

## Syllabus

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**Instructor:** Dr. Colleen McEdwards, Ph.D., Anchor/Correspondent CNN International.

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[http://edition.cnn.com/CNN/anchors\\_reporters/mcedwards.colleen.html](http://edition.cnn.com/CNN/anchors_reporters/mcedwards.colleen.html)

Office: TBA

**Office Hours:** Thursdays 5-6 pm and by appointment.

**Class Meets: Thursdays, 6:05-8:55 pm**

**Whenever there is a question about when assignments are due, please remember this syllabus is considered the ruling document. Some items will change with advanced warning pending availability of guest speakers and multi-media content.**

### **GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION**

In a short period of time, social media has changed global politics. The widespread use of social media technology has led to new types of interactions and expectations as people maintain relationships and communicate in different ways than in any time in history. People who were once history's audience are now its organizers, content creators, challengers, rebels, and leaders. This course explores the implications of social media in a global context, including its impact on journalism, government, public relations, and revolution. Each week learners will investigate specific themes in the context of recent global political events. Particular attention will be paid to the interactions between users of social media, online communities, journalists, thought-leaders, and political players. This experiential course format requires you to attend class with an open mind, prepared to observe everything from current films, to guest lecturers, to student-generated presentations. Come prepared to discuss and to collaborate in the learning process. Students will develop and hone the skills necessary to produce rigorous research on new and emerging media in a global political context.

### **GRADING:**

The main components of this course will be classroom discussions, a team presentation, a draft of a final paper, and a final paper.

Participation: 30% of final grade. Discussion is fundamental to this class and learners will be evaluated accordingly. Attendance counts. Blog/discussion postings count. In class writing assignments count.

Written Submissions (40% total): 10% of final grade. Draft/outline of a short research paper. The topic of your paper will be approved by your instructor. The draft/outline will be due mid-term.  
30% of final grade. Final paper. Using feedback from your draft/outline students will submit a final paper due towards the end of term.

Group Presentation: 30% of final grade. Within the first two weeks of the course you will be divided into small groups to prepare presentations. Presentations will be delivered throughout the course. A schedule will be set and posted early in the course. Presentations might include an interview of a recognized thought leader or social media entrepreneur, analysis of course readings, analysis of global media events in the context of social media demonstrating critically informed arguments and academic research, and will include visual and discussion components. Topics will be pre-approved early in the course timeline.

**REQUIRED READING:** Students are required to read all materials. Many will be accessible online. Videos are also considered required reading for this course. Two textbooks are required for purchase:

**Citizen Journalism, Global Perspectives. Stuart Allan and Einar Thorsen (Eds). NY: Peter Lang, 2009.**

**Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations. Clay Shirky, Penguin Press, 2008.**

### ***Classroom Expectations***

Learners must complete all readings for each class. Attendance is required and participation counts. Late arrivals or habitual lack of participation in discussions will affect grades. During class, cellular phones must be off. Regular breaks will be scheduled so learners will know in advance when time will be available to check electronic devices. Laptops may be used in class for taking notes and accessing social media relevant to the lecture. Learners must complete all

required work to receive a grade for the course. Late assignments will be accepted for exactly 30 hours after the due date but will incur a 30% deduction penalty. Assignments submitted more than 30 hours late will not be accepted for grading. Learners must submit work that represents their original words and ideas. If any words or ideas in an assignment submission do not represent a learner's original words or ideas, the learner must cite all relevant sources and make clear the extent to which such sources were used. Georgia Tech's Honor code is in effect for this course.

### ***Course Topics & Objectives***

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#### **Week One Aug 23: Introductory Readings/Syllabus Review- NO CLASS MEETING**

You will receive individual communication from me by e-mail or phone about the course. Class will not meet as I will be out of country this week only.

- Familiarize with course content and requirements.
- Synthesize through assigned readings the introductory concepts of social media's growth, impact on organizations, and impact on global journalism.
- Gain a broad understanding of the major forms of social media and their impact on business, communities, and organizations.

**Readings. Syllabus: E-mail with any questions.**

**Text: Here Comes Everybody (Shirky), Chapters 1 & 2. pp. 1-54.**

#### **Week Two Aug 30: Virtual Communities for Change**

- Introductions/Syllabus questions/Writing assignment schedule/Presentation schedule.
- Required discussion based on week 1 readings.
- Lecture: Virtual Communities and Social Change.

View: Governance 2.0, Banyak films: A video introduction to trends in social media and global communication. <http://watch.usnowfilm.com/>

**Readings. Online: The Harry Potter Alliance:**

<http://blog.commarks.wisc.edu/2011/01/24/harry-potter-takes-fans-from-apaty-to-activism>

<http://frontrow.dmagazine.com/2011/07/how-harry-potter-inspires-social-activism/>

**Malcolm Gladwell:** [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa\\_fact\\_gladwell](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa_fact_gladwell)

### **Week Three Sept 6: Social Media and Revolution**

- Introduction to the Arab Spring, the Orange Revolution and others in the context of social media's impact on political change.
- Multimedia: Nato Review, Political Change, What Social Media Can and Can't do.
- Discussion regarding the role of citizen journalism, Flickr, Twitter, Facebook etc.
- Screening: "Saving Face" viewed in class pending rights acquisition.

