

MODULE 3: NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

Aim: To provide participants with comprehensive knowledge and skills regarding the dual role of social media in democratization, focusing on its potential as a political tool and the threats it poses to political communication and democratic integrity.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the interconnection between social media and democracy, addressing both opportunities and threats.
- Explore the use of social media as a political tool for advocacy and communication.
- Promote ethical media literacy to counteract disinformation and cyber threats.

Skills Objectives:

- Develop digital advocacy and critical thinking skills to effectively navigate the digital landscape.
- Enhance abilities in ethical communication and media analysis.

Attitudes Objectives:

- Encourage responsible and informed use of technology for political participation.
- Foster accountability in media usage to support democratic processes.

Methodology

- Lecture/Seminars: 30%
- Group Work: 20%
- Discussions: 20%
- Simulations and Tech Demos: 20%
- Assignments and Debates: 10%

3.1 New Media: Opportunities and Challenges for Democracy

Aim: To study the opportunities and perils of new media (digital media, social media) in the process of democratic development.

Objectives:

- To enrich theoretical baggage on the role and importance of mass media in democracy with stress on new media,
- To discuss the multisector (positive and negative) impact of new media on democratic developments and human rights,
- To enhance the ability of critical thinking and multilevel analyses on different controversial approaches New media's role.

3.2 Social media and political parties' (smart communication strategies)

Aim: To provide theoretical and practical knowledge on the new forms of democratic participation in civic and political fields by understanding the main processes of digitalization and virtual activeness.

Objectives:

- To study the problems and perspectives of digitalization and electronic governance systems,
- To study the phenomenon of digital divide and how it impacts the realization of human rights,
- Will study the new forms and digital tools of democratic participation.

3.3 Political digital participation: Microactivists and Slacktivists

Aim: To study what role the media plays in the development of partisanship in democracy.

Objectives:

- To present the toolset of smart and innovative means of political campaigning and ads,
- To present how partisan orientation shapes the media activities.

3.4 Civic (Citizen) journalism in politics

Aim: To get an understanding of the newly developing journalistic branch and its importance from the perspective of human rights and freedoms and democratic consolidation.

Objectives:

- The learners will study the main gaps and dangers of citizen-based news and information making.
- Will gain proper knowledge of the history and main perspectives of development of citizen journalism in Armenia.

3.5 Disinformation and Hate Speech

Aim: To provide a deep overview on political disinformation and hate speech in cyberspace as main threats for democratic institutions, establishment of constructive political communication and healthy political and civic participation.

Objectives:

- To properly distinguish political disinformation and other types of fake information,
- To differentiate main sources for disinformation,
- To develop an understanding of forms and degrees of hate speech,

- To uncover the role of political parties in the way of usage of hateful rhetoric and disseminating disinformation.

3.6 Media and political information literacy

Aim: To demonstrate understanding of media and information literacy (MIL) and MIL related concepts by focusing on political information and knowledge.

Objectives:

- To understand how media literacy, information literacy, and technology literacy overlap,
- To uncover the links between media literacy and politics,
- To distinguish media sources and information types,
- To dive deep into the rules and ethics of safe and proper media usage.

3.7 Political Communication (Public speaking and Pitch Writing)

Aim: to develop effective public speaking skills tailored to specific target audiences.

Objectives:

- To form a comprehensive understanding of the purpose and structure of public speaking.
- To acquire an understanding of the various types of target audiences and their specific needs that can be addressed through public speaking.