

**Crisis, Emergency and Risk Communications in the 21st Century:
A Cross Cultural Interdisciplinary Seminar on
Media Promise and Performance**

OBJECTIVE

The growing occurrence of expected and unexpected crises, emergencies and risk situations in the 21st century, and the changes in their nature, demand optimization of media performance in these areas. To achieve this objective, **a Cross Cultural Interdisciplinary Seminar on Crisis, Emergency and Risk Communication sponsored jointly by Hadassah Academic College in Jerusalem and Wagner College in Staten Island, New York, with the active support of the Minerva Center for the Rule of Law under Extreme Conditions in the University of Haifa, will take place on the Hadassah College campus in Jerusalem, on January 10 and 11, 2016**, with the participation of media professionals, academics, decision-makers, legislators and regulators, students, experts and activists in the seminar topics, from Israel, the US and other countries.

PREMISES

The seminar is based on the following premises:

- a) Since their advent, the media of communication have been an integral part of crises, emergency and risk situations;
- b) Research in the 20th century has revealed a marked media preference for war, revolutions, disaster and abrupt social change;
- c) Newer and more threatening aspects of this preference have emerged in the 21st century, related to official and unofficial violence, asymmetric war and terrorism, ecological and environmental disasters, health epidemics, humanitarian aid, and more;
- d) Together with newer decentralized media modalities based on advanced technologies, and with structural and professional changes in the press, radio and television, current media culture --- including the coverage of strategies, ethics, aesthetics and professional techniques in extreme conditions --- has lagged considerably behind such changes;
- e) Significant contributions to this situation can be made by a cross cultural interdisciplinary forum to be convened periodically, with the participation of media professionals, emergency and risk experts, public sphere personalities, and academic scholars, researchers and students.

AREAS OF FOCUS

- a) Identification and critique of traditional and changing media cultures, norms and activities, with particular reference to emergencies, crisis and risk situations, such as wars, terrorism/counter terrorism/cyber terrorism and military actions; economic meltdowns and sociopolitical fragmentation; epidemics, floods, storms, fires and earthquakes, and national and other security emergencies, socioeconomic crises, natural and human-made disasters, humanitarian aid and efforts;
- b) The promise and performance of media coverage (in the world and in Israel), including social responsibility vs. information quality and volume; freedom of expression and information vs. social responsibility and control; media ethos (such as the US first amendment and its impact on worldwide media culture) vs. the rule of law under extreme conditions;
- c) Time and space dimensions in (pre-, during, and post) crisis, emergency and risk situations, including warning and “whistle blowing”, news-value, panic-creating aspects, damage, rehabilitation, global, regional, local, and “glocal” aspects;
- d) Journalism genres: security-oriented, peace-oriented, economic, ecological and disaster-oriented, humanitarian, participatory and social-network journalism.
- e) Additional topics to be defined by the sponsors and participants.