COURSE TITLE: D-LAB: Deradicalization
PREREQUISITES: None
PROFESSORS: Stephen W. Sawyer & Roman Zinigrad
CLASS SCHEDULE: Mon + Thu 13:45-15:05
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COURSE NO: PO/HI3091B
SEMESTER: Fall 2021
CREDITS: 4
ROOM NO: Q609
PERIOD(S):

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
In discussing the “democratic ideal” of education, John Dewey emphasized two traits that link the educational experience and democracy. The aim of education, he argued, is to “generate greater reliance upon the recognition of mutual interests” and “continuous readjustment through meeting new situations.” Building from this observation, the Democracy Lab combines Dewey’s insights into education and democracy with recent trends in design-thinking pedagogy. The course focuses on generating opportunities for students to build a mutual interest based on their differences and provide a context for them to deploy this mutual interest toward solving a specific problem. To this end, the Democracy Lab will explore a key challenge to our contemporary democracy. This semester’s topic is deradicalization.

Radicalization and polarization have come to define social action and mobilization across Europe, Asia and the Americas and beyond. This course seeks to understand how to achieve social and political change without resorting to civilian and state violence by examining the actors, networks, and wider social contexts driving radicalization, particularly among young people in urban and peri-urban areas. In this Democracy Lab we will begin by exploring conceptual and theoretical tools presently available for understanding this phenomenon, including the present European Research Grant “D.Rad” within the Center for Critical Democracy Studies. In the second half of the course we will then move towards developing prototypes for how to de-escalate political, individual and collective violence. Our intention is to identify the building blocks of radicalization, which include a sense of being victimized; a sense of being thwarted or lacking agency in established legal and political structures; and coming under the influence of “us vs them” identity formulations. Our Democracy Lab explores this question in very concrete terms. It provides a hands-on, design-thinking, experimental space where students elaborate a specific problem of deradicalization and devise a potential solution together.

Following an introduction, the course is divided into five parts:
I. FORMULATING THE QUESTION
II. DEFINING THE PROBLEM
III. CONFLICTS
V. RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION
VI. CRAFTING SOLUTIONS
STUDENT LEARNING GOALS:
Following this course, students will:
- Learn to identify the complex citizenship problems facing our contemporary democracies
- Develop the capacity to put these problems into dialogue with other people who are thinking and attempting to solve these problems
- Elaborate problem-solving strategies as individuals and as a group to address these complex problems
- Learn to use accessible resources creatively to come to terms with these problems
- Acquire tools for crafting impactful solutions to complex problems

TEXTBOOKS:
All readings can be accessed online on the course’s Blackboard site. It is the students’ responsibility to bring hard copies of the assigned readings for each session to class.

ATTENDANCE:
Students are expected to arrive on time and to attend all classes.

GRADING:
- Class participation including: attendance, in-class presentations, fulfilling role in group work, and participating actively in class discussion (40%)
- Mid-term exam (25%)
- Final project (35%)

Students are expected to have done the required readings prior to the class session.

If you miss a written exercise without valid justification of the absence, your grade for the missed exam will be F.
We reserve A for outstanding work, demonstrating superior effort, mastery of information and understanding of concepts. A grade of B indicates a solid effort, a good grasp of information, and above-average comprehension of concepts. A grade of C reflects a minimally acceptable effort and comprehension, while a grade of C- or below indicates results that are less than satisfactory.
All written work must be your own. Students submitting plagiarized work for any assignment will automatically receive a grade of F for the whole course. Plagiarism is defined as the act of misrepresenting work done by others as one’s own. It constitutes a serious violation of AUP rules, and may result in more serious disciplinary action.

An excellent class-participation grade will depend on consistent attendance, regular participation, as well as the ability to respond to and to respect classmates’ contributions and views. Simple attendance without participation will earn you a class-participation grade of C.

AUP ATTENDANCE POLICY:
Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes.
A maximum of four (4) excused absences per semester may be requested for all 4-credit courses. Two (2) excused absences per semester per 1 or 2-credit course may be requested.
The French Department has its own attendance policy. Students are responsible for compliance.
Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

Student Affairs will recommend that a professor excuse an absence for the following reason only: Involuntary absences due to illness or personal emergencies, upon presentation of documentary proof of illness or emergency.

Religious and National Holidays:
Due to the large number of nationalities and faiths represented at the University, religious and national holidays (other than those on the academic schedule) will not be excused by Student Affairs.

Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students’ participation in study trips related to their courses.

Lateness to course meetings:
If a student arrives at course meetings more than 10 minutes late without documentation for one of the above scenarios, it will be considered an unexcused absence.

All documentation must be submitted to the Office of Student Affairs within ONE WEEK following the first day of the absence.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence (excused or unexcused) is accepted or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive excused and unexcused absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an “F” for the course. An instructor may recommend the withdrawal of a student whose absences from any course, excused or not, have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level. The professor may consult with Student Affairs for additional information.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

COURSE OUTLINE:

I. FORMULATING THE QUESTION

These sessions are designed to familiarize students with some of the major issues in the construction of radicalization and deradicalization. Students will attempt to identify specific problems within these larger global issues.

