



T-IES Summer School July · June 21 – July 19, 2025

“Weaponization of Knowledge: The Historical Legacy of Propaganda and Disinformation in the US and Europe”

In cooperation with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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Many of us have heard the phrase “knowledge is power.” The motto is said to have originated with Francis Bacon, a philosopher from the 16th and early 17th centuries famous for creating the scientific method. Thomas Jefferson was also fond of the concept, using it to underscore the idea that an informed citizenry is crucial for the success and stability of a democratic society. But what if we thought about the relationship between knowledge and power differently? In this class, we will explore *how those in power create knowledge* and understand how what counts as knowledge is used to maintain their political position. By learning sociological frameworks to question knowledge and reality, this class will then use that theory to study applied cases of weaponized knowledge throughout history in the United States and Germany. As students learn foundational concepts and visit museums related to the subject matter, they will develop an array of communication strategies for distinct situations and specific audiences. In doing so, this course can fulfill both the “[Ways of Knowing](#)” and “[Communication Beyond Carolina](#)” IDEAs requirements. This course will also include an extended weekend excursion to Berlin.

Week 1 - The Origins

Week 2 – The Social Construction of Race

Week 3 – Reality and Memory

Week 4 - Applied Cases of Propaganda and Presentations

Additional activities

- Orientation (Jan Battke) and Intercultural Workshop (Marc Strain)
- German Language Courses (Annika Böcker, Gabriela Ebeling) – four 90 min sessions each (Week 1 & 2)
- Excursion / Study Trip to Berlin (Layne, Tripodi, Battke) – three nights (at the end of Week 2)
- Guest inputs by Tübingen faculty (Bellon, Morozov)

WEEK 1	MORNING	NOON	AFTERNOON	EVENING
Sat, June 21	Arrival in Tübingen: Check-In Accommodation (CLOUD N°7 STUDIOS, Karlstr. 11/2)			
Sun, June 22	<u>10:00</u> City tour (Lucas Ogden), Meeting point: <u>9:45</u> in front of the accommodation / <u>12:00</u> Joint Lunch (Neckarmüller) / from 14:00: Time with buddies			
Mon, June 23	<u>10:00-12:00</u> Registration and Orientation; Introduction to the Program Room 081, Keplerstr. 2	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch with Buddies (Mensa)		<u>17:00-19:00</u> Grand Opening of Summer School Kleiner Senat, Neue Aula
Tue, June 24	<u>09:30-12:00</u> Intercultural Workshop and Getting to know each other (I) Room 236, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	<u>13:30-15:00</u> Intercultural Workshop and Getting to know each other (II) Marc Strain Room 236, Neue Aula	<u>19:00-open end</u> Quiz, Games ("Werewolf"), and Group Challenge (T-IES) Schlattehaus, Kleiner Saal, Österbergstr. 2
Wed, June 25	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions Knowledge As Power <i>Systems of power shape how knowledge is produced, circulated, and controlled in society</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	<u>13:30-15:00</u> German Course Annika Böcker Room 063, Neue Aula <u>13:30-15:45</u> German Course Gabriela Ebeling Room 004, Keplerstr. 2	
Thu, June 26	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions How Fascism Works <i>Fascism is bound by recurring patterns and tactics that have been employed by fascist movements throughout history</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	<u>13:30-15:00</u> German Courses Annika Böcker, Gabriela Ebeling Room 063, Neue Aula Room 004, Keplerstr. 2	<u>19:00</u> Picnic in Bota with buddies
Fri, June 27	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions The Origins of Totalitarianism <i>Totalitarian regimes consolidate power and control the masses through propaganda, manipulation of truth, and the activation of mass movements to shape public opinion</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	<u>13:30-16:30</u> Course Sessions War and Propaganda <i>Throughout war, strategic media practices to shift ideological positions have been used. This week we will look at some of this content and present our own disinformation/propaganda campaigns</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>18:00-20:00</u> GUEST INPUT UT Faculty (Online Lecture on "War and Propaganda in Europe Today") Dr. Oleg Morozov Konferenzraum II, Alte Botanik
Sat, June 28	FREE / Time with buddies			
Sun, June 29				

