)653658_EN.pdf">https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2021/653658/EXPO_IDA(2021)653658_EN.pdf</a> |
| <b>Week 13</b> | Ownership of Media Organizations  | McCluskey & Swinnen, 'Media Economics and the Political Economy of Information', in The Oxford Handbook of Business and Government (2010), READ pp.643-653.<br><a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199214273.003.0029">https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199214273.003.0029</a><br><br>Freedom House (2015) “Freedom of the Press 2015”   |
| <b>Week 14</b> | Gender and Political Communication  | Council of Europe study, Study on media coverage of elections with a specific focus on gender equality, READ pp.11-21.<br><br>Gender, Media and Elections:<br><a href="https://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/me/default">https://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/me/default</a><br><br>Additional:<br><br>Gendered Bodies: Considering the Sexual in Political Communication, Jimmie Manning Cady Short-Thompson, READ, pp.251-267<br><br>Gender and media:<br><a href="https://gsdrc.org/topic-guides/gender/gender-and-media/">https://gsdrc.org/topic-guides/gender/gender-and-media/</a>   |
| <b>Week 15</b> |   | Will be decided on group discussion  |

