



The 12th South Asian Media and Cultural Studies (SAMCS) Conference Program



Conference website: bit.ly/samcs26

Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter): @samcsfsu

YouTube: bit.ly/samcsyoutube (*The conference will be streamed live here)

Opening Keynote Address (In-person Event)

Thursday, January 29, 2026

Reception: 05:00 PM (EST) | Keynote Presentation: 05:30 PM (EST)

Location: The Globe Auditorium, Florida State University, Tallahassee, USA

Keynote YouTube live stream: <https://www.youtube.com/live/jiCBBmCVeOI>

FSU College of Communication & Information's South Asian Media & Cultural Studies Conference,
College of Social Sciences & Public Policy's Ruth K. & Shepard Broad International Lecture Series &
Center for Global Engagement's Engage Your World Speaker Series present

INDIGENOUS RESPONSES TO SOUTH ASIA'S CLIMATE CRISES

Keynote Lecture at the 12th Annual South Asian Media & Cultural Studies Conference

Talk by Dr. Michael Ogden

Dean Emeritus, College of Humanities & Social Sciences, Zayed University, Dubai

Thursday, January 29

5 p.m. Reception | 5:30 p.m. Lecture | The Globe Auditorium



Indigenous peoples in South Asia inhabit some of the most naturally diverse and ecologically vulnerable regions on Earth. The climate crises they face are existential threats to their communities' well-being and, in some instances, to their very survival. To counteract short-term thinking and the extractive approaches to development and social change favored by South Asian governments and other authorities, Dr. Michael Ogden argues that the Seventh Generation Principle must be adopted. Articulated originally by the Haudenosaunee Confederacy in North America, it views the future not as a horizon too distant to care much about but as "an ever-present garden to be cultivated by all for all times" (Sardar, 2010). To illustrate such an ethos in action, the lecture will feature clips from Indigenous documentaries produced in South Asia that showcase the importance of thinking futuristically at the local level and of contemporary, place-based solutions to the climate crisis.

Ogden is an accomplished teacher, scholar, filmmaker and storyteller. A descendant of the Nez Perce and Salish people, he was raised on a cattle ranch in Oregon. Following his graduation with a B.A. in Communication Studies from George Fox University, he served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Fiji for two years. He subsequently earned a Ph.D. in political science at the University of Hawai'i. His academic career includes an instructor position at the Center for Pacific Studies and tenured appointments at the University of Hawai'i, Central Washington University, where he taught in the American Indian Studies Program and founded a film studies program, and Zayed University in Dubai. He retired from Zayed last fall, having taught multiple media-related courses, including filmmaking, and served as dean of the university's College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

FSU

CENTER FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT
COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES & PUBLIC POLICY



Main Conference: Friday, January 30, 2026

Main Conference YouTube Live Stream Link: <https://www.youtube.com/live/0OAVC6Xgh4Y>

Welcome and Introduction (7:00 AM – 7:15 AM EST)

Dean Michelle Kazmer, College of Communication and Information, FSU

Zoom Link for Presenters (Same link for all sessions)

Zoom Link: <https://fsu.zoom.us/j/96921212498?pwd=PpxStxDKyzdf76MTf7SEhYl3KCigXG.1>

Meeting ID: 969 2121 2498

Passcode: 300126

Panel 1 (7:15 AM – 8:30 AM EST)

“Journalism, Ethics, and Media Innovation in South Asia”

Moderator: Dr. Azmat Rasul, Associate Professor, College of Communication and Media Sciences, Zayed University, Abu Dhabi, UAE

Description: This panel explores contemporary challenges in journalism, ethical practices, AI-driven innovations, and resilient communication strategies across South Asia.

Papers:

1. Can Mainstream Media Remain Relevant to Generation Z?, by Hamna Shakeel, IBA Karachi
2. Beyond the Byline: The Role of Trauma Literacy in Fostering a Resilient and Ethical Press in South Asia, Dr. Anshu Arora, AMITY University
3. Perceptions and Practices of Solutions Journalism in Pakistani Newsrooms: An Exploratory Study, by Atif Ashraf, University of Central Punjab
4. Role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Transforming Digital and Electronic Journalism in Pakistan, by Javaid Ur-Rahman & Farhan Latif, University of Gujarat

5. From Disaster to Displacement: Exploring Media Coverage of Climate Refugees in South Asia, by Dr. Ayesha Sadiqa, University of Central Punjab

Panel 2 (8:30 AM – 09:45 AM EST)

“Cultural Revival, Tradition, and Digital Storytelling”

Moderator: Dr. Vaibhav Diwanji, Assistant Professor, William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of Kansas, USA

Description: Focusing on cultural preservation and revival, this panel examines how South Asian arts, folklore, literature, theatre, and visual culture are reimagined in contemporary media spaces.