#### **Readings:**

**Text: Citizen Journalism, Global Perspectives. Chapters 2, 3 & 4.**

**Online: Social Media, Human Rights, and Political Change by Sarah Joseph**

[http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1856880](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1856880)

### **Week Four Sept 13: Social Media and Revolution Continued**

- Bahrain and Egypt focus.
- In class multimedia: The Muslim Brotherhood in revolutionary context.
- Research paper topic narrowed/discussion

**Readings: Text: Here Comes Everybody, Chapters 5 & 6.**

**Online: <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-moral-molecule/201103/why-social-media-is-driving-political-change-in-the-arab-world>**

### **Week Five Sept 20: Social Media and Revolution Continued**

- Syria and cell phone journalism, blogging.
- In class multimedia: Social media and state violence.
- Cell phone Journalism, 8 Stories, 1 City, 1 World, 1 Cell phone
- Research paper topics submitted for approval

Guest/Skype Speaker: TBA

**Readings: Text: Citizen Journalism, Global Perspectives, Chapters 15 & 18.**

### **Week Six Sept 27: Dream of Freedom**

- In class screening and discussion of Adam Curtis' *The Trap: What happened to Our Dream of Freedom?* Part 1.

Readings: NONE

## **Week Seven Oct 4: Digital Connections/The Wealth of Networks**

- Draft/outline workshop.
- Research paper draft/outline due. Deadline: 9pm, end of this week's class.

**Readings: Text: Here Comes Everybody, Chapters 7 & 8.**

**Online: The Wealth of Networks, A presentation by Yochai Benkler**

<http://www.scribemedialab.org/2007/03/19/yochai-benkler/>

## **Week Eight Oct 11: Social Media and Conflict: Political Activism**

- Team Presentations Begin.
- In class screening and discussion of Adam Curtis' *The Trap: What happened to Our Dream of Freedom?* Part 2.

**Readings: Online: Give Me Rice, But Give Me a Laptop Too**

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/7138061.stm>

**Text: Citizen Journalism, Chapter 12**

## **Week Nine Oct 18: Social Media and Activism Continued**

- Presentations continue
- In class screening and discussion of Adam Curtis' *The Trap: What happened to Our Dream of Freedom?* Part 3.

**Readings: Online: Henry Jenkins, Taking the You out of YouTube?**

[http://www.henryjenkins.org/2006/11/googtube\\_tv\\_20\\_or\\_bubble\\_20.html](http://www.henryjenkins.org/2006/11/googtube_tv_20_or_bubble_20.html)

## **Week Ten Oct 25: Russia's Oligarchy Meets Social Media**

- Presentations continue.
- In class screening and discussion of Cyril Tuschi's Khodorkovsky: How the Richest Man in Russia Became its Most Famous Prisoner.

**Readings: Online: Social Networking, New Governing**

<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0309/19893.html>

**The Age of Big Data:** <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/12/sunday-review/big-datas-impact-in-the-world.html?pagewanted=all>

Guest/Skype Speaker: TBA

### **Week Eleven Nov 1: Social Media and “Free Culture?”**

- Presentations continue

In class screening and discussion of Lawrence Lessig’s Free Culture presentation.

**Readings: Text: Citizen Journalism: Chapter 21  
Here Comes Everybody: Chapters 9 & 10**

### **Week Twelve Nov 8: Social Media and “Free Culture?” Continued**

- Presentations continue
- Screening: Syria, Songs of Defiance

Guest/Skype Speaker: TBA

**Readings: Text: Here Comes Everybody: Chapter 11**

### **Week Thirteen Nov 15: Writing Lab**

- Presentations wrap
- In class writing lab, discussion, review.

Readings: NONE

**NO CLASS November 22’nd Thanksgiving Break**

### **Week Fourteen Nov 29: Tahrir, 2011**

TBA/Presentations completed/Review/Screening of Tahrir, 2011 pending rights acquisition. Filmmaker Tamer Ezzat: TBA

### **Week Fifteen Dec 6: Review and Wrap**

**Final Papers are due at beginning of this week’s class- 6pm.**

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***Key Assignment Dates***

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<b>ASSIGNMENTS</b>
<b><i>Week Two/Three, Aug 30/Sept 6:</i></b>
Learning teams formed in class. Schedule posted for in class presentations.
<b><i>Week Five, Sept 20:</i></b>
Research Topic must be approved by week five.
<b><i>Week Seven, Oct 4::</i></b>
Research paper outline/draft due by 9pm end of class.
<b><i>Week Fifteen, Dec 6: Final research paper due by 6pm.</i></b>

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