



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2021

8,690: Medien/Media: Digital Citizenship - The Impact of ICTs on Citizen's Political Communication

ECTS credits: 3

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (40%)

Examination time: term time

Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (60%)

Examination time: term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,690,1.00 Medien/Media: Digital Citizenship - The Impact of ICTs on Citizen's Political Communication](#) -- Englisch --
[Freyburg Tina](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

Keine.

Learning objectives

Knowledge & Understanding

During this course successful students will acquire knowledge and understanding of:

1. the key theories trying to understand and explain the effects of the use and dissemination of ICT on political communication and participation of citizens,
2. the most important opportunities and risks of digitisation for democratic processes.

Transferable Skills

After successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. use the theoretical and empirical insights presented during the course to assess and interpret the digital behaviour of citizens,
2. use the theoretical and empirical insights presented during the course to critically assess central studies of the social and political sciences on the course topic,
3. use the theoretical and empirical insights presented during the course when addressing some of the key problems in the field effectively, systematically and independently.

Course content

Our communication is becoming increasingly networked and interactive. The use of internet-based information and communication technologies (ICT) expands the available repertoire for both individuals and political institutions. These new communication possibilities enable what we call "digital citizenship": people in a society with access to digital and networked media (provided by ICT) can exercise their citizenship role with the help of digital technologies.

The role of internet-based information and communication technologies for the political participation of citizens has been a core topic of political communication research for around two decades. Numerous studies examine whether and under which



conditions the optimistic assessment of the mobilizing effect of ICT applies. Most of these studies were conducted in Western democracies and can therefore provide solid insights into the potential of ICT in established democracies. At the same time, they reflect a western-oriented understanding of politics and participation. In contrast, political and cultural contexts such as those found in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) have so far been neglected. In view of the rapid spread of ICT, especially through mobile phones, and its innovative application in everyday life (see e.g. the crowdsourcing platform Ushahidi), regions like SSA are extremely important for our understanding of ICT.

In this seminar we want to (a) ensure the level of knowledge about the effects of ICT on political communication and participation in Western democracies; and (b) identify the contextual factors that are critical to understanding the impact of ICT on political communication outside the OECD world of established democracies.

Course structure

The course is organized in a seminar format and focuses on the introduction and in-depth discussion of the required reading, whereby the active preparation of the texts and the participation of all course participants in the discussion is expected. In each session, a group of students will briefly introduce the texts and supplement / expand the perspective with independently researched material on the topic. Additional input on the respective main topics and further examples are prepared by the lecturer and discussed during the respective session.

The aim is to (a) secure the state of knowledge with regard to the effects of ICT in established democracies for each subject area, and (b) develop concrete expectations with regard to the effects of ICT in SSA.

Das Kontextstudium ist der Form nach **Kontaktstudium**; zum ordnungsgemässen Besuch der Veranstaltung gehört daher die **regelmässige Teilnahme**, ob online oder in Präsenz. Um die an der Universität geltenden Abstands- und Hygieneregeln vollumfänglich einhalten zu können, kann der Kurs online oder in kleinen Gruppen besucht werden. Die Studierenden müssen selbst darauf achten, dass sich Veranstaltungstermine nicht überschneiden. Die genaue Kursplanung und alle Unterlagen werden zu Beginn der Veranstaltung auf **StudyNet** bereitgestellt.

Course literature

The seminar literature will be announced in the first session and made available to students via Canvas. It will be complemented with a broad mix of material, including podcasts, quizzes, and short videos.

Additional course information

Tina Freyburg works as Full Professor for Comparative Politics at the HSG and is currently head of the interdisciplinary master's program International Affairs & Governance. In teaching and research, she represents a modern understanding of comparative political science, which recognises the increasing interconnectedness of politics, economies and societies in a globalised and digitised world. For example, she is currently researching internet shutdowns in Africa, focusing on the role of telecommunications companies. More information can be found at ipw.unisg.ch

In the case of the President's Board having to implement new directives due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic in Spring term 2021, the course information listed above will be changed as follows:

- The course is conducted online via the platform zoom;
- There will be no recordings of the course;
- The lecturer informs via StudyNet on the changed implementation modalities of the course;
- No course content will be cancelled.

The examination information listed below would be changed as follows:

- The group presentations will take the form of audio-recorded presentations. The lecturer will provide guidance;
- There are no changes necessary to the second examination type, i.e. the take-home exam.

Examination information

Examination sub part/s



1. Examination sub part (1/2)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (40%)

Examination time: term time

Remark

--

Examination-aid rule

Presentations

In presentations, aids for visual presentation can be used. These aids can be specified or restricted by the lecturers.

Supplementary aids

--

Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

2. Examination sub part (2/2)

Examination time and form

Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (60%)

Examination time: term time

Remark

--

Examination-aid rule

Term papers

Term papers must be written without anyone else's help and in accordance with the known quotation standards, and they must contain a declaration of authorship which is a published template in StudentWeb.

The documentation of sources (quotations, bibliography) has to be done throughout and consistently in accordance with the chosen citation standard such as APA or MLA.

For papers in law, the legal standard is recommended (by way of example, cf. FORSTMOSER, P., OGOREK R. et SCHINDLER B., Juristisches Arbeiten: Eine Anleitung für Studierende, newest edition respectively, or according to the recommendations of the Law School).

The indications of the sources of information taken over verbatim or in paraphrase (quotations) must be integrated into texts in accordance with the precepts of the applicable quotation standard, while informative and bibliographical notes must be added as footnotes (recommendations and standards can be found, for example, in METZGER, C., Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien, newest edition respectively).

For any work written at the HSG, the indication of the page numbers is mandatory independent of the chosen citation standard. Where there are no page numbers in sources, precise references must be provided in a different way: titles of chapters or sections, section numbers, acts, scenes, verses, etc.

Supplementary aids

--

Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Examination content

Part 1: Group presentation (grading the same for all) (40%):



The group prepares a presentation based on the respective required reading and presents it in plenary. The presentation (20 minutes, max.) summarizes the central aspects of the course reading, reflects them and presents further examples / materials that illustrate the topic area presented. The aim is to present the state of the art re. the topic that is subject to the session of the week.

Part 2: Written term paper (individual) (60%):

At the end of the seminar, the participants write a "take-home exam" (14,000 characters in total, including spaces). This means that the participants have 24 hours to answer the exam questions and submit them electronically. The aim of the term paper is to apply the state of the knowledge about ICT and citizens' political communication and participation that has largely been developed by looking at the OECD world and reflect upon its validity and generability in the context of SSA countries, as we discussed in the seminar sessions.

Examination relevant literature

All material made available on Canvas is relevant for the exam.

Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 12 are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 28 January 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 22 March 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 22 March 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before the end of the registration period in CW 14 (Thursday, 8 April 2021).