Papers:

1. Art and Artisans of Sindh, by Humna Athar, Habib University
2. Rise of Mizo Digital Storytellers: Reviving Folklore in the Digital Age, by Dr. Embassy Lawbei, CHRIST (Deemed to be) University
3. Cultural Branding and Media Afterlives of Rickshaw and Truck Art in South Asia: From Tradition to Transformation, and Global Visibility, by Nabila Haque Mitu, Jahangirnagar University
4. Preserving the Pulse of Tradition, Scripting the Future: Urdu Literature as a Medium of Resilience and Renewal in South Asia, by Dr. Rani Begum, Women University Mardan
5. Itinerant Publics: Mobility, Embodied Practice, and the Cultural Politics of Assam’s Bhramyaman Theatre, by Stooti Baruah, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Panel 3 (09:45 AM – 11:00 AM EST)

“Identity, Mobilization, and Youth Engagement in Media”

Moderator: Ms. Oladoyin Abiona, Doctoral Candidate, School of Communication, Florida State University, USA

Description: This panel examines gendered experiences, youth participation, mobility, and political engagement through social and digital media across South Asia.

Papers:

1. Humorous Political Campaigning via Artificial Intelligence Videos on Facebook in Bangladesh, by Salauddin Ahmed, University of Southern Mississippi
2. (Re)imagining South Asian Feminist Futures: Tagore's Women and #MeToo in the Contemporary World, by Dr. Krishnapriya T K, CHRIST (Deemed to be) University

3. Women's Voices in Digital Islam: The Contested Reception of Women-Led Islamic Preaching on YouTube in Bangladesh, by Mohammad Obaydullah, Jahangirnagar University
4. Social Networking: An Analysis of Health-Related Social Support Messages Posted in a Facebook Group for Kashmiri Women, by Arbeena & Mohd. Asif, University of Kashmir
5. Am I Bengali Enough?: A Research through Design Approach to Navigating Cultural Identity, by Dr. Sonali Srivastav & Archisha Biswas, IIT Hyderabad

Panel 4 (11:00 AM – 12:15 PM EST)

“Resilience, Representation, and Re-Archiving in South Asia”

Moderator: Dr. Mariam Shaikh, Adviser/ Social and Digital Media, Office of the President of the General Assembly, United Nations

Description: This panel examines resilience and identity through media, arts, and digital practices in South Asia. It explores how marginalized voices, gender, and artistic practices are archived, represented, and reimagined.

Papers:

1. Re-archiving the Digital Arts in South Asia, by Najam Ul Assar, University of British Columbia
2. Rebuilding the Self: A Phenomenological Study on Resilience in Young Adults Following Adolescent Bereavement, Based on a Case Study in Karachi, Pakistan, by Anum Afra, Habib University
3. Exploring Media's Role in Shaping Indigenous Girls' Understanding of Feminine Hygiene in Bangladesh, by Tahura Tabassum Tari, Minnesota State University, Mankato
4. Construction, Deconstruction or Reconstruction? Digital Media and Transgender Representation in South Asia, by Farah Afzal, Wilfrid Laurier University
5. Subjectivity Through Simulation: The Artificial Woman Reimagined, Reclaiming Female Subjecthood in Kahaani and Laapataa Ladies, by Dr. Rebecca Peters, Florida State University

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Poster Session: (12:15 PM – 1:30 PM EST)

In-person posters (The Globe Auditorium, Florida State University):

Moderator: TBD

1. Between Two Worlds: Cultural Adaptation and Belonging among Nepali Doctoral Students in U.S. Higher Education, by Aastha Bhattarai, Florida State University
2. Digital Renewal of a Protest Repertoire: The Circulation and Resonance of Slogans in Bangladesh's 2024 Quota Movement, by Mamunor Rashid & Silme Sadia, University of Colorado Boulder
3. Tech-Tools and Tech-Controls Pakistani Digital Media in Ambivalence, Dr. Syeda Sultana, University of Antwerp, Belgium

Virtual posters (via Zoom):

Zoom Link: <https://fsu.zoom.us/j/96921212498?pwd=PpxStxDKyzdf76MTf7SEhYl3KCigXG.1>

