

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School/Department: Social Sciences and Humanities

Programme: MA International Relations
MA Advertising and Public Relations

FHEQ Level: 7

Course Title: Media, Digital Diplomacy and International Organisations

Course Code: INR 7108

Total Hours: 200

Timetabled Hours: 39

Guided Learning Hours: 21

Independent Learning Hours: 140

Credits: 20 UK CATS credits

10 ECTS credits

4 US credits

Course Description:

This course explores the role of the media as an actor in international politics, diplomacy and society. To that end, the course asks whether and how issues of corporate ownership affect the agendas of a variety of media actors. The course will specifically look into the agenda-setting powers of the media in the areas of diplomacy, foreign policy, war and conflict resolution, environmental protection, international development, democracy and global justice campaigns. It will also analyse how states, international organisations, terrorist organisations and actors from the global civil society use and respond to the media through strategies of news management, public and cultural diplomacy, propaganda and censorship. Finally, the course will consider the manner in which journalists and newsmakers gather, produce and disseminate information.

Pre-requisites: N/A

Aims and Objectives:

This course will examine the different ways (if any) whereby the news media influences global politics. With this purpose in mind the course will start by analysing the motivations and agenda-setting power of the media in international affairs and society. To that end, the course will examine theories such as the 'CNN Effect', 'Twitter Effect' and others that claim that global media actors have the capacity to agenda-set issues and influence international affairs from wars, conflict resolution, humanitarian intervention, the politics of climate change,

terrorism and so on. The course will also examine the power of national governments, international organisations, and global civil society to set the news agenda through propaganda, public diplomacy, Twitter diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, and digital public relations. By the end of the course students should be able to have a detailed and nuanced understanding of the effects of the political economy of global media actors, how the media influence public opinion and political actors through agenda-setting, framing and priming; how actors in international politics and society shape and in some instances control the news media agenda.

Programme Outcomes:

On completion of this specific module, successful students will be able to:

MA IR A1, A2, B1, B3, C5 C6, D3, D4, D5

MA APR: B1, B3, B4, C4, C5, D3, D4

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course students should be able to:

- Apply concepts, theories and methods used in the study of the role of the media in international relations.
- Be able to critically assess the role of the media of agenda-setting and framing issues for public opinion consumption.
- Be able to critically analyse the interests, motivations and agendas of the media with regards to international affairs
- Be able to analyse and explain how state actors, international organisations and actors of global civil society can shape and/or control the political agenda through propaganda, news management, public diplomacy, Twitter diplomacy and cultural diplomacy.
- Be able to analyse and explain how the global media frames, primes and agenda-sets the public perception of war, conflict resolution, the politics of climate change, protest and dissent
- Be able to gather, organise and deploy evidence, data and information from a variety of secondary and some primary sources so as to synthesise information in an innovative and critical manner.
- Demonstrate a level of conceptual understanding and an ability to construct a reasoned argument, synthesise relevant information and exercise critical judgment.
- Demonstrate an ability to challenge accepted orthodoxy on the basis of new or re-interpreted evidence or new conceptual approaches.
- Undertake research with minimum guidance and become an independent and self-critical learner.
- Work independently, demonstrating initiative, self-organisation and time management; progressing through the programme to become a mature, independent learner.
- Communicate effectively and fluently in speech and writing; engage confidently in academic and professional communication with others, reporting on action clearly, autonomously and competently.

Indicative Content:

- Media ownership
- Theories of agenda-setting, framing and priming
- The ‘CNN Effect’ and humanitarian intervention
- The ‘Twitter Effect’
- The digital practices of social movements
- Public Diplomacy, Cultural diplomacy and Twitter diplomacy
- Peace Journalism and Conflict Resolution
- News management and the PR industry
- International Organisations and Public and Digital Diplomacy
- Cyber-Terrorism
- Social media, democracy and social movements
- The media, the global social justice movement and dissent
- Censorship

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and located at: <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/>

Teaching Methodology:

The course will consist of lectures and discussion led seminars, which will be based on assigned readings and workshops. Students will be expected to participate regularly in discussions, as the formulation of their own thoughts and clarification of their assumptions, often in contradiction to other students’ thoughts and assumptions, form a crucial part of the learning process. The module establishes a framework for intellectual engagement and as a forum in which students can hone their analytical skills in the context of discussion and debate. Although an emphasis will be placed on autonomous learning and study, tutorial opportunities will also be provided for more refined forms of academic support.

Indicative Text(s):

Bennett, Lance W. (2020) *Communicating the Future: Solutions for Environment, Economy and Democracy*, Cambridge: Polity Press

Carah, Nicholas (2021) *Media and Society: Power, Platform and Participation*, Sage Publications.

Castells, Manuel. *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age*, (Polity Press, 2015)

Kreps, Sarah (2020) *Social Media and International Relations*, Cambridge University Press.

Lecheler, Sophie; De Vreese, Claes H. (2018) *News Framing Effects*, Routledge

Wagner, Michael; Perryman, Mallory R (2020) *Mediated Democracy: Politics, the News and Citizenship in the 21st Century*, Sage Publishing.

York, Jillian (2021) *Silicon Values: The Future of Free Speech Under Surveillance Capitalism*, London: Verso.

Journals:

Websites:

See syllabus for complete reading list

Change Log for this CSD:

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or AB)	Change Actioned by Registry Services
Revision – annual update	May 2023	
Total Hours Updated	April 2024	

Which Changes Were Introduced Since The Last Change Was Approved in Spring of 2020:

- The present CSD changed the title of the INR 7121 course from IR and Media to Media, Digital Diplomacy and International Organisations to better reflect the aims of the programme and describe what the course covers content wise.
- The course description was updated to better reflect the programme outcomes of the degree. The earlier course description was:
This course explores the role of the media as an actor in International Relations. To that end, the course asks whether and how issues of corporate ownership affect the agendas of a variety of media actors. The course will specifically look into the agenda-setting powers of the media in the areas of diplomacy, foreign policy, war and conflict resolution, environmental protection, international development and global justice campaigns. It will also analyse how states, international organisations, terrorist organisations and actors from the global civil society use and respond to the media through strategies of news management, public and cultural diplomacy, propaganda and censorship. Finally, the course will consider the manner in which journalists and news-makers gather, produce and disseminate information.

- The indicative content now includes international organisations and public and digital diplomacy
- The Indicative bibliography was updated to include more recent publications.