

#mppdigital

**The Internet and Political Campaigns**

**DPI-674M Spring 2017 Syllabus**

Class time: M/W 2:45-4:00pm

Class location: Littauer 140

*v. 1.4 as of 14 Dec 2017*

*Please note that this syllabus is a DRAFT and is subject to change.*

Instructor	Course Assistants
Nicco Mele Taubman 268 Assistant: Kaitlyn Dowling Kaitlyn_Dowling@hks.harvard.edu  OFFICE HOURS: Visit <a href="http://nicco.org/hours/">http://nicco.org/hours/</a> to book an appointment after class on Monday or Wednesday between 4:00 and 5:30pm (15-minute slots)	Jenina Soto <a href="mailto:jenina_soto@hks18.harvard.edu">jenina_soto@hks18.harvard.edu</a>  Kevin Hong <a href="mailto:kevin_hong@hks18.harvard.edu">kevin_hong@hks18.harvard.edu</a>

**Class Description:** Building on the concepts, vocabulary, and skills of DPI-662, this course will take a deep dive into a series of critical issues at the intersection of politics, media, and digital technology, with a focus on the role of technology in political campaigns. The course will cover a wide range of issues related to technology's impact on political campaigns and political advocacy including: persuasion in political campaigns using digital media; online fundraising in political campaigns; data collection and data targeting in politics. We will review in detail the role of technology in the 2012 and 2016 U.S. Presidential elections. A significant degree of digital literacy will be required to succeed in the course.

**Class Goals:** Given the rapidly changing digital landscape, this course is designed to give students with a strong grounding in the digital world an opportunity to probe emerging opportunities and issues at the intersection of technology and politics. Both strategy and tactics will be covered. After the course, the student should have a strong digital skill set, both in terms of theory and practice in digital political campaigning, advocacy, and communications. Students will be expected to maintain an active Twitter feed and blog as part of the class, providing a deep immersion in the application of digital concepts and technology in the public arena.

**Teaching Philosophy:** To understand the digital age, you need to live it. In addition to the assigned readings, students will be expected to use the online tools that are discussed. Only by participating in the online digital culture can students begin to understand the changing nature of the media landscape and glimpse the future.

### Details of Assignments

This class is designed to be a discussion on core readings. The readings are structured around four books and an additional selection of readings available online. Students will be expected to write three reading response papers. Each reading response paper must be a minimum of 2,000 words long and should be posted to the student's blog.

Reading response papers should review the assigned readings, covering these three major points:

- Summarize (highlight the main arguments of) the readings
- Analyze/evaluate (tear apart, react to, find problems or contradictions with, give strengths of, explain why you agree or disagree with) the readings
- Synthesize (place in relation to, bring together themes with, say what one author would say to another) the readings in question with other work, academic or professional

### Paper Due Dates

- **Wednesday, 31 January:** First Reading Response paper on selections from *The MoveOn Effect* by David Karpf and the entire book *Analytic Activism* also by David Karpf.
- **Wednesday, 21 February:** Second Reading Response paper on *Prototype Politics* by Daniel Kriess.
- **Wednesday, 7 March:** Final Reading Response paper on *The Victory Lab* by Sasha Issenberg.

### Class Participation

There are three components of class participation:

1. Attendance in class
2. Class discussion: Each week you will be expected to participate in a rigorous classroom discussion of the key concepts and readings.
3. Twitter: You will be expected to Tweet two articles or blog posts a week on a digital topic of interest to you or the class, and as we move closer to the end of the semester you should also think about issues related to your final paper. Alternatively, if you are at a digital related event at HKS, Harvard, MIT etc., you can also Tweet salient quotes or issues raised at the event. Your Tweets should be tagged using the class #hashtag (#mppdigital), to ensure you receive credit. Interesting and relevant Tweets on the #mppdigital feed will be discussed at the beginning of each class.

### Grading Totals

- Class participation: 25% of total grade
- First reading paper: 25% of total grade
- Second reading paper: 25% of total grade
- Final reading paper: 25% of total grade

### Readings and Books

- David Karpf, *Analytic Activism: Digital Listening and the New Political Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016). <http://a.nicco.org/karpf2>
  - An e-book version is available for use via Canvas
- Daniel Kriess, *Prototype Politics: Technology-Intensive Campaigning and the Data of Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016). <http://a.nicco.org/kreiss2>
  - An e-book version is available for use via Canvas
- Sasha Issenberg, *The Victory Lab: The Secret Science of Winning Campaigns* (New York: Crown, 2012). <http://a.nicco.org/victorylab>
- Additional web articles, reports, and chapters assigned below -- see the links in the syllabus and find the files on Canvas

**READINGS ARE LISTED UNDERNEATH EACH CLASS:  
COME TO CLASS PREPARED HAVING COMPLETED THOSE READINGS**

**Week 1**

Mon. 22 January 2018 – Overview

- **ARTICLE:** Madrigal, Alexis C. "When the Nerds Go Marching In." *The Atlantic*. November 16, 2012. <http://theatlntc/2BpRxkm>.
- **ARTICLE:** Bennett, Dashiell. "Romney's Get Out The Vote Plan Was a Complete Disaster." *The Atlantic*. November 09, 2012. <http://theatlntc/2kH73xO>.

