



EU Public Diplomacy: Opportunities and Challenges of the Social Media

Globalization and with it the development of new technologies, has influenced the communication patterns of modern diplomacy, with networks playing a pivotal role. New ways of communication allow for a multidirectional flow of information, not solely aimed at elites but also at the general public. The universal and instant access to information diminishes the states' informational monopoly, and diplomatic services have become more flexible.

Bearing that in mind, the purpose of this course is twofold: Firstly, to examine the changing nature of EUPD within the context of the evolution of global communications. In particular, it will examine how the EU has developed 'Public Diplomacy 2.0' techniques in order to facilitate new forms of dialogue and outreach, and how the usage of the social media has transformed traditional forms of EUPD. In so doing, it will not only examine how the EEAS, the Commission, the EU Delegations and other EU institutions use social media (Facebook, twitter), but also examine how the EU communication services, such as the 'europa.eu' internet domain or the Europe Direct network, demonstrate the desire for openness and willingness to engage with wider publics.

Secondly, to examine the opportunities and challenges of internet-social media tools for EUPD activities. How can social media activities as a whole greatly assist in projecting the EU's policy positions to domestic and foreign audiences? How can social media activities strengthen the work of the EU in international relations in a faster and more cost-effective way? What are the risks (information leakage, hacking, and anonymity of Internet users) associated with the use and reliance on the social media as a tool of public diplomacy? Can the EU, its citizens and member states, really discuss/negotiate online? What are the best ways to implement online engagement to realize its advantages for inclusion and economy without losing the advantages of face-to-face meetings?

Class and learning activities will be lectures, group-work, class presentations, literature study and written assignments. Guest speakers will also offer their perspective on the contested topics of European Public Diplomacy and the issues discussed in class. The total workload in terms of hours will be 300, with 29.5 hours devoted to lectures/teaching, 150 hours to the preparation and presentation of exercises and the study of the compulsory and optional literature, and 110 hours to the preparation and submission of working assignments/essays.

This course, the first to be taught at a Greek university at undergraduate level, will be optional and open to both pathways of the undergraduate program of the School, as well as to the students of the School of Political Science of the Faculty and the Department of European Studies (University of Macedonia). In the context of the School's Memorandum of Cooperation local and national media outlets, attendance will also be open to journalists of Thessaloniki, the wider region of Macedonia and other regions of Greece.

