

DEGREE COURSE: Innovative Technologies for Digital Communication (L-20)

TEACHING: Sociology of Media and Communication

CFU: 6

MODULES: NO

COURSE YEAR: first

TEACHER NAME: Valentina Fedele

EMAIL ADDRESS: v.fedele@unilink.it

RECEPTION HOURS: by appointment (send an email to v.fedele@unilink.it).

TEACHING LEARNING OUTCOMES

The teaching aims to enable students to achieve the following learning outcomes:

1. **Knowledge and ability to understand:** students will be able to understand the main languages of media and communication, through the acquisition of theoretical and analytical tools, allowing them to identify relevant dimensions of the relationship between media, society and culture. Specific attention will be given to the construction and deconstruction of differences in contemporary media.
2. **Applied knowledge and understanding:** students will be able to understand the main processes and mechanisms underlying media and communication in the contemporary era. Students will also be able to analyse media contents and to understand them in their ecological relationship, applying the most relevant theoretical tools.
3. **Autonomy of judgement:** students will be able to reflect independently on contemporary evolutions of the relationship between media and society, deepening the main contemporary communication phenomena. Students will also be able to critically identify social and cultural models, produced and reproduced through the media, defining their impact.
4. **Communication skills:** students will be able to learn and correctly apply specialized terminology.
5. **Ability to learn:** Through the discussions with the teacher and other students during the course, the ability to adopt a critical learning method will be developed, useful for connecting theoretical tools and empirical analyses and developing an autonomous thought.

DETAILED PLAN OF THE COURSE

The aim of the course is to provide students with the general knowledge to recognize different dimensions of the complex relationship between media and contemporary social and cultural processes. After having addressed the main theoretical approaches and methodologies of sociological analysis of media and communication, the course deepens the construction and deconstruction of identities and differences in communication, with specific reference to social media. The course is organized into three thematic parts, within which the following topics are addressed:

- 1) *Elements of the media:* historical evolution and social dimension of media technologies; organization and governance of the media industry; socio-economic elements (advertising, sponsors and direct user payments); media contents (semiological approaches, discourse analysis, content analysis); media users (main audience analysis approaches, cultural

studies, encoding and decoding model, critical dimensions of digital participatory culture); introduction to internet studies.

- 2) *Sociological theories on communication*: from the analysis of traditional media to the theories on media effects; the cultural industry and the Frankfurt school; consensus building; the spiral of silence; media, participation and democracy; agenda setting and newsmaking; media dependency theory; cultivation theory; visual cultural studies and visual sociology.
- 3) *Media and identity*: construction and de-construction of difference in contemporary media; communication and creation of imagery; homogenization, individualization, stigmatization; ethnic difference in the media (stereotyping, segregation, media and migration); media and gender (male and female in the media; the representation of LGBTQIA communities); forms and strategies of deconstruction.

The course is structured in close reference to the book, integrated with materials provided by the teacher.

RECOMMENDED PREPARATIONS

There are no preparatory requirements.

FINAL EXAM

The exam consists of an oral discussion concerning the indicated texts and the material (ppt.) provided by the teacher. Its aim is to verify students' mastery of the subject, specific linguistic skills and the main components and applied theories of analysis on the relationship between media and society. In particular, the exam evaluates the level of learning of basic theories and concepts and the ability to critically analyse the issues covered during the course, as well as to independently apply the knowledge acquired to reflect on the relationship between media, culture and society.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. **Knowledge and understanding**: the exam evaluates the acquisition of notions related to the topics of the course programme.
2. **Applied knowledge and understanding**: the exam evaluates the ability to apply the tools acquired to media analysis.
3. **Autonomy of judgement**: the exam evaluates the ability to independently carry out critical readings of the relationship between media and society and their consequences.
4. **Communication skills**: the final exam will evaluate the terminological skills and the ability to effectively present the topics studied.
5. **Learning abilities**: the final exam will evaluate the ability to elaborate on the topics.

FINAL MARK ALLOCATION CRITERIA

The final vote, expressed out of thirty, will be awarded according to the following criteria:

- 18-21: basic acquisition and application of knowledge; basic capacity for autonomous reflection; basic specific language skills.
- 22-24: good acquisition and application of knowledge; reasonable capacity for autonomous reflection; average specific language skills.
- 25-27: more than good acquisition and application of knowledge; good autonomy in reflection; good specific language skills.

- 28-30: excellent acquisition and application of knowledge; autonomy in critical reflection; excellent specific language skills.

TEACHING MATERIALS

The course material consists of 1 manual; ppt. provided by the teacher.

REFERENCE BOOK

Hodkinson, P. (2017), *Media, Culture and Society* (2nd edition), Sage: London, pp. 326.