# Media and Information

## Prof. Gerolamo Fazzini, Prof. Pierluigi Ferrari

# Media and Information - Module 1

## Prof. Gerolamo Fazzini

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course focuses essentially on two macro-objectives, which consider students respectively as media users but also as “apprentices” of journalism and potential operators and key players in the information world.

With regard to the first objective, the course aims to illustrate the relevance of information in today's society (where social networks have taken on a growing role) and its essential contribution to the democratic life of a country. First, the course will offer a phenomenological overview of the current state of information, in the grips of momentous transformation. In particular, the course will cover the topic of freedom of the press in the world and will introduce, albeit in a general way, the main newspapers in some European countries and beyond. Furthermore, it will introduce some essential elements of the history of journalism, as well as some of its major figures.

Next, the course aims to provide the basic elements of journalistic technique (the concept of news, sources, the relationship with the public…), which combines both print and digital journalism. The “information machine” will then be examined, with particular reference to the structures and organizational and productive dynamics of newspapers and, in the second place, periodicals.

Attention will then be devoted, in part three, to describing some of the latest developments in the information world, regarding new concepts of journalism and innovative business models, with a particular focus on the new frontier of “citizen journalism” , a field including innovative forms of journalism that are more common abroad than in Italy (e.g. constructive journalism, slow journalism, and solution journalism...).

At the end of the course, students will be able to acquire the basic tools that will enable them to clearly identify both the factors that make a piece of news newsworthy and the process for creating a news service based on a piece of news; they will also have learned the basic rules for writing and titling a piece. They will also have a concise overview of the main ethical standards related to the profession of journalism. This knowledge and these skills will be the prerequisites for taking Module B.

***COURSE CONTENT***

1\_FROM THE PENNY PRESS TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, VIA NEW JOURNALISM AND CITIZEN JOURNALISM: Identity and functions of journalism, yesterday and today; the difference between journalism and literatures. A short historical overview of some key milestones in the history of information, including important journalists, both male (Tiziano Terzani, Ryszard Kapuściński, Dino Buzzati) and female (Nellie Bly, Ida Tarbell, Oriana Fallaci).

2\_AN OUTLINE OF THE STATUS OF INFORMATION AND PRESS FREEDOM IN THE WORLD: The most important newspapers and the main ongoing trends. The link between power and information: how is journalism done in today’s world and what are the limits and the risks? The RSF’s World Press Freedom Index and the analysis of some specific cases.

3\_ NEWS, THE KEY WORD OF JOURNALISM: How/where do you find it? The different types of “topicality”; the criteria for news; the relationship with sources; the news agencies; the Internet and social media as a source of information; the selection and hierarchy of news.

4\_VERIFYING NEWS: From "lies" to "fake news": Because today's lies on social media are more dangerous than yesterday's. How do you verify news and expose falsehood?

5\_ WRITING: The basic rules; the criteria of clarity and effectiveness; the titling of an article.

6\_ BASIC JOURNALISTIC GENRES: Service, reportage, interview, inquiry, comment…

7\_BEYOND WORDS: THE NEW LANGUAGES OF INFORMATION. Infographics, photojournalism and data journalism.

8\_THE FIELDS OF JOURNALISM: Politics, foreign affairs, news, economics, culture and entertainment, sport, religion, but also environment, technology, food...

9\_WHO MAKES A NEWSPAPER? The publisher; the editor and their role; the editorial organization.

10\_ELEMENTS OF ETHICS: Freedom of information and its limitations, the responsibilities of the journalist, the main rules e and the main documents of reference.

11\_OTHER WAYS OF MAKING NEWS. The bad-good news relationship as a constant polarity of information. Case studies: ‘Buone Notizie’ (‘Good News’) by the Corriere della Sera and ‘Economia civile’ (‘Civil Economy’) by Avvenire. Social journalism, religious information and missionary press, with concrete examples and case studies.

12\_TODAY AND TOMORROW: Objectives and forms of “civil journalism” as a possible route towards information that serves the common good (constructive journalism, slow journalism, and solution journalism). With case studies e suggestions on further readings.

