Sociology and Anthropology of the Media (with a Module on Teaching Methodology)

## Prof. Chiara Giaccardi

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

The subject of the course is the idea of communication and the relationship between the media and the social world from a social-anthropological transdisciplinary perspective. The aim of the course is to provide students with a foundational approach to communication within the contemporary globalised and digitalised context, onto which the more applied directions developed in other courses can be grafted, without losing sight of the anthropological centrality of the communicative dimension, in all its expressions.

The course will be organised into two modules:

*Module A* - will build a description and interpretation of the scenario, with particular focus on media development and the issues of sustainability and digitalization. With respect to the media will provide interpretative keys to assess its impact from a perceptive, relational and social point of view will be explored, so as to reach a redefinition of the very idea of communication, prompted by the contributory nature of digital, from a critical, transdisciplinary perspective.

*Module B* – will explore the issue of “generative communication”, with concrete examples and participatory learning.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

With reference to Module A:

* understand that the different forms of strategic communication are sectorial applications with a typically human and complex characteristic which must always be kept in the background so as to be able to recognise and avoid the many communication drifts that can be seen in today’s society (from fake news to various forms of manipulation)
* develop and articulate a critically constructive approach to communication seen as a constitutive dimension of social living
* be able to contribute in a positive way to the regeneration of communication in the public sphere

With reference to Module B:

- recognise and create forms of communication capable of enhancing the anthropological specificity of humans in the age of technology

- implement deutero-learning processes;

- recognise and use different digital technologies designed to increase understanding and active participation.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course covers the following topics:

*Module A* -

This module will focus on certain foundational issues:

* A socio-anthropological overview of the current scenario, where the very ideas of globalisation and even society are no longer enough for understanding change, with particular reference to two driving dimensions of sustainability and digitalization
* Starting with McLuhan’s approach to the media formulated in the Sixties and with his definition of the media as extensions and an environment, its ambivalences’ will be addressed and the various interpretations of the subject of sensoriality will be explored, also on the basis of sociological (Simmel), philosophical (Stiegler), and anthropological (Mauss, De Martino, Le Breton) reflections in contemporary studies on media experience.
* the dimensions of space and time and their transformations linked to the development of the media and big global shocks.
* The redefinition of communication, beyond the paradigm of transmission, as an 'integral' social event, capable of counteracting information entropy and the elements which foster it (polarisation of public communication, fake news etc.).

*Module B*

* This module will focus on the 'generative communication' paradigm, both in terms of its qualifying elements and different ways of creating it.
* Students will acquire the skills by means of active involvement on different platforms.

***READING LIST***

The reading list will be provided at the beginning of the course. Course material will be indicated and posted on BlackBoard. N*on-attending* students (see Notes) will receive alternative content and it will be available on BlackBoard.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course consists of frontal lectures; student involvement in the collection of material for guided analysis; the intervention of experts and prominent figures; the use of multimedia tools and participation in individual and group supplementary activities (in class or connection), also via social media; the production and sharing of multimedia material by students.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Assessment will be by means of a written test. Attending students will have the opportunity to replace the part of the course related to the second module (generative communication) with a personal paper; this should be agreed with the lecturer in advance. In line with the general approach of the course and the idea of communication as a collective contribution and generation of meanings, the ascertainment of the learning outcomes – and thus final assessment – as well as the methods outlined above will also take into account active participation, both through students’ intervention in the classroom and when students return course content through individual or group participation in activities on platforms used during the course.

Assessment will be based on the following elements:

- Understanding of course topics.

- Critical reading of concrete communication phenomena.

- Ability to communicate project objectives and outcomes.

The following will contribute to the final mark:

* Participation in activities promoted during lectures;
* Participation in activities recommended activities aimed at strengthening complementary skills (e.g.creative-productive skills and soft skills);

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students should have basic knowledge of sociology of communication: students are advised to read G. Boccia Artieri, S. Bentivegna, *Le teorie delle comunicazioni di massa e la sfida digitale*, Laterza 2019.

Attendance is not compulsory but is strongly recommended.

Students who, for curricular reasons (such as work placements, international mobility, etc.), are unable to attend the course, must contact the lecturer at the start of term to arrange an alternative programme.

Registration on the course’s BlackBoard platform is mandatory for all students. Information regarding events, meetings, workshops and other activities concerning the course will be sent to students via the BlackBoard mailing list.

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.