

DC Semester Program

Spring 2023

Digital Politics

Taught by Professor Elizabeth Losh

Digital communication often sets the agenda in Washington D.C. It drives the news cycle, dominates conversations about culture and civic life, and influences political participation. To explain these fast-moving phenomena, scholars, journalists, and organizations must also use digital media platforms. The course in Digital Journalism teaches valuable communication skills with blogging, podcasting, and video production as exemplary practices that will be useful for future careers that require knowledge of social media. Digital Journalism teaches research skills, citation of sources, and communication with public audiences. The Online Citizenship course raises issues that are relevant for students interested in activism, public service, community organizing, corporate management, or political office.

Washington Program Internship

- *6 credit hours: INTR 499*

Students will work at a wide variety of institutions that deal with the semester topic. Some will work with media outlets that use digital journalism to report on the events of the day, such as Politico, the Hill, Diplomatic Courier, American Prospect, the Pulitzer Center and others. Students may work in the communications office at one of the many organizations in DC that use these techniques to transmit their messages and activities, including US House and Senate personal offices and committees; think tanks like Center for American Progress, AEI, and New America Foundation; public relations firms like Fleishman Hillard or APCO; non-profits like the Smithsonian museums, the American Film Institute, SOS Children's Villages, Center for History and New Media; and governmental entities like the Library of Congress and the National Endowment for the Arts. The associated academic work has three components: a five-minute Ignite-style talk for a public audience, a collaborative web-based project that requires working with other students, and a research paper that includes a prospectus, annotated bibliography, and abstract.

Digital Journalism

- *3-4 credit hours: WRIT 401, tentative cross-listings with AMST and FMST, COLL 300 pending*

This is a hands-on Digital Journalism course in multimedia authoring, online publishing, and digital storytelling. We will also read criticism involving new media journalism. The course will emphasize four themes: • Learning how to report, produce, and edit using blogs, audio, video, photos, animations, and digital maps to tell nonfiction stories. • Discussing emerging themes in digital journalism, such as the role of corporate social media, the rise of "witness journalism," and the use of infographics, digital image alteration software, and news games to expand readership. • Analyzing the legal, economic, professional, and ethical challenges created by publishing news online. • Acquiring the skills for advanced Internet research, including how to use material from news archives, public records databases, private social network sites, and online corporate PR appropriately.

Online Citizenship

- *3-4 credit hours: AMST TBD, tentative cross-listing with GOVT, COLL 300 pending*

This course on online communities and digital activism examines how new media and distributed networks can help or hinder positive civic change. It considers how the campaigns of social movements, online organizations, hashtag activists, independent journalists, fans, and other kinds of digital citizens organize and disseminate ideas to promote political, civil, or human rights. It analyzes the rhetoric of online civility, free speech, and intellectual property as concerns for the digital public sphere. It also shows why governments might want to regulate online behavior and technology companies.