***READING LIST***

Attending students:

\* the lecturer's slides uploaded to Blackboard and the short texts or other material provided throughout the course of the lectures.

\* G. Balbi-P.malaguda, *Media digitali. La storia, i contesti sociali, le narrazioni,* Laterza 2021

Non-attending students:

\* A. Barbano-V.Sassu, *Manuale di giornalismo,* Laterza 2012

\* G. Balbi-P.Malaguda, *Media digitali. La storia, i contesti sociali, le narrazioni,* Laterza 2021

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course is based on frontal lectures, during which a series of slides and short videos will be screened. The theoretical presentation of the concepts is constantly accompanied by concrete examples, recommendations of reading (usually articles from newspapers and periodicals or from specialized sites) and films on the subjects covered by the course.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The assessment will be carried out on the basis of an oral test, for both the 6-ECTS-credit and the 12-ECTS-credit courses. The final mark for the 12-ECTS-credit exam is the average of the marks for the Module A exam (Fazzini) and the Module B exam (Ferrari). Throughout Module A, attending students will be able to take written tests (optional) for which they will receive a mark which will be taken into account in the final assessment.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Since this is an introductory course, there is no need for any special prerequisites, other than the willingness to “practice” with journalistic texts of various kinds and to gradually complete the reading recommended by the lecturer. Attendance in lectures is strongly recommended as course content will be continually supported by examples from the field.

*Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.*

# Media and Information - Module 2

## Prof. Pierluigi Ferrari

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to provide students with an overview of the *ongoing transformations of journalism caused by the rise of digital technology, the Internet, and social media*, with a focus on *crisis information*.

The first lectures of the course will be dedicated to the Internet revolution and its impact on information. How do traditional media like *radio and television* change? What is the relationship between *informational websites and social media*? From the point of view of social media, particular attention will be paid to *Tik Tok* and the experimentations of some long-established or digitally native publishing companies.

The last part of the course will be focused on the *information disorder* phenomenon and the role of the *public service*.

Furthermore, the course will explore the crisis information sector through the analysis of the material offered by the news: *covid, war, climate crisis*.

At the end of the course, students will be able to acquire *the tools they need to carry out a critical analysis of the world of digital information, identify the basic elements of broadcast journalism (radio and television), know and apply the journalistic writing rules related to radio, television, websites, and social media.*

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course is divided into five parts:

Part 1 JOURNALISM AND THE INTERNET REVOLUTION

From Gutenberg to ChatGPT. The functions of journalism in the time of platforms. Crisis information from covid to war to the climate emergency.

Part 2 HOW TELEVISION AND RADIO CHANGE

The language of radio and television. The elements and the structure of radio service and TV news. Radio, television, and the Internet. Talk shows, the staged wrestling model and toxic information. Social media and dual screening.

Part 3 ONLINE INFORMATION

Informational websites: structure, CMS, language and writing. SEO and good journalism. Titles and click baiting

Part 4 INFORMATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The social journalism dilemma. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and the experimentations on Tik Tok. Moderation.

Part 5 INFORMATION DISORDER, PUBLIC SERVICE, AND CRISIS JOURNALISM

The fog of information disorder, the role of the public service, and crisis information: tools and rules for correct and effective information in emergency contexts (covid, war, and climate crisis).

***READING LIST***

**For attending students:**

*Il giornalismo e la rivoluzione di internet*, Pierluigi Ferrari, 2021, Edizioni EDUCatt

The teaching material available on the BlackBoard page of the course.

**For non-attending students:**

*Il giornalismo e la rivoluzione di internet*, Pierluigi Ferrari, 2021, Edizioni EDUCatt

Riva Giuseppe, *Fake news*, Il Mulino, 2018

Quirico Domenico*, Il tuffo nel pozzo*, Vita e pensiero, 2017.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures, projected teaching material, practical activities based on the use of journalistic writing on social media, instructions for an in-depth study of the topics explored, meetings with subject-matter experts.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The final assessment will consist in an oral exam.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students are strongly invited to attend the Module A of the course (although class attendance is not necessary) and the journalistic writing workshop, and pay a particular attention to press, radio, TV, online, and social information. Given the nature and the contents of the course, class attendance is highly recommended.

*Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.*