

ULG DIGITAL BUSINESS 2018/2019



Lecturer

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Organizing the Digital in the Public Sphere

Digitalization is affecting not just private sector businesses but also the public sector. At the same time, the whole notion of “public” is changing in the course of ongoing digital transformations. By referring to the “Public Sphere”, this course seeks to capture both these dynamics.

Consequently, the course comprises two main parts. The first part focuses on the digital transformation of public sector institutions such as public administrations, public service providers and public utilities. The second part addresses the public more broadly and looks at new forms of platform-based publics as well as provision of public goods with private means.

Methods

- Point-Counterpoint debates between students on the topics of the course.
- Each participant is required to deliver at least one point/counterpoint talk of 15-20 minutes each
- For preparing the Point-Counterpoint debates participants are divided into two groups
- Topics will be assigned in the introductory session of the course
- Point-Counterpoint debates will be followed by open discussion of the readings in plenary, punctuated by occasional mini-lectures
- At the end of the course, students will write a reflection essay (3-5 pages) on one of the debates in class

Assessment and Grading

- Point/Counterpoint presentations (50%)
- Reflection essay on one of the debates (50%)

Attendance

Attendance is compulsory.

Session 1

Introduction

Sept. 11, 15-18, SR15

- Overview about the course content
- Assignment of topics

Session 2

New Digital Frontiers for New Public Management?

Sept. 16, 12-15, SR15

Readings:

- Dunleavy, P., Margetts, H., Bastow, S., & Tinkler, J. (2006). New public management is dead—long live digital-era governance. *Journal of public administration research and theory*, 16(3), 467-494, <https://academic.oup.com/jpart/article/16/3/467/934257>
- Hilgers, D., & Ihl, C. (2010). Citizensourcing: Applying the concept of open innovation to the public sector. *International Journal of Public Participation*, 4(1), <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/36548271.pdf>
- Vogel, R. (2012). Framing and counter-framing new public management: The case of Germany. *Public Administration*, 90(2), 370-392, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1467-9299.2011.01981.x>

Point: Digitalization of Public Management is New Public Management on Steroids

Counterpoint: Digitization of Public Management is an opportunity to correct for New Public Management mistakes and fallacies

Session 3

From Open Data to Open Government?

Sept. 17, 09-12, SR15

Readings:

- Janssen, M., Charalabidis, Y., & Zuiderwijk, A. (2012). Benefits, adoption barriers and myths of open data and open government. *Information Systems Management*, 29(4), 258-268, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10580530.2012.716740>
- Kornberger, M., Meyer, R. E., Brandtner, C., & Höllerer, M. A. (2017). When bureaucracy meets the crowd: Studying “open government” in the Vienna City Administration. *Organization Studies*, 38(2), 179-200, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0170840616655496>
- Longo, J. (2011). # OpenData: Digital-era governance thoroughbred or new public management Trojan horse?, *Public Policy & Governance Review*, 2(2), 38, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1856120

Point: Open Government is the logical next step after introducing Open Data

Counterpoint: Open Government and Open Data are entirely distinct endeavors with different challenges and requirements

Session 4

Public Foundations for a Thriving Digital Economy?

Sept. 17, 12-15, SR15

Readings:

- Christensen, L. T., & Greve, C. (2017). Choosing State Owned Enterprises over Public-Private Partnerships for Infrastructure Governance: Explaining Institutional Change with Evidence from Denmark's Transport Sector. *International Public Management Review*, 18(1/2), 137-161, <http://journals.sfu.ca/ipmr/index.php/ipmr/article/view/298>
- Mazzucato, M. (2016). From market fixing to market-creating: a new framework for innovation policy. *Industry and Innovation*, 23(2), 140-156, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13662716.2016.1146124>
- Mingardi, A. (2015). A critique of Mazzucato's Entrepreneurial State. *Cato Journal*, 35, 603-625, <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.699.1787&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

Point: Public regulation and intervention is a key hindrance for harvesting benefits of digital growth opportunities

Counterpoint: Much more public investment and interventions are needed to enable new digital business models

Session 5

Public Goods via Private Regulation?

Sept. 30, 09-12, SR15

Readings:

- Braithwaite, J. (2002). Rules and principles: A theory of legal certainty. *Australian Journal of Legal Philosophy*, 27, 47-82, http://www.anu.edu.au/fellows/jbraithwaite/documents/Articles/Rules_and_Principles2002.pdf
- Carroll, M. W. (2006). Creative commons and the new intermediaries. *Michigan State Law Review*, 45-56, https://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1039&context=facsch_lawrev
- Elkin-Koren, N. (2005). What contracts cannot do: The limits of private ordering in facilitating a creative commons. *Fordham Law Review*, 74, 375-422, <https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4102&context=fllr>

Point: Private Regulation offers a unique opportunity for creating digital public goods.

Counterpoint: Private regulatory measures are inherently deficient and unable to compensate for a lack of public regulation of the public domain.

Session 6

Democratic Publics via Private Platforms?

Sept. 30, 12-15, SR15

Readings:

- Bucher, T. (2012). Want to be on the top? Algorithmic power and the threat of invisibility on Facebook. *New media & society*, 14(7), 1164-1180, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1463444812440359>
- Fagerjord, A. (2009). After convergence: YouTube and remix culture. In Hunsinger, J., Klastrup, L., & Allen, M. (Eds.), *International handbook of internet research*. Springer, Dordrecht, 187-200, https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/27250/1/Fagerjord_AfterConvergencePreprint.pdf
- Ribeiro, M. H., Ottoni, R., West, R., Almeida, V. A., & Meira, W. (2019). Auditing Radicalization Pathways on YouTube. arXiv preprint arXiv:1908.08313, <https://arxiv.org/pdf/1908.08313.pdf>

Point: Private, for-profit platforms and their algorithms are a fundamental threat for democratic publics

Counterpoint: Private, for-profit platforms strengthen and allow the creation of new democratic publics

Session 7

Digital Journalism: Existential Crisis or Re-Invention?

Sept. 30, 15-18, SR15

Readings:

- Bruns, A. (2018): Chapter 8: New(s) Publics in the Public Sphere. In: *Gatewatching and News Curation: Journalism, Social Media, and the Public Sphere*. New York: Peter Lang, 308-347,; <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/116434/>
- Martens, B., Aguiar, L., Gomez-Herrera, E., & Mueller-Langer, F. (2018). The digital transformation of news media and the rise of disinformation and fake news, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3164170
- Thompson, B. (2014): Newspapers Are Dead; Long Live Journalism. *Stratechery*, <https://stratechery.com/2014/newspapers-are-dead-long-live-journalism/>

Point: Unbundling of traditional newspapers endangers funding and quality of political journalism

Counterpoint: Traditional journalism was broken and digital unbundling is a precondition to re-inventing and improving journalism

Session 8

Individual Feedback Session

post Sept. 30, by appointment via e-mail
