**Syllabus – NewsReel2**

1. **Data on the program**

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| 1.1 Field of study | **Journalism/Communication and Media Studies** |
| 1.2 Recommended level *[Bachelor/ Masters]* | **Bachelor** |
| 1.3 Recommended study programme/ qualification | **Journalism/Media Studies/Mass Communication** |

**2. Data on the discipline**

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| 2.1 Name | | | **Verifying and analysing fake news** | | |
| 2.2 Recommended qualifications for the teacher [practitioner, theoretician, PhD holder in a certain field of study, etc.] | | | **Theoretician; practitioners/journalists for seminars** | | |
|  | | |  | | |
| 2.3 Year of study *[entry level/ advanced]* | **1st & 2nd** | 2.4. Evaluation type *[examination/ project/ portfolio]* | **Essay** | 2.5. Type of discipline *[facultative, compulsory]* | **Compulsory** |

**3. Total time - estimated *[hours per semester of student activity]***

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3.1 Number of hours per week | **2** | From which: 3.2 course *[theory]* | **1 (12 weeks)** | 3.3 seminar *[theory & practice]*/  laboratory *[practice & laboratory]* | **1 (12 weeks)** |
| 3.4 Total number of hours  *[3.1 X number of weeks; 12-14 weeks per semester]* | **24** | From which: 3.5 course *[theory]* | **12** | 3.6 seminar *[theory & practice]*/  laboratory *[practice & laboratory]* | **12** |
| Time distribution | | | | | **Hours** |
| Individual study using a manual, course support, bibliography, notes from the course | | | | | **40** |
| Documentation online and/ or on the field | | | | | **40** |
| Preparing homework: individual or teamwork, portfolios, essays, etc. | | | | | **40** |
| Tutoring | | | | | **0** |
| Examinations | | | | | **20** |
| Other activities .................................................. | | | | | **0** |
| 3.7 Total hour of individual study | | | | | **140** |
| 3.8 Total hours per semester (3.4. + 3.7) | | | | | **164** |
| 3.9 Number of ECTS | | | | | **5** |

**4. Preconditions (if applicable)**

***[Who are the intended students]***

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| 4.1 curriculum preconditions (recommended previous courses) | **Introductory courses in journalism and/or media studies** |
| 4.2 competences preconditions | **NA** |

**5. Infrastructure needed (if applicable)**

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| 5.1 for the course | **NA** |
| 5.2 for the seminar/laboratory | **NA** |

**6. Specific abilities**

***[What do we want students to be able to do]***

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| 6.1. Professional competencies  (job skills to be developed) | **To acquire the skills necessary to recognize quality media content, as well as deceptive media content (facts vs fabricated content).**  **To have the ability to recognize the various types of fake news in the media.**  **To have the ability of recognizing reliable and unreliable sources.**  **To understand how journalistic stories are created vs fake news**  **To develop critical thinking skills and to understand the professional ethics standards.**  **To develop the necessary skills for verifying information before publication, as well as the necessary skills for fact-checking.** |
| 6.2. Transversal competencies  (teamwork, critical thinking, global citizenship, etc.) | **Critical thinking**  **Analytical thinking**  **Media and Information literacy** |

**7. Discipline’s objectives**

***[related to developing abilities & competencies]***

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| 7.1 General objective | **To improve the quality of today’s news by increasing students’ media literacy skills in order to raise the trust in journalism.** |
| 7.2 Specific objectives  *[Learning outcomes – observable, measurable]* | * **To teach the students what fake news and misinformation are.** * **To offer the students the necessary tools to recognize real news from fake and false ones.** * **To teach the students how to distinguish the trustworthy sources from unreliable ones.** * **To teach the students how to verify the information.** |