WEEK 2	MORNING	NOON	AFTERNOON	EVENING
Mon, June 30	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions <i>The Origins of Race</i> <i>Epistemology (how we know what we know) is also connected to how racial thinking is central to historical, social, political, and economic function</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	<u>13:30-15:00</u> German Courses <i>Annika Böcker, Gabriela Ebeling</i> Room 063, Neue Aula Room 004, Keplerstr. 2	<u>17:00-20:00</u> City game
Tue, July 1	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions <i>Critical Race Theory</i> <i>Intersectionality exposes the connected nature of social categories and explores how privilege and discrimination are based on the combination of these identities. We will use this concept to consider how this applies to educational access and the legal strategies employed to protect desegregation of education</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	<u>13:30-16:30</u> Course Sessions <i>Black Reconstruction in America</i> <i>Prevailing narratives portray reconstruction as a failure and suggest that Black people were not ready for responsible citizenship. DuBois questions this logic, exposing how racism, political compromises, and economic exploitation, and the rise of Jim Crow segregation undermined racial equality</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	
Wed, July 2	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions <i>Racial Legacies of Post-Truth</i> <i>By looking at two cases in the US and how government handles drugs and housing, we can see how policies of our past present a better picture of our future than phrases like “post-truth”</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	<u>13:30-15:00</u> German Course <i>Annika Böcker</i> Room 063, Neue Aula <u>13:30-15:45</u> German Course <i>Gabriela Ebeling</i> Room 004, Keplerstr. 2	
Thu, July 3	<u>All Day</u> Study Trip to BERLIN Separate schedule will be made available			
Fri, July 4				
Sat, July 5				
Sun, July 6				

WEEK 3	MORNING	NOON	AFTERNOON	EVENING
Mon, July 7	FREE [Group will be back from Berlin late on Sunday ...]		<u>13:30-15:00</u> T-IES Course / Workshop <i>Jan Battke (UT)</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	
Tue, July 8	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions <i>Social Construction of Reality</i> <i>What we think of as reality is not a neutral, objective, fact. It is socially constructed through human interactions and collective agreement</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	<u>13:30-16:30</u> Course Sessions <i>Philosophy of History</i> <i>How we remember history is not as simple as we might think. The past is not an objective record and is influenced by the present</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	
Wed, July 9	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions <i>Searching for Alternative Facts</i> <i>The way we see the world shapes how we search for information online. The keywords and phrases we use are tied to systems of power</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	<u>13:30-15:00</u> T-IES Course / Workshop <i>Jacqueline Bellon (UT)</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>18:00-19:00</u> Punting tour
Thu, July 10	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions <i>Monuments & Museums</i> <i>Students examine two Pulitzer Center reporting projects that explore the symbolism of memorials, including Confederate monuments and streets named after Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	<u>13:30-15:00</u> T-IES Course / Workshop <i>Jacqueline Bellon (UT)</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>18:00-20:00</u> GUEST INPUT UT Faculty (Online Lecture on “Memory Culture in Europe”) <i>Dr. Oleg Morozov</i> Konferenzraum II, Alte Botanik
Fri, July 11	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions <i>The OpEd Project</i> <i>Students start the process of writing an op-ed style piece on a subject of their choosing. Prof. Tripodi will guide students in this process to help with placement</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	FREE	
Sat, July 12	FREE / Time with buddies			
Sun, July 13				

WEEK 4	MORNING	NOON	AFTERNOON	EVENING
Mon, July 14	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions Screening <i>I, TOO (2022)</i> Group Discussion + Op-ed Workshop Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	<u>13:30-15:00</u> T-IES Course / Workshop Jan Battke Room 063, Neue Aula	
Tue, July 15	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions Screening <i>Homecoming (1941)</i> Group Discussion + Op-ed Workshop Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	Field work for Jacqueline Bellon's course	
Wed, July 16	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions Screening <i>Little Tokyo USA (1942)</i> Final Meetings for Disinformation Campaigns Due: Op-ed Assignment Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	<u>13:30-15:00</u> T-IES Course / Workshop Jacqueline Bellon Room 063, Neue Aula	
Thu, July 17	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions Presentations <i>Students Present Disinformation Campaigns to Class for Final Feedback</i> Due: Peer Evaluation of Disinformation Campaign Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	FREE	
Fri, July 18	<u>9:00-12:00</u> Course Sessions Final Presentations <i>Start of Conference on the Weaponization of Knowledge</i> Room 063, Neue Aula	<u>12:00-13:30</u> Lunch Break	<u>13:30-14:30</u> Feedback	<u>17:00-19:00</u> Grand Farewell Fürstenzimmer, Hohentübingen Castle
July 19	Check-Out and Departure			