MEDIA ACTIVISM AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS
MCC-UE 1826
Spring 2014
Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:00-12:15
SILV Rm. 501

The recent wave of protest movements—from the uprisings of the Arab Spring to events closer to home like Occupy Wall Street—have sparked a renewed interest in the role of the media in mobilizing and sustaining social movements with global resonance. This course offers students both an overview of contemporary debates about social movement theory and the increasingly important role of media activism and a chance to think through these theories in practice by focusing on the specific case of the current immigrant rights movement in the US and New York more specifically. While the first half of the course is structured around theoretical and empirical texts, the second half of the semester will be spent working with local immigrant rights organizations with the aim of producing collaborative “allied research projects” as the final project for the class.

REQUIRED READINGS
• Additional Chapters, Article and On-line materials will be posted on NYU Classes Site. To navigate NYU Classes Please see:
  https://wikis.nyu.edu/display/nyuclasses/Student+Quick-Start

REQUIREMENTS

Attendance/Participation 25%
Attendance, class and group participation throughout the semester is crucial not only for your success in the course, but also key in order for the class to be productive for your classmates. You will be expected to come to class having completed your assigned readings as well as take part in class presentations and discussion of readings. Moreover, you will be expected to participate in group research activities and both in-class and field-
based research during the course of the semester. More detailed guidelines on how your participation grade will be calculated will be posted on the class website.

**Mid-Semester Research Paper (10 pgs)_______________________ 25%**

A mid-semester research paper will allow students to reflect on the various theories of social movements and the role of the media in shaping the direction of these movements by focusing on the specific case of immigration reform in the US. More details about this short-paper assignment will be posted on the class website by February 15th. The paper will be due on Tuesday, March 11th at the beginning of class.

**Film Reviews_________________________________________10%**

To supplement our readings, we will be watching several relevant films and/or documentaries during the course of the semester. You will have the opportunity to write up to two short (1000 words) film reviews that will count 5 points each towards your final grade. Detailed instructions on these film review assignments will be posted on the class website by February 1st.

**FINAL RESEARCH PROJECT________________________________40%**

Your final research project will be a collaborative, critical and creative assignment drawing from the theories and methods learned in the first half to better understand how mediated social movements work in practice. We will begin working on this project in mid-March and you will have the choice to produce an individual or a collaborative (groups of 2-3) final project. Detailed instructions about the final research project will be posted on the class website by March 15th.

**DEADLINE:** Your final projects will be due by 4:00 PM on Wednesday, May 15th.
POLICIES

Academic Integrity Policy (including plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling/recycling coursework & cheating): Consult http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/mcc/undergraduate/academic_integrity

Style for Assignments: Students will be asked to cite and reference their assignments in the APA (American Psychological Association) or MLA (Modern Language Association) styles, which will be reviewed in class. Standard instructions for class assignments include: identifying assignments with student numbers rather than names, stapling, and double-spacing, and using 12-point font.

Electronic Devices: All electronic devices should be in the off or vibrate position and out of sight during class session. Laptops should be used only to take notes and or access material directly relevant to class discussion.

Turning in Papers and Assignments: All papers and assignments are due as hard copies (stapled) in class at the beginning of class, or via email as word documents before class.

Late Assignments: It is difficult for the instructor to coordinate grading, ensure fairness, or return papers in a timely manner when assignments are not handed in on time. Each day that a paper is late, you will lose half a letter grade (An A paper will be graded as A-, etc). Papers will not be accepted more than 1 week after the assignment was originally due, unless there are extenuating circumstances (such as an illness that can be documented), in which case the student and instructor will come to an agreement together.

Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities, with the advice and assistance of the appropriate services on campus.

Syllabus Changes: This syllabus is a contract between professor and students. However, it is subject to change with sufficient notice to students.
Weekly Outline

Week 1
January 28th: Introduction and Overview of Class

January 30th: What is a Social Movement?

- *Social Movements: An Introduction* (pgs.1-32.)
- Timeline of US Immigration Reform:
  

- Immigrant Rights Organizations: National and NYC
  
  [http://www.nnirr.org/immigration/immigration_map.html](http://www.nnirr.org/immigration/immigration_map.html)
  
  [http://www.thenyic.org/issues](http://www.thenyic.org/issues)

- Anti-Immigration Rights Groups and Organizations
  
  [http://www.publiceye.org/research/directories/immig_grp_undermine.html](http://www.publiceye.org/research/directories/immig_grp_undermine.html)

Week 2

February 4th: Institutions and Movements

- *Social Movements: An Introduction* (pgs.33-63.)

February 6th: Documentary Field Trip

- *The Square*, Cinema Village, 22 East 12th Street
- *Social Movements: An Introduction* (pgs.64-88)

Week 3

February 11th: Movements, Culture and Identity

- *Social Movements: An Introduction* (pgs.89-113.)
February 13th: Networks and Participation
- *Social Movements: An Introduction* (pgs. 114-162.)

**Week 4**
February 18th: Cycles of Protest and Policing Change
- *Social Movements: An Introduction* (pgs. 163-222.)

February 20th: Mapping the Post-911 Immigrant Rights Movement
- Explore the issue of Immigration Reform and Immigrant Rights Activism: http://colorlines.com/

**Week 5**
February 25th: Case Study: DREAMers

February 27th: Changing the Debate

**Week 6**
March 4th: Digital Media and the Transformation of Contentious Politics?
- *The Logic of Connective Action*. (pgs. 1-54)

March 6th: Tools or New Publics?
- *The Logic of Connective Action*. (pgs. 87-113)
Week 7:

March 11th: Research Methods, Media and Movements


March 13th: Allied Research Looking Forward

- Screening of *Immigrant Nation* Documentary

- MID-SEMESTER PAPER DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS

Week 8

**SPRING BREAK (MARCH 17TH-23RD)**

Week 9

March 25th: Media Framing and Activist Research

- Take the Frameworks Institute mini-course: [http://sfa.frameworksinstitute.org](http://sfa.frameworksinstitute.org)
- Explore the Center for Media Justice’s website, especially: [http://centerformediajustice.org/toolbox/media-how-tos/](http://centerformediajustice.org/toolbox/media-how-tos/)

March 27th: Partner Groups and Research Goals

- Planning Field Visits and Ethics of Allied Research

Week 10

April 1st: Field Visits

April 3rd: Field Visits

Week 11

April 8th: Mapping Research Needs and Connecting to Themes Covered in Texts

April 10th: Outline for Final Research Project Due

Week 12

April 15th: Field Visits

April 17th: Field Visits
**Week 13**  
April 22nd: Field Visits  
April 24th: Reflections on Field Visits

**Week 14**  
April 29th: Field Visits  
May 1st: Field Visits

**Week 15**  
May 6th: Final Project Presentations  
May 8th: Final Project Presentations and Wrap Up

**Final Projects Due by 4:00 PM May 15th**