

MASTER OF ARTS (MA) IN DIGITAL COMMUNICATION & SOCIAL MEDIA

CN 6006 APPLIED COMMUNICATION RESEARCH METHODS

3 US CREDITS

This course enables students to develop the research skills that will allow them to complete successful research projects in their future careers. The theory and techniques of both quantitative and qualitative communication research methods are presented in this course. Using numerous examples of research in the field, the course demonstrates how communication studies are designed and applied to specific cases.

CN 6025 DIGITAL MEDIA PRODUCTION

3 US CREDITS

A professional engaged in Digital Communication & the Social Media is increasingly required to be familiar of the various multimedia platforms that are available in order to effectively produce audiovisual productions. This course provides the opportunity for students to engage in the entire production process from theory to practice in the lab by utilizing the full potential of the various Adobe Creative Cloud suite software. Furthermore, students will be exposed to various skills such as, but not limited to: image and sound aesthetics, filmic processes, storyboarding, production organization, graphic design, color grading, lighting techniques, animation, video & audio effects as well as editing based techniques. The final audiovisual project will be tailored according to the various digital media formats and the inherent communication strategy and will be ready for launching in the mobile, web or social media nexus.

CN 6035 APPLIED COMMUNICATION THEORY

3 US CREDITS

This course addresses the relationship between theory and practice in understanding communication in applied contexts. Specifically, this course provides students with systematic overview of communication theory in traditional and new media, and a greater understanding of how communication concepts, theories, principles, models, methods, research, and other practices, can be applied to address real-life communication and organizational goals. Topics examined in the course include, but are not limited to, techniques of rhetoric and persuasive message strategy, message framing, various audience response models, theories of media effects, major principles of media planning, digital public relations, advertising strategy and social media crisis management.

CN 6040 NEW MEDIA THEORY & RESEARCH

3 US CREDITS

This course has been designed to cover major theoretical debates in the area of internet and new media studies and the empirical evidence that is needed to assess them. Students will comprehend how the communication environment has changed and how digitalization is reshaping our patterns of interaction, sociability, identity, existing social institutions, networks, and structures of everyday life. The course will also discuss critical ethical, policy and legal issues, such as privacy, big data, and freedom of expression in the digital era.

CN 6042 WEB DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

3 US CREDITS

In the digital era, the development of purposeful and engaging online content constitutes a competitive advantage at an individual and collective level. The design and architecture of information are integral elements in the way we make sense of the world around us, which is progressively digitised to serve the needs of everyday life as well as institutional strategic priorities.

The course aims at giving both the fundamental principles of design and development in the context of web presence and a practical hands-on experience of the evaluation and development of audience-centred web places (websites, landing pages, etc.).

The classroom experience combines the study of the relevant theoretical base of digital representation with the practical exploration of online architecture and creation.

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Individually and as a team, students analyse, synthesise and put into practice key elements of web design and development. Websites, landing pages, classic blogs, vlogs and microsites would be the field of students' work that concludes with the design of a functional prototype.

Students first analyse and evaluate a real case study against a series of criteria that stem out of major trends in design and development of web-based content and services as well as user experience concerns. Then, they work as a team towards the design of a purposeful landing page, website or microsite.

Individual research as well as teamwork will take place in a lab environment with the use of popular web-development tools.

CN 6043 BRAND COMMUNICATION

3 US CREDITS

Which are the brands that people love most and why? What draws people to brands, how are brand cultures formed and how do companies create compelling experiences through digital and social media? How is brand management changing in response to the digital media environment? These are the questions the course Brands and Digital Branding is exploring. Specifically, the course focuses on how brands are viewed, built, managed, and measured to ensure a firms' differentiation. To explore these issues, the course provides relevant theories, concepts, techniques, and models in branding. The course will interweave lectures, exercises, guest speakers, case discussions, a workshop and a brand audit group project.

CN 6047 CONTENT STRATEGY

3 US CREDITS

Covering content strategy in relation to broader digital strategy, KPIs and relevant metrics this course develops writing skills for the digital environment, focusing on web texts, posts, tweets, newsletters or blog articles, examining SEO factors as well as script writing for multimedia or multimodal texts, all within the context of a content calendar.

CN 6065 SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT

3 CREDITS

Social media is changing communication patterns around the world in almost every industry. Social media has helped give consumers a voice and connect them with their friends and other like-minded consumers, and it has opened up numerous new communication channels for brands to interact with current and potential customers. The emphasis of this course is on understanding consumers' social interactions, examining the various social media channels available to marketers, learning how to build social marketing strategies, and practicing how to build social communities and track their effectiveness. The course uses a combination of lectures, lab demonstrations, case studies and a simulation game.

CN 6046 UX – USER EXPERIENCE & RESPONSIVE DESIGN

3 US CREDITS

User Experience (commonly abbreviated as UX) is often conceived as an extension of the traditional concepts of ergonomics and usability; UX moves the focus from the predominantly functional aspects of interaction design to a wide variety of sensory, emotional, affective, social, and symbolic connotations that accompany the use of digital technologies. Therefore, UX can be seen as a superset of standard, usability-centred interaction design principles and evaluation criteria.

This course provides an overview of the theoretical underpinnings of UX (ranging from the productive / pragmatic to the experiential / hedonic end of the spectrum) and highlights important issues in the design and evaluation of the users' experience with interactive technologies.

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Furthermore, interaction is no longer limited to a single platform (e.g. the desktop computer); instead, it encompasses a diverse ecosystem of devices ranging from small wearables to large-scale interactive installations. The course highlights the nuances of designing experiences for a multitude of different devices. An introduction to the particulars of designing and developing games (along with hands-on practice using software that is considered standard in the game industry) is also provided as a working example of designing experience-driven interactive applications.