Meeting ID: 969 2121 2498

Passcode: 300126

Moderators: Dr. Claudia Liebeskind, Dr. Steve McDowell, Dr. Rebecca Peters - Florida State University; Dr. Asif Shaikh, Clinical Assistant Professor - Stony Brook University; Dr. Mariam Shaikh, Adviser/ Social and Digital Media, Office of the President of the General Assembly, United Nations

1. Karma and Reincarnation Beyond Borders: South Asian Dharmic Philosophy in Korean Popular Dramas, by Radhashtami Bhujun, Gujarat University
2. From Gadget to Sanctuary: A Phenomenological Approach to Headphone Usage among Indian Gen Z and Millennials, by Aryan Jain & Dr. Krishnapriya T K, CHRIST (Deemed to be) University
3. Analyzing the Experiences of Hakki Pikki Youth Using Social Media Platforms to Navigate Within Their Collective Identity, by Mudit Aggarwal, Ridhima Thareja & Aditya Mitra, CHRIST (Deemed to be) University
4. Smartphones, Social Justice, and the Reinvention of Resistance: Caste, Media, and Youth Agency in Contemporary South Asia, by Sonali Gupta, Jawaharlal Nehru University
5. Tales from the hinterland: Grasping global audiences with India's untold digital shows, by Amit Jena, Symbiosis International (Deemed) University
6. Reconnecting with Tamil Roots: Cultural Rediscovery Through Digital Media (What You Missed in Tamil Class), by Kasthuree Thiyakalingam, Independent Researcher & Founder of What You Missed in Tamil Class
7. Communication during Crisis in the Age of AI and New Media: An Analysis of Social Media in the 2025 Nepalese Gen Z Protests through Uses and Gratification, by Sayema Nawshin Rahman Aroni, Independent University, Bangladesh
8. Exploring the Fieldwork Experiences of Undergraduate Women in Karachi, Pakistan, Hafsa Shaikh, Habib University, Pakistan

9. Safety Challenges and Coping Strategies of Women Journalists in India, by Manasvi Maheshwari, University of Miami
10. Building Strength, Finding Voice: The Emerging Fitness Culture in Pakistan, Muhammad Saleem, University of Houston
11. Social Determinants of Health and Gender Disparities in Pakistan, Aabia Saleem, University of Houston

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LUNCH in CGE Auditorium (12:15 PM – 1:15 PM EST)

[Those present are invited to attend a complimentary lunch in the cafeteria of the CGE, catered by Mayuri Indian Restaurant.]

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Closing Keynote Address (In-person Event)

Keynote Presentation: 01:30 PM (Eastern Time)

Location: The Globe Auditorium, Florida State University, Tallahassee, USA

Keynote YouTube live stream: <https://www.youtube.com/live/aeq78aUyifo>

Dr. Taimur Shamil

***“The Narrative Power: Mapping South Asian Think Tanks
and Their Influence on Policy Formulation”***



Abstract: The mapping of contemporary South Asian think tanks reveals a growing diversity in their operating models, with newer, frequently non-governmental organizations prioritizing social justice, environmental sustainability, and regional integration. These think tanks offer alternative policy narratives, with impact relying less on direct bureaucratic links and more on their capacity to mobilize civil society, foster cross-border dialogues, and introduce novel conceptual frameworks that challenge dominant government thinking. By cultivating robust stakeholder relationships, producing accessible “impact stories,” and engaging with media and emerging scholars, they strive to circumvent traditional gatekeepers. Ultimately, their policy influence is a function of not only the content (the research) but also the manner (the narrative presentation), determining whether their ideas are perceived as politically inconvenient or embraced as the new consensus for regional stability and progress.

Dr. Taimur Shamil is a national security and foreign policy expert from Pakistan, based in New York, U.S. He holds a Ph.D. in International Relations with over 15 years of service in government, academia and media. Mr. Shamil is the former Show Host of prime-time program “Dialogue with Taimur Shamil” on Pakistan Television, PTV (World), where he focused on Pakistan’s foreign policy and global politics. His analyses have also appeared regularly on national and international TV Channels like Al-Jazeera, Al-Jazeera Arabic and several other TV channels. Mr. Shamil has served as Senior Research Fellow at Pakistan’s leading think tank, the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI), and adjunct faculty at the National Defence University. He is the President and Executive Director of Policy East, a New York based think tank.

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**End of the 12th South Asian Media and Cultural Studies (SAMCS)
Annual Conference, 2026**

