Course Specifications
Valid as from the academic year 2018-2019

Course

Lecturers in academic year 2018-2019
De Marez, Lieven
PS01

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2018-2019
A (semester 2) Dutch guided self-study 10.0 h lecture 35.0 h

Offered in the following programmes in 2018-2019
Bachelor of Science in Communication Science 5 A
Master of Science in Physical Education and Movement Sciences (main subject Sports Policy and Sports Management) 5 A
Linking Course Master of Science in Communication Science (main subject New Media and Society) 5 A
Preparatory Course Master of Science in Communication Science (main subject New Media and Society) 5 A

Teaching languages
Dutch

Keywords
Communication Technology, ICT, Innovation, New Media.

Position of the course
Digitization and innovation are pillars of the current digital and information economy, and are powers of change to which every form of media and communication is susceptible.

Technology and innovation aren’t new. Up to and including the nineties, every form of media and/or communication is gradually been mediated by it and since then, every form of media and/or communication has depended more and more on it. That’s why this course aims at giving an overview of the history and of the challenges that came along with it.

Historically, an overview and an insight is offered in how through the years every form of communication (text, speech, sound, image) has been mediated by technology. Since the nineties, digitization has brought everything up to speed and has made innovation the code word of the ‘present-day’ digital economy and the ‘spiral of innovation’ on which the economy runs. In this course, we give an introduction to the principal aspects, concepts and trends that underpin this spiral of innovation and we expose the ‘innovation’-concept as a trilateral diamond. Innovation can only exist if it is both user-centric and society-proof, and if it’s based on a sustainable business model.

Furthermore, an introduction is given to the most important theoretical frameworks for the study of the user in and environment of new media and innovation.

This course is situated in the curriculum of ‘New Media and Society’. The overall finality of this course is to provide insight into the changing sectors, the changing user and the biggest challenges in the field of new media and ICT. In the specialization course ‘New Media and Society’, there will be continued to build on these insights, both from the standing point of the user, the industry as the society. Within the bachelor degree, the course ‘Innovation research’ (Ba3) continues to build on the standing point of the user, while the course ‘Media economy and media structures’ (Ba1) continues to build
on the standing point of respectively industry and society.

Contents

This course provides insights on the historical evolution that took place for different media and the way in which technological, social and economic processes influenced each other throughout this process. Furthermore, we elaborate on the theoretical frameworks that study audiences in this rapidly evolving environment. This is both useful to understand the past and to investigate current evolutions in media and ICT.

We focus specifically in the way in which technology and innovation have changed every form of communication. Starting from the nineties, the speed at which evolution this took place increased rapidly, mainly due to the introduction of digital technologies. This created a technological environment that had a tremendous impact on both end-users and society, and a market environment that is not only influenced by this technological evolution, but has also become dependent from it. This course provides a critical analysis of the relationship between innovation in media and ICT and these subdomains. Hereby, we also elaborate in the concept of ‘innovation’ and how an increasing pace of new technology introductions had led to an ‘innovation spiral’ in which all stakeholders of the current information society – provider, user, policy maker – have to be able to cope with an increasing amount of technologies, applications and possibilities. This course aims to provide a framework to understand this changing media and ICT environment.

The contents of this course are organized in four main chapters. The first chapter focuses on the concept of innovation and the role of innovation in a socio-economic context. This is explained through the innovation spiral concept which also provides an overview of the main evolutions in each of the societal subdomains that are discussed later in the course. The second chapter discusses the historical technological evolution of the technologies that shape our everyday communication. In this chapter, we also provide the basics of information theory. The third part elaborates on the theories, concepts and frameworks that allow us to understand media audiences from a social sciences point of view. These theories emerged within a historical context, as discussed in the previous chapter, but also provide a useful framework to study recent evolutions, since this is the role of a social scientist within this rapidly changing technological context. The fourth and final chapter then focuses on the relationship between these technologies and the three domains that were described earlier: the individual, society and the economy. We study how a changing ICT environment influences changes in usage and consumption of media and business models of media companies. With these insights, this course aims to offer knowledge to frame and study recent evolutions in media, technology and innovation.

Initial competences

none

Final competences

1 - Good insight in both historical and current evolution concerning innovation and technologies for communication of text, speech and audiovisual material.
2 - Basic understanding of the principal social consequences of these evolutions for user, industry as well as society.
3 - Knowledge of the technological basic concepts of the digitization process and the concepts that characterize this environment that is changed by digitization.
4 - Knowledge of the principal concepts and frames for studying the changing/changed user in this changing/changed environment.
5 - To take a critical and scientifically based (diffusion, domestication) stand concerning the current state of innovation and new communication technologies and communication scientific issues.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in ‘Starting Competences’

Conditions for exam contract

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Guided self-study, lecture

Extra information on the teaching methods

In this course, three central schemes and a literature bundle are provided as hooks to understand all concepts and frames from the syllabus. These not only serve as a guide through the lectures and the syllabus, but also as a hook to explain the current state of affairs. The student is invited to correctly frame the current developments through the latter schemes. The central theoretic frames in this course are the diffusion and the
domestication theory. Linked to the topical examples and the illustrations of ongoing investigation that are used during the course, the students learn how to form a scientifically based verdict and how to take a stand in the face of the developments in the field of new media and ICT (from the user’s perspective).

Learning materials and price
- Estimated total price: 20 EUR
- Printed syllabus in Dutch + additional slides and papers
- Slides are free and downloadable via the electronic teaching environment

References

Course content-related study coaching
- On appointment

Evaluation methods
- end-of-term evaluation

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the first examination period
- Written examination with open questions

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the second examination period
- Written examination with open questions

Examination methods in case of permanent evaluation

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent evaluation
- not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods
- The examination consist of a written exam with open questions. Besides questions on core concepts and the most important evolutions in media, technology and innovation, there will also be an assessment of the capacity to frame and interpret recent evolutions in a scientific manner, based on the theoretical frameworks that are provided within this course.

Calculation of the examination mark

Facilities for Working Students
- Possibility to apply for an individualized course of studies.
- Possibility to request an alternative examination date (to move the examination).
- Possibility to receive feedback on an alternative moment.
- Possibility to make an individual assignment instead of a group assignment.