**8. Content**

***[for 12 weeks]***

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| **8.1 Course** | **Teaching methods**  *[connected to professional & transversal competencies]* | **Observations**  *[link among proposed teaching methods and intended competences]* |
| **Course – week 1**  Introduction of the course  History of Fake News | Lecture, discussion, questions/answers | Presenting the objectives and the structure of the course, the assignments and evaluation methods.  Definitions of „fake news”.  History of „fake news”  Ground zero in fake news – 2016 the American elections  Dangers of fake news |
| **Courses - weeks 2 and 3**  What is the news?  Fake news typology | Lecture, discussion, questions/answers | Discussing about different classifications of fake news  Fake news examples for each category  Differences between classifications  Actors of fake news |
| **Courses - weeks 4 and 5**  Journalism and Fake News. Ethics and deontology | Lecture, discussion, questions/answers | How the fake news phenomenon affects mainstream journalism  Low-quality journalism  How can journalism stop the development of the fake news phenomenon |
| **Course - week 6**  Digitalisation and transformation of the news industry | Lecture, discussion, questions/answers | The digitalisation of news and the introduction of a new type of audience (the digital public)  Increasing online propaganda, disrupting advertising systems |
| **Course – week 7**  Sources | Lecture, discussion, questions/answers | Analysing different news and fake news from the sources point of view.  Analysing the use of expert/ reputable sources, the use of direct quotes and other methods of verifying the sources |
| **Course - week 8**  Fake news and social media | Lecture, discussion, questions/answers | Why is social media a fertile ground for fake news  How to detect fake news on social media  Journalism on social media and the promotion of news on social media  Actions taken by social media platforms to stop the spread of false news |
| **Course - week 9**  The economic dimension.  Local Fake News | Lecture, discussion, questions/answers | The economic effects of fake news  Clickbaits  The discovery of digital fingerprints, online influencing techniques, bots  Digital frauds  A look at the local fake news from the countries in the project |
| **Course – week 10**  The need for digital literacy | Lecture, discussion, questions/answers | What digital literacy means  Why digital literacy is more important than ever |
| **Course - week 11**  Fact-checking | Lecture, discussion, questions/answers | How to check information, fact-checking  Text, photo, video checking  How to detect „fake news” |
| **Course – week 12**  Trends for tackling fake news in the future | Lecture, discussion, questions/answers | Creating a model to detect fake news on social media  Web interface for detecting "sensational" headlines  Other solutions to combat misinformation |
|  | | |
| **8.2 Seminar/laboratory** | **Teaching methods**  *[connected to professional & transversal competencies]* | **Observations**  *[link among proposed teaching methods and intended competences]* |
| **Seminar – week 1** | Exercises, discussions | Analysing the definitions of fake news.  Talking about the ground zero in fake news – 2016 the American elections.  Analysing the most important fake news moments so far and the consequences of fake news. |
| **Seminar – weeks 2 and 3** | Exercises, discussions | Comparing news and fake news.  Finding and analysing fake news according to the classifications.  Topics for fake news.  Creators, consumers, and arbiters of fake news. |
| **Seminar - weeks 4 and 5** | Exercises, discussions | Examples and analyses of low-quality journalism. Most distinct features.  How can journalism stop the development of the fake news phenomenon? |
| **Seminar - week 6** | Exercises, discussions | The challenges of the news digitalisation process.  The new advertising models and their impact on news/fake news.  Audience expectations of the new type of news. |
| **Seminar - week 7** | Exercises, discussions | Exercise in order to find the correct information and to identify reliable/unreliable sources. |
| **Seminar - week 8** | Exercises, discussions | Analysing different fake news in social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube).  Verifying the sources in social media.  Identifying fake accounts.  Analysing fake news gone viral. |
| **Seminar - week 9** | Exercises, discussions | Ways to fight fake news through media literacy  Analysing subliminal messages  Deconstructing media messages |
| **Seminar - week 10** | Exercises, discussions | How to find the facts - students will write a fact check report of a certain news story. |
| **Seminar - week 11** | Final discussions and preparing the final presentations |  |
| **Seminar - week 12** | Evaluation |  |
|  | | |

**9.1. Compulsory (core) bibliography**

Barclay, Donald A. 2018. Fake News, Propaganda, and Plain Old Lies, The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, London

Dalkir, Kimiz, Katz, Rebecca. 2020. Navigating Fake News, Alternative Facts, and Misinformation in a Post-Truth World, IGI Global

