

Prof. Tony Affigne
Political Science / Black Studies
Providence College

Howley Hall 316
Tel. (401) 865-2569
affigne@providence.edu

PSC 470-001 / BLS 480-004 : Social Media, Rebellion, and the Power of Youth



A protestor marches with a sign after a gathering to show solidarity with the family of black teenager Michael Brown outside the American Embassy in London November 26, 2014. 18-year-old Michael Brown was shot to death by policeman Darren Wilson on Aug. 9 in Ferguson, Missouri. The shooting has highlighted the often-tense nature of U.S. race relations and the strains between black communities and police. REUTERS/Paul Hackett

Fall 2015, Tue/Thu 1:00 p.m.-2:15 p.m, Feinstein 213

About This Course

This seminar-style course will explore youth politics today, and the emergence of social media as a tool for informing and mobilizing youth dissent. With a primary focus on *Ferguson*, Missouri and other recent Black community rebellions, the course will also consider the role of social media in other uprisings including *Tahrir Square* in Cairo, Egypt, *Ayotzinapa* in Guerrero, Mexico, *Taksim Square* in Istanbul, Turkey, and *Occupy Central* in Hong Kong, China. To better understand the potential of social media, each student will create and use online accounts on one or more of these platforms: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Vine, and YouTube.

Course Design and Requirements

The success of this course will depend on your full participation in two ways: full completion and understanding of the assigned readings, and thoughtful engagement in class discussions. There will be no midterm or final exam in this class; your written assignments will include three short papers.

Attendance is Mandatory

One simple rule: Be on time, every time, and don't miss any classes. Unexcused absences will automatically result in an extra-credit opportunity—additional reading assignment and review essay—for each class you miss. Absences are sometimes justified (for serious medical, legal, or personal issues) and when something like this happens, you should notify the instructor, prior to the class you'll miss, via phone or email (see contact info on page one).

Required Books

Networks of Outrage and Hope, 2nd Ed. M. Castells (2015).

Digital Media and Democracy. M. Boler (2008).

Democracy Remixed. C. Cohen (2010).

Demanding Dignity. M. Alhassen & A. Shihab-Eldin (2012).

SCHEDULE OF READING AND RESEARCH ASSIGNMENTS

1. Introduction and Course Overview – 9/8

2. Social Movements and the Internet

9/10, 9/15, 9/17, 9/22, 9/24, 9/29

Readings from Castells / Action: Set up social media account

Short Paper: “*Social media in rebellions of Egypt, Turkey, Mexico, & Hong Kong*”

3. Tactical Approaches to Digital Activism

Readings from Boler / Action: Select and develop issue focus for social media

10/1, 10/6, 10/8, **No class 10/13**, 10/15, 10/20, 10/22

Short Paper: “*For activism, how is ‘New Media’ different from the ‘Old Media’?*”

4. Black Youth, Black Life, and Black Rebellion

Readings from Cohen / Action: Revise and refine social media engagement

10/27, 10/29, 11/3, 11/5, 11/10, 11/12, 11/17, 11/19

Short Paper: “*Social media and resistance in Ferguson, Baltimore, New York*”

Thanksgiving week; No class 11/24 or 11/26

5. Social Media in Global Protest

Readings from Alhassen & Shihab-Eldin / Action: Expand reach of social media

12/1, 12/3, 12/8, 12/10