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Social Media Theory and Data in Journalism and Politics

change perspective

Radboud Universiteit
Social Media Theory and Data in Journalism and Politics

This course will introduce you to what typical social media data (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Plurk, Renren) tells us about politicians’, journalists’ and citizens’ engagement in society. You will learn how to collect and analyse this data from a communications perspective. Particular attention will be devoted to different types of research questions derived from communication theories and how social media data can be used to answer these research questions. Furthermore, attention will be devoted to the potential that social media data may provide but also to the limitations of social media data. Social media are important new digital platforms for online social networking and microblogging to discuss all kinds of issues (serious and trivial). A subdivision of social media research concerns how regular people (citizens), political actors (politicians, organisations) and media professionals (journalists) use social media to share opinions about issues, create online communities and use social media strategically to inform or to win over people, e.g., to vote for them. In this course you will learn how to look at this social media data to understand how journalists, politicians, and citizens use social media.

The course has three main parts:
• creating social media theories,
• creating theories about online journalism and political communication
• methods of data collection and analysis of social media.

Creating social media theories will look at the specifics of social media design and how this affects online communication and networks. This theme is applicable to all kinds of social media and connected digital media. Subsequently we will look at creating social media theories for journalism and political communication using traditional and new approaches to create social media theories such as agenda setting research and networked journalism. Furthermore, we will discuss and use methods of collection and analysing social media data. The empirical and hands-on part will focus on understanding the structure of social media data (e.g., networks based on social connections but also sharing activities), the dynamics of social media data (e.g., change across time of social media activity) and the actual content of social media (i.e., expressed opinions).
Number of EC
2 ECTS

Entry level
Advanced Bachelor and Master

After this course you are able to:
• assess whether social media data is suitable to answer specific research questions.
• collect social media data using the API method.
• perform social media data analysis (e.g., network analysis, content analysis).

This course is designed for:
students interested in journalism and political communication with affinity for quantitative research. It is intended for those that want to develop as empirical researchers of social media data.

Admission documents
Motivation letter and CV

Course leader
Dr. Maurice Vergeer, Assistant professor, Department of Communication Science, Radboud University

More detailed course information can be found on our website!

Dates
Monday 7 August – Friday 11 August 2017
Want to be part of the RSS experience?

Course fee
€490

Discounts
• 10% discount for early bird applicants. The early bird deadline is 1 April 2017.
• 15% discount for students and PhD candidates from partner universities.

More than just a course!
Radboud Summer School is more than an academic event. It is a unique opportunity to meet other international students and researchers and to get to know Radboud University and the city of Nijmegen. Our participants come from all over the world and have different cultural and academic backgrounds. Our programme includes the following activities free of charge: welcome reception, sports activity, guest lecture and farewell drink. We offer also a BBQ, River Cruise, City Tour, Pub quiz and excursion for a small fee.

Have a look at what participants had to say about their experience!

And do not forget to register now!

Deadline application
June 1, 2017

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www.ru.nl/radboudsummerschool, August 6-18 2017