CN 6079 DIGITAL ADVERTISING

3 US CREDITS

Digital advertising, as are most components of what is currently known as “digitalization of life”, is fundamentally different from its traditional, offline version. If communication specialists want to be part of this daring, new and exciting field, they will need to explore innovative pathways of communicating their brands, ideas and products, engaging with the digital generation in an appropriate, mutually respectful and profitable way. This course offers a comprehensive exploration of the strategic, tactical and design aspects of digital advertising tools and channels currently offered, with an audience-centric and analytics-based approach. To this end the course deals with connections between theories and practical applications, useful frameworks and models, as well as concrete digital tools in digital advertising and communication, concurrently providing students with the opportunity to enhance their project portfolio with a digital advertising plan. The educational tools used throughout the course are a combination of lectures, case studies and class discussions, exercises, as well as hands-on workshops with digital platforms and tools.

CN 6127 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH IN COMMUNICATION

3 US CREDITS

Prerequisites

CN 6006 APPLIED COMMUNICATION RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of this module is to introduce graduate students with applied quantitative research methods used in communications and public relations. It focuses mainly on core topics in quantitative research, ranging from basic statistical terms and procedures (such as ‘sample’ and central tendency respectively) to more advanced procedures (such as regression analysis).

It aims to prepare researchers to effectively grasp elementary statistical concepts and theory, as well as intelligently apply basic statistical methods for the purposes of empirical research in communication and public relations.

The course will consequently combine simple exposition to statistical theory with practical use of research methodology, alternating between lectures and computer lab sessions, where students will be introduced to IBM’s SPSS™ statistical package.

The course follows a ‘hands-on’ approach, encouraging students to take an active part in the learning process, after being introduced to the necessary theories and practical instruments in order to apply them in various communication and public relations research scenarios and cases. Thus, students are given the opportunity to immediately apply newly acquired knowledge and skills in relevant research context.

Cases are also used throughout the module, in order to illustrate the various procedures, so that students can gain a better understanding of the practical implications of the discussed research methods, as well as their applicability and relevance in real-life situations.

The module covers traditional, as well as new media-related methods and tools.

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CN 6141 DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

3 US CREDITS

Prerequisites

CN 6035 APPLIED COMMUNICATION THEORY

Digital media and technologies have revolutionized the industry and practice of professional communication. This course covers the fundamentals of digital campaign strategy and planning. We compare and contrast outbound and inbound marketing approaches within the context of a digital marketing strategy and explore the main digital media channels including: display advertising, search advertising, content marketing, email & mobile, and social media marketing. The course takes a comprehensive perspective on the development of appropriate strategies and plans as well as on appropriate performance measurement. The course combines lectures, demonstrations, three major case studies, a company visit, and an exciting executive simulation game.

CN 6148 DIGITAL AND SOCIAL ANALYTICS

3 US CREDITS

Prerequisites

CN 6141 DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

From research, to planning and implementation, the field of digital and social media marketing offers immense opportunities for real-time, or near real-time, data collection, analysis and measurement, that can lead to the optimization of new as well as traditional media communication campaigns. Yet, today's digital media landscape is becoming increasingly challenging when identifying optimum solutions and strategies for the achievement of specific digital goals and objectives. The modern marketing analyst needs to be in a position to evaluate existing and arising analytic capabilities offered online, combine and integrate analytic tools as part of an optimum analytic plan, present and interpret collected data, extract valuable insights that will lead to the optimization of content delivery and strategic marketing communication. This course allows students to gain familiarity with digital and social analytics tools and methods, and to develop the necessary skills in applying them for the collection of actionable data and assessing and optimizing digital marketing campaigns.

CN 6450 THESIS IN DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

3 US CREDITS

Prerequisites

CN 6035 APPLIED COMMUNICATION THEORY
CN 6040 NEW MEDIA THEORY & RESEARCH
CN 6006 APPLIED COMMUNICATION RESEARCH METHODS
CN 6127 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH IN COMMUNICATION

The thesis runs for the equivalent duration of 2 terms, namely 26 weeks. Students are required to work independently under the supervision of an allocated thesis advisor. The final thesis document must be approximately 15,000-20,000 words in length (excluding appendices and references) and should demonstrate competencies in research design, data analysis and interpretation, as well as in-depth knowledge of the topic, evidenced by a thorough literature review and critical thinking skills. The topic of the dissertation will be based on approved proposals and should relate to Communication Studies. Students will meet their supervisor regularly and will be required to submit progress reports. The dissertation may take the form of empirical research piece or a secondary research essay.

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CN 6249 CAPSTONE PROJECT: THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION CHALLENGE 3 US CREDITS

Prerequisites

CN 6141 DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

CN 6042 WEB DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

"Digitalization is the cause of large-scale and sweeping transformations across multiple aspects of business, providing unparalleled opportunities for value creation and capture, while also representing a major source of risk"

World Economic Forum, 2016

The emergence of the digital economy has unlocked new opportunities regarding the relations between a brand and multiple audiences. Within the current complex and high competitive environment, companies often are challenged with a need for change in order to reconnect with their customers and the markets. Digital transformation is the integration of digital technology into all areas of a business, meaning a new business model of operations, customer relations, branding, products and services development. In this capstone course (running for 26 weeks), students will embark on a team challenge to develop a digital transformation solution for an existing product/service of a certain brand. Students will be given a real brief from a brand to work on. The challenge is for them to come up with their own idea of digitising the product/service/company, design the solution (eg build a web site or develop the mock up of an application) and finally develop the communication strategy to promote the outcome through digital and social media. At the end of the course, students will pitch their digital transformation journey to a panel including the client.