Wed. 24 January 2018 – Technology Stacks & Org Chats

- **SLIDE DECK:** Engage Research. "Inside the Cave." Powerpoint Presentation. 2012.
- **BOOK:** Karpf, David. *Analytic Activism*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016. Chapters 1 - 3

**Week 2**

Mon. 29 January 2018 – Fundraising: Digital Acquisition

- **REPORT:** DiJulio, Sarah, and Andrea Wood. *Online Tactics & Success: An Examination of the Obama for America New Media Campaign*. Report. M+R Strategic Services. 2009.
- **BOOK:** Karpf, David. *Analytic Activism*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016. Chapters 4 - 6

Wed. 31 January 2018 – Fundraising: Digital Conversion -- FIRST PAPER DUE

- **CHAPTER:** Mele, Nicco. "Skyrocketing Numbers: Online Fundraising for Political Campaigns." In *Margin of Victory: How Technologists Help Politicians Win Elections*, edited by Nathaniel Pearlman, 29-40. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2012.
- **CHAPTER:** Nuxoll, Kelly. "E-Mail: Sign Your Own Name." In *Mousepads, Shoe Leather, and Hope: Lessons from the Howard Dean Campaign for the Future of Internet Politics*,

edited by Zephyr Teachout and Thomas Streeter, 192-200. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2008.

- **CHAPTER:** Nuxoll, Kelly. "After New Hampshire." In *Mousepads, Shoe Leather, and Hope: Lessons from the Howard Dean Campaign for the Future of Internet Politics*, edited by Zephyr Teachout and Thomas Streeter, 220-223. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2008.

### Week 3

Mon. 5 February 2018 – Persuasion: YouTube vs. TV

- **HBS CASE:** Deighton, John, and Leora Kornfeld. *Obama versus Clinton: The YouTube Primary*. Publication no. 9-509-032. Harvard Business School, Harvard University. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business Publishing, 2009.
- **BOOK:** Kreiss, Daniel. *Prototype Politics: Technology-intense Campaigning and the Data of Democracy*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016. Chapters 1 - 3

Wed. 7 February 2018 – Persuasion: Facebook

- **ARTICLE:** Gessen, Masha. "Russian Interference in the 2016 Election: A Cacophony, Not a Conspiracy." *The New Yorker*. November 03, 2017. <http://bit.ly/2h97uQ6>.
- **ARTICLE:** Ruffini, Patrick. "Why Russia's Facebook ad campaign wasn't such a success." *The Washington Post*. November 03, 2017. <http://wapo.st/2AGBuyW>.
- **ARTICLE:** Green, Joshua, and Sasha Issenberg. "Inside the Trump Bunker, With 12 Days to Go." *Bloomberg.com*. October 27, 2016. <https://bloom.bg/2fxAGll>.
- **ARTICLE:** Quinn, Sean. "A Word on Voter Files." *FiveThirtyEight*. May 07, 2014. <http://53eig.ht/2BwJDDf>.
- **ARTICLE:** Karpf, David. "Will the Real Psychometric Targeters Please Stand Up?" *Civic Hall*. February 1, 2017. <http://bit.ly/2iOE0Ew>.
- **ARTICLE:** Krogerus, Hannes Grassegger & Mikael. "The Data That Turned the World Upside Down." *Motherboard*. January 28, 2017. <http://bit.ly/2ujkgUS>.

### Week 4

Mon. 12 February 2018 – Press: Twitter & the Triangle

- **ARTICLE:** Daou, Peter. "THE TRIANGLE: Limits of Blog Power." *TechPresident*. September 19, 2005. <http://bit.ly/Q1bHIM>.
- **ARTICLE:** Hamby, Peter. *Did Twitter Kill the Boys on the Bus? Searching for a better way to cover a campaign*. Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy. September 2013. <http://bit.ly/2x4NM2m>.

Wed. 14 February 2018— Misinformation on Social Networks

- **REPORT:** Wardle, Claire, and Hossein Derakhshan. *Information Disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policymaking*. Council on Europe. October 31, 2017. <http://bit.ly/2BnDyLT>.

## Week 5

Mon. 19 February 2018: HOLIDAY – President’s Day – NO CLASS

Wed. 21 February 2018 – Field and Get Out The Vote (GOTV) -- SECOND PAPER DUE

- **BOOK:** Kreiss, Daniel. *Prototype Politics: Technology-intense Campaigning and the Data of Democracy*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016. Chapters 4 - 7

## Week 6

Mon. 26 February 2018 – Field and Get Out The Vote (GOTV)

- **BOOK:** Issenberg, Sasha. *The Victory Lab: The Secret Science of Winning Campaigns*. New York: B \ D \ W \ Y, Broadway Books, 2016. Chapters 1 - 5

Wed. 28 February 2018 – Data Targeting

- **BOOK:** Issenberg, Sasha. *The Victory Lab: The Secret Science of Winning Campaigns*. New York: B \ D \ W \ Y, Broadway Books, 2016. Chapters 6 - Postscript

## Week 7

Mon. 5 March 2018 – Security: Protecting Campaigns

- **REPORT:** Mook, Robby, and Matt Rhoades. *The Cybersecurity Campaign Playbook*. Report. Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University. Cambridge, MA: Belfer Center, 2017. <http://bit.ly/2i8D5FI>.

Wed. 7 March 2018 – Closing thoughts – THIRD PAPER DUE

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