

Course of study in  
**"Innovative, multimedia and digital communication" - [L-20].**  
 a.y. 2021/2022

**SUBJECT**  
**Theories of communication and digital media**

SDS: SPS/08 - ECT: 9  
 I YEAR; II SEMESTER

Lecturer: **Prof. Claudio Bensi**  
 Disciplinary tutor: **Dr. Rita Nagni**

<p><b>Qualification and scientific background of the lecturer</b></p>	<p>He studied psychology and sociology of communications at La Sapienza University, he specialised in network communication and institutional communication. After various experiences as a researcher and communication expert, he won a competition as a researcher at ISFOL where he was Head of the Web and Multimedia Communication Service. He has edited online information, digital publishing, scientific series and columns.</p> <p>He later extended his interests to new media and multimedia information.</p> <p>He has coordinated several European information and communication projects.</p> <p>He is currently Head of the Press Office of Inapp, where he also held the position of Head of the Service for Communication and Scientific Dissemination. He is editor of editorial series and editor-in-chief of the scientific journal "Sinappsi".</p> <p>As a journalist, he has collaborated with newspapers and magazines. He has been editor-in-chief of trade publications. He is also involved in scientific information and communication.</p>
<p><b>Description of contents and subdivision of the programme into teaching modules</b></p>	<p>The course is organised in <b>3 modules</b> covering the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Module 1. Elements of Communication</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meanings of communication.</li> <li>▪ Basic concepts and terms.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The multidisciplinary approach.</li> <li>▪ A definition of communication.</li> <li>▪ The communication system.</li> <li>▪ The categories of analysis.</li> <li>▪ Dynamics and processes.</li> <li>▪ Models and functions of communication.</li> <li>▪ Analogue and digital communication.</li> </ul> <p>➤ <b>Module 2 - Psychology and Sociology of New Media</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interpersonal communication.</li> <li>▪ Key concepts and models.</li> <li>▪ Interactive and multimedia communication.</li> <li>▪ Mass culture and digital culture.</li> <li>▪ The development of social media.</li> <li>▪ From testimonial to influencer.</li> <li>▪ Theories and experimental approach.</li> <li>▪ Neo rhetoric and persuasion.</li> </ul> <p>➤ <b>Module 3 - Digital communication models: online information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The critical approach.</li> <li>▪ Agenda setting.</li> <li>▪ Newsmaking.</li> <li>▪ Fake news.</li> <li>▪ Disintermediation.</li> <li>▪ Citizen journalism.</li> <li>▪ Selective information and exposure.</li> <li>▪ The digital society.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Abstract</b></p>	<p>The course traces the evolution of the main theories in the field of communication up to the most current, through a pragmatic approach that integrates the psychological matrix with the social one. The basic notions and tools will be provided to allow understanding, analysing and interpreting phenomena and processes in the field of mass and interpersonal communication, with particular regard to the most recent digital declinations. The course is organised in three modules: "Elements of communication", "Psychology and Sociology of new media" and "Digital communication models". The use of an integrated perspective, which takes into account the different study approaches, intends to provide the basic elements and concepts to stimulate critical, creative and systemic thinking of the subject.</p>

<p><b>Learning objectives</b></p>	<p>The course aims to introduce students to the main aspects, methods and systems of the discipline by providing a framework of basic theories useful for its analysis and understanding. The course also aims to provide students with adequate knowledge for the interpretation of the most current communication systems, with particular reference to digital media. By attending the subsequent modules of the course, students will progressively acquire a more articulate and precise picture of the communication processes of the digital society through the study and analysis of the language and social use of the new communication technologies.</p>
<p><b>Expected learning outcomes</b></p>	<p><b>A. Knowledge and understanding</b> The student will achieve the ability to analyse and understand the forms and languages of mass communication and media through the acquisition of theoretical competences on models, with particular attention to the dynamics and systems of digital media.</p> <p><b>B. Applied knowledge and understanding</b> The student will develop the ability and mastery to correctly and thoroughly analyse media products and genres through the application of the main methodologies of analysis.</p> <p><b>C. Autonomy of judgement</b> The student will be able to apply the acquired knowledge to critically observe the role of the media and the transformations introduced by digital media, both on a collective and individual level.</p> <p><b>D. Communication skills</b> The student acquires skills in the use and understanding of technical terms and concepts specific to the subject, as well as the languages most frequently used by the media themselves.</p> <p><b>E. Learning ability</b> The student will develop a learning method capable of linking theoretical skills and empirical analysis, functional to the development of independent thinking.</p>
<p><b>Skills to be acquired</b></p>	<p><b>EXPECTED RESULTS</b></p>

	<p><b>A.</b> Use of advanced textbooks, knowledge of some avant-garde themes within the subject studied. In particular, with regard to the main theories and approaches linked to mass communication and the contemporary media system.</p> <p><b>B.</b> Adequate skills to conceive arguments, to support them and to solve problems within the subject studied, especially with reference to the dynamics and evolutionary processes in the field of information and digital communication. Ability to collect and interpret data useful to determine autonomous judgments through the development of critical thinking that encourages an informed approach, particularly with regard to new media.</p> <p><b>C.</b> Ability to communicate information and ideas and to formulate analytical contributions for the benefit of specialist and non-specialist interlocutors, with particular reference to the languages and multimedia codes specific to the subject of study.</p> <p><b>D.</b> Ability to undertake subsequent studies with a high degree of autonomy, according to a multidisciplinary approach capable of integrating the salient aspects of the different fields of study relating to communication and with a particular focus on the phenomena and processes taking place in the field of digital media.</p>
<p><b>Didactics organisation</b></p>	<p><b>DIDACTICS PROVISION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 6 hours of recorded video lessons available on the platform;</li> <li>➤ 2 synchronous meetings on the platform;</li> <li>➤ Podcasts of all the above-mentioned video lessons.</li> </ul> <p><b>INTERACTIVE DIDACTICS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 1 course orientation forum;</li> <li>➤ 2 thematic in-depth forums;</li> <li>➤ Possibility to carry out work in groups.</li> <li>➤ 3 structured <i>e-activities</i> (as described in the section "<i>in itinere assessment methods</i>").</li> </ul> <p><b>SELF-LEARNING</b></p>

	Teaching materials are provided for each module: in-depth thematic studies, articles and slides by the lecturer, open access readings, online resources, reference bibliography, etc.
<b>Recommended examination texts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Bentivegna S. , Boccia Artieri G. , (2019). <i>Le teorie delle comunicazioni di massa e la sfida digitale</i>. Bari: Laterza.</li> <li>➤ Stella R., Riva C., Scarcelli C. M., Drusian M. (2018). <i>Sociologia dei new media</i>. Novara: UTET</li> </ul>
<b>In itinere assessment methods</b>	<p>Access to the final examination is subject to the following <b>3 e-activities</b>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "Constructing communication": writing a short hypertext composition based on a topic from the topics of module 1 (<i>Elements of communication</i>).</li> <li>2. "Apocalyptic or integrated": peer-learning on the platform to be carried out through forum debate related to the contents of module 2 (<i>Psychology and sociology of new media</i>).</li> <li>3. "Digital information": verification of skills acquired through exercises on the topics of module 3 (<i>Digital communication models - online information</i>).</li> </ol>
<b>Procedure for the final examination</b>	The assessment of learning will take the form of an oral interview on the course contents and on the final report submitted, if any. The grade (min 18, max 30 with possible honours) is determined by the level of performance for each of the following dimensions of the oral interview: mastery of contents, appropriateness of definitions and theoretical references, clarity of argument, command of specialist language.
<b>Language of instruction</b>	Italian