Davis, Evan. Post truth: Why we have reached peak bullshit and what we can do about it. Little Brown, 2017

Edson C. Tandoc Jr., Zheng Wei Lim & Richard Ling (2018) Defining “Fake News”, Digital Journalism, 6:2, DOI: 10.1080/21670811.2017.1360143

Greifeneder, Rainer, Jaffé, Mariela E., Newman, Eryn J., Schwarz, Norbert (2021): The Psychology of fake news, Routledge

Ireton, Cherilyn, Posetti, Julie (eds.) (2018): Journalism, ‘Fake News’ & Disinformation. Handbook for Journalism Education and Training*,* UNESCO, Paris

McBrayer J. (2021) – Beyond Fake News, Routledge, New York

Rusbridger, Alan (2018): Breaking News: The Remaking of Journalism and Why It Matters Now. London: Canongate

Shu, K. et al. (eds.) (2021): Disinformation, Misinformation, and Fake News in Social Media, Springer

Zimdars, Melissa, McLeod, Kembrew (eds.) (2020): Fake News - Understanding Media and Misinformation in the Digital Age, The MIT Press, Cambridge

**9.2. Additional bibliography**

Schudson, Michael*.* 2007.Why Democracies Need An Unlovable Press. Malden, MA: Polity

Jayakumar, Shashi, Ang, Benjamin, Anwar, Nur Diyanah (eds.). 2021. Disinformation and Fake News, Palgrave Macmillan

Wardle, C. 2017. "Fake news. It’s complicated." UK: First Draft, https:// firstdraftnews.org/latest/fake-news-complicated, accessed 6 March 2021

Winston, Brian, Winston, Matthew. 2020. The Roots of Fake News, Routledge, New York

**10. How is the discipline connected to the expectations of the professional/epistemic community**

Newsrooms and journalists are constantly struggling with fake and false news. However, the phenomenon has become widespread and journalists alone cannot deal with it. Thus, there is also a need for academic support. This course will help the media environment by teaching the students how to become both informed news consumers as well as trained journalists who can recognize and correct misinformation.

**11. How is the discipline connected to the rest of the journalistic/communication studies curriculum**

This course is related to almost all the other journalistic/communication studies curriculum: Deontology and media ethics, Media Writing, Reporting Methods, Researching Techniques, News editing and management, Digital communication. To know how to differentiate between facts and fiction, how to verify the information or how to recognise credible sources are some of the basic elements in the study of journalism and communication studies.

**12. Evaluation**

***[How to measure students’ acquired abilities, through different instruments, such as:*** ***tests***, ***analyses of existing journalistic examples***, ***essays***, ***suggested portfolio]***

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| **Type of activity** | **12.1 Evaluation criteria** | **12.2 Evaluation methods** |
| **Course** | Class participation (10 %) | Knowledge of compulsory reading, ability to answer questions during the lecture or/and discuss topics. |
|  | Individual assignment – Essay (40 %) | Written academic essay (max. 10 pages) focused on one of the topics of the course. |
| **Seminar/ laboratory** | A case study and its presentation (50%) | A written presentation on the selected topic from the course subjects |
| **10.3 Minimum performance standard *[linked to specific objectives/ learning outcomes]***  60 % of the overall score; all tasks must be finished and submitted/performed | | |

**RATIONALE**

**Benchmarking courses**

<https://www.umu.se/en/education/exchange-students/propaganda-journalism-and-fake-news/>

<https://mediactive.newscollab.org/>

<https://writingcommons.org/courses/courses-overview/composition/syllabus-fake-news/>

<https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/meta/393210/global-journalism-searching-truth-age-fake-news>

<https://apps.precollege.brown.edu/catalog/course.php?course_code=CEMS0918>

<https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/courses/fake-news-a-history>

<https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/courses/teaching-in-a-digital-world-promoting-digital-literacies-elt?code=O21I421MJC>

<https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/courses/data-science-and-fake-news?code=O21P207COJ>

<https://wwwi.unige.ch/cursus/programme-des-cours/web/teachings/details/2021-7417I>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/course/fakenews>