Sept 6: Introduction
Introduction, Activity: Perspectives
Video: UNESCO on extremist radicalization
Project examples:
   EDIS - De-Radicalisation in Europe and Beyond: Detect, Resolve, Re-integrate
   CAPRI: JEUNES

Sept 9: What's the Matter with Political Violence?
[Push to recognize problems of political and social violence, that is, to see that there is a problem with trying to solve political and social problems through destruction, intolerance, and even murder]
Readings:
Gandhi MK, Indian Home Rule (Prabhat Prakashan 1908) ch 16.
Asad T, ‘On Suicide Bombing’ (2007) 15/16 The Arab Studies Journal 123.

Further reading
Asad T, On Suicide Bombing (Columbia University Press 2007).

Sept 12: Last day to DROP/ADD courses

Sept 13: What is Design Thinking?
A crash course from Stanford University's d.school

Sept 16: What is Radicalization?
Questions: Readings on debates on the term radicalization. Is the term useful? What are the problems with the term? What are the alternatives? How are we defining the term?

Further reading

Sept 20: Conflicts in (De)radicalization Perspectives: What is deradicalization?
Questions: What does it mean to deradicalize? When did the term emerge? How has it changed? What is the difference between an apology for the status quo and deradicalization?

**Further reading**


**Sept 23:** **Perspectives: Right-Wing Violence**


**Further reading**


**Sept 27:** **Perspectives: Jihadist Violence**


‘National Tribute to the Memory of Samuel Paty: Speech by M. Emmanuel Macron, President of the Republic, at the Sorbonne (Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, 21 October 2020) https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/coming-to-france/france-facts/secu
Al-Qā'idah in the Arabian Peninsula, ‘Statement Regarding the Latest Incidents in France’ (3 January 2021).
‘Sawt-Al-Hind’ (2021) 18 1, p.3.

Sept 30: Perspectives: Jihadist Violence 2
Sawyer SW and Zinigrad R, ‘Stakeholders of (De)-Radicalisation in France’ (April 2021) [Charts on pp. 17-20].

Further reading

Oct 4: Perspectives: Ultra-Left Violence
Varriale Carson J, ‘Left-wing Terrorism: From Anarchists to the Radical Environmental Movement and Back’ in G LaFree and JD Freilich (eds), The Handbook of the Criminology of Terrorism (John Wiley & Sons 2016).

Further watching/reading
Oct 7: Perspectives: Beyond Categories: Incels and Yellow Vests


Further reading

Oct 11: Mid-term (analysis of a document for defining a problem) (1h20)

II. DEFINING THE PROBLEM:
HOW DO WE ADDRESS THESE MATTERS?

Oct 14: Designing YOUR Deradicalization Project

Oct 18: Choose Your Group: Formulating the Problem
1) Student-led group presentations on problems based on groups listed below, identify up to three problems (the relevant readings should help!)
2) Think about potential solutions by creating your own project, e.g. working with existing NGOs, developing policy, elaborating a program, defining a research agenda.

Group 1: De-Radicalization (Prisons)
Conti B, ‘Case Studies of Interactive Radicalisation: France’ (June 2020) 14-22.

Group 2: Counter-Radicalization (Schools)

**Further reading**
Roder I, ‘*Les Enseignants de France Face Aux Contestations de La Laïcité et Au Séparatisme*’ (6 January 2021).  

**Group 3: Moderation of Online Hate Speech or Censorship?**
Brown A, ‘What is so Special about Online (as Compared to Offline) Hate Speech?’ (2018) 18 Ethnicities 297.

**Oct 21:** Choose Your Group: Formulating the Problem  
Presentations and discussions continued

**III. CONTINUED: REFINING THE PROBLEM**

**Oct 25:** Which problem do YOU want to solve?  
Focusing YOUR problem/solution – group discussion/individual worksheet  
Presentation: 5 minutes/15 minute discussion with class
Oct 28: **Design Thinking**
Working backwards lab: from solution to problem
1. *Combatting radicalization project*
2. *D.Rad*

Discussion:
1) What problem are they trying to solve?
2) What are the resources available for solving that problem?
3) Other ways of solving the same problem?

Nov 1-5: **FALL BREAK – no classes**

IV. **CONFLICTS: CAN EVERYTHING BE SOLVED WITH AN APP?**

Nov 8: Conflicts in deradicalization: What kinds of solutions are possible in a democracy?

Nov 12: *Last day to withdraw from a course or to choose CR/NC grading option*

V. **RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Nov 15: *Defining goals, defining success*


Discussion: Leadership, Organization, and Strategy

Nov 18: *Group work on conflicts in their area (individual worksheet)*

Nov 22: *Presentations on resources:*
Group work and presentations on 3 potential resources and how they could be accessed, mobilized, or harnessed.

Nov 25: *Group activity: Debate (opposing stances) in front of the class*

VI. **CRAFTING SOLUTIONS**

Nov 29: *Thinking towards a solution*
Group Assignment: Present two examples of other organizations or individuals that are doing something comparable to your project

Dec 2: *Group work on final proto-type*

Dec 6: *Making choices / trade-offs*
Take a look at this “budget spending trade-offs” app:
Bring an object that represents a solution to a problem and discuss what kind of trade-offs the designers have faced
Dec 9: Meetings with professors to confirm final implementation plan

Dec 16, 12:30: Final exam period: Presentations of final proto-type