Syllabus

Global protest communication - 50058

Last update 03-10-2017

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: communication & journalism

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Christian Baden

Coordinator Email: c.baden@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Wednesday 16-18

Teaching Staff:
Dr. Christian Baden
Course/Module description:

Public communication as a means to mobilize support stands at the beginning of any kind of political change: Both in democracies and in authoritarian systems, new thoughts and political ideas are brought into the debate mostly by activists and dissidents. However, before new ideas can become politically influential, they need to be pushed into the public debate, and gain support throughout society and the political system. This course investigates what are the main challenges that political activists need to address, and how protest takes different forms and employs different strategies and tactics in different countries, cultures, and circumstances. We look at a wide variety of cases around the world, ranging from opposition movements in Socialist and authoritarian countries, over environmental and civil rights protests, to peace movements and protests on behalf of foreign nations. Based on an examination of the successes and failures of different groups, we will develop a deeper understanding for the communicative dynamics of protest communication. Building upon this understanding, we then focus on a selection of specific protest movements around the globe, mapping their specific goals and strategies, challenges and opportunities for achieving political change. In small project groups, we will analyze these movements' activities at communicating their causes toward the media, the public, and political authorities. Bringing together all insights from the different cases, we discuss how different strategies can be applied in different contexts, and review the implications for the viability of effective political protest.

Course/Module aims:

To study the enactment of protest and activist communication in different cultural, political and media contexts around the globe; to understand the challenges that protest communication must meet, the different strategies for rendering protest publicly and politically effective, as well as the influence of the socio-cultural setting upon available avenues for protest; to discuss the specific successes and failures of protest communication strategies and critically evaluate them against the underlying goals.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:
- Define and productively engage the role of protest as a key concept in political communication
- Understand the mechanisms underlying protest communication, as well as the conditions and contextual factors facilitating or obstructing its success in different socio-cultural and political settings around the globe
- Critically evaluate activist and protest communication strategies regarding their ability to meet key challenges and initiate public and political debates
- Apply the analytic perspectives discussed in the class to cases of protest communication
- Provide a political and ethical appraisal of concrete protest communication strategies and understand their roles within a pluralist political debate
- Design small-scale research projects based on the class content

Attendance requirements (%):
85

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: lecture, assignments, class discussion

Course/Module Content:

BLOCK I: BASICS
- 23.10.17 Communicating for political change: Basics
- 30.10.17 Challenges in protest communication I: Attention & Media
- 06.11.17 Challenges in protest communication II: Legitimation & Persuasion
- 13.11.17 Challenges in protest communication III: Mobilizing Supporters

BLOCK II: RESEARCH PROJECT
- 20.11.17 Analyzing protest communication & Selection of case studies
- 27.11.17 Development of a structured approach for the case studies
- 04.12.17 Validation & Getting ready for the field
- 11.12.17 Group consultations during the research process
- 18.12.17 Presentation & discussion of results

Required Reading:


**Additional Reading Material:**
Will be specified in a more detailed syllabus handed out to class registrants.

**Course/Module evaluation:**
End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 40 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 0 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 40 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 20 %
Active Participation
Additional information: