FACULTY OF SOCIETY AND SCIENCE
STUDY COURSE DESCRIPTION

Course Title:	**Culture, Society, and Digital Media**				
Course code (LAIS):	**KomZ6002**				
Study programme:	**Media and Information Literacy**				
Level of Study programme:	☐ 1st level professional higher education				
	☐ Professional Bachelor				
	☒ Professional Master				
	☐ Academic Master				
	☐ PhD level				
Type of Study programme:	☐ Compulsory course (Part A)				
	☐ Professional specialization courses (Part B, compulsory)				
	☒ Professional specialization optional courses (Part B, optional)				
	☐ Elective courses (Part C)				
Course Workload:	**Credits**	**ECTS**	**Academic hours**	**Contact hours**	**Independent work hours**
	2	3	80	24	56
Course Author/ Tutor:	**Andra Siibak, PhD**				
	PhD (Media and Communication)				
	e-mail: andra.siibak@ut.ee,				
	Consultation: according to the schedule for each semester				
Course Form:	Full times studies				
Study year, semester:	First year, 2.semester				
Language:	English				
Prerequisites for the Course:	NA				
Course Summary:	The objective of the course is to advance theoretical and empirical knowledge about the timely processes related to society, culture and (new) online media, and the relationships between them. After passing the course, the students have improved knowledge about contemporary society, culture and (new) online media. They are able to analyze and give sense to the relationships between them and set relevant research questions. The course provides a selective overview of the main concepts and theoretical conceptions describing contemporary societies, culture and (new) media, and the ways of researching the related phenomena.				
Course Methods, including description of the organization of students' individual work and tasks:	Lectures, seminars, literature studies (40% of the independent work), case studies (60% of student independent work).				
Assessment:	Practical assignments in class (individual and group assignments); individual reading and writing tasks at home; individual empirical case-study (course-paper)				
Requirements for Credits and Criteria for Assessing the Course Results:	• **Individual reaction papers** (5 in total, for each class): to be written based on the compulsory home reading assignments (2 articles per meeting). Reaction papers (max 1 page) should contain the most important ideas/thoughts you learned from the texts that you read; and 3 questions that started to trigger you or that might be posed based on the texts that you read (that could be discussed during class). Max 5 points per reaction paper (5x5 points= max 25 points). Reaction papers should be posted to the Moodle at least 2 hours before the class. Late submission is possible, but in case of submitting your work in late, the number of points will be reduced. • **Group-assignment: empirical case-study related to the topics covered during the course** (to be carried out in groups of 3) Deadline: 6. April. Students are welcome to choose the topic/angle for their empirical case-study that is most intriguing to them but where the concepts and theories covered during the course could be used. This case-study could be carried out to study a phenomenon characteristic to Latvia only, or life in the digitalized and datafied				

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	society in general. Students should pose the research aim and questions they will set out to explore empirically by carrying out a small-scale empirical study of the phenomenon (interviews, netnography, survey, content analysis, etc). The students should also explain and justify their chosen method and sample; introduce the main findings and provide evidence to their claims; as well as discuss upon the findings by making use of relevant research literature (both the one provided during the course as well as find additional sources). The group-assignment will consist in: at least 20 page-long (Times New Roman 12, spacing 1.5) written paper and an oral presentation (Power-Point). The oral presentation will take place 6. April. **Evaluation criteria for group assignment**: (the work will be evaluated in the 50-point system): a description of the chosen case, the appropriateness of the chosen sources of literature, analysis of the data and its use in making conclusions, the quality of arguments, presentations and answers to questions during the presentation of the group). • **In class participation:** small in-class written assignments (both individual and in small groups) – 3 points for each meeting (3x6=18 points) All the independent assignments should have a positive assessment.
Course Contents:	The topics covered include: 1) Mediatization, acceleration of social time, digital divides and digital literacies; 2) platformization and the fragmentation of the public sphere; 3) post-truth society, fake news and affective publics; 4) calculated publics, personified web and the datafication of everyday life e.g. dataveillance, data activism and algorithmic bias; 5) personal publics and imagined audiences: self-presentation on social media (e.g. selfies), commodified self and the emergence of the micro-celebrity phenomenon

	Learning Outcomes	The evaluation methods and criteria
Learning Outcomes; the evaluation methods and criteria	**Knowledge**	
	Students will have knowledge about the main concepts of contemporary society, culture and new online media, and the relationships between them	Lectures, seminars, independent work
	Students will have knowledge of common theories related to the digitalized, mediatized and datafied society	Lectures, seminars, independent work
	Skills	
	Students will have skills to recognize and formulate research problems or puzzles for empirical studies	Lectures, seminars, independent work
	Students will have skills to choose and apply suitable research methods for studying topics related to the contemporary digital society	Lectures, seminars, independent work
	Students will have skills to carry out an empirical case-study and to accommodate suitable theoretical frameworks when discussing their findings	Lectures, seminars, independent work
	Competency	
	Students will be able to discuss and critically evaluate the contemporary issues of the information age	Lectures, seminars, independent work
	Students will be able to critically reflect upon one's own new media practices	Lectures, seminars, independent work

Course Compulsory literature:	**Topic 2: (write a 1-page long reaction paper, deadline by 2. March)** • Gillesie, T. (2017). Governance of and by platforms. In: Burges, J., Powell, T., Marwick, A. (2017) SAGE Handbook of Social Media. • van Dijck, J., & Poell, T. (2013). Understanding social media logic. Media and Communication, 1(1), 2-14. DOI: 10.17645/mac.v1i1.70

Topic 3: (write a 1-page long reaction paper, deadline by 22. March)
- Papacharissi, Z. (2015). Affective publics and structures of storytelling: sentiment, events and mediality, *Information, Communication & Society*, DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2015.1109697
- Marwick, A. M. (2018). Why do people share fake news? A sociotechnical model of media effects. Georgetown LawTechnology Review, 472-512.

Topic 4: (write a 1-page long reaction paper, deadline by 23. March)
- Crawford, K. (2016). Can an algorithm be agnostic? Ten scenes from life in the calculated publics. Science, Technology & Human Values, 41(1), 77-92
- Van Dijk, J. (2014). Datafication, dataism and dataveillance: Big Data between scientific paradigm and ideology. Surveillance & Society 12(2): 197-208.

Topic 5: (write a 1-page long reaction paper, deadline by 5. April)
- Abidin, C. (2016). "Aren't these just young, rich women doing vain things online?": influencer selfies as subversive frivolity. Social Media & Society, 1-17.
- Marwick, A. (2015). You May Know Me From YouTube: (Micro)-Celebrity in Social Media. In Marshall, P.D. & Redmond, S., (Eds). A Companion to Celebrity, Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc

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Course additional literature:	• Hepp, A., Hjarvard, S. & Lundby, K. (2015). Mediatization: Theorizing the interplay between media, culture and society. *Media, Culture & Society,* 37(2): 314-324. • Vittadini, N.; Siibak, A.; Carpentier Reifova, I.; Bilandzic, H. (2014). Generations and media: The social construction of generational identity and differences. In: Carpentier, N.; Schroder, K.C.; Hallett, L. (Eds), *Transforming Audiences, Transforming societies* (65-81). London: Routledge.
Course confirmation date:	22.11.2017. (Accepted by ViA Senate)
Date of course description update:	22.02.2019

Study Course Plan:

Date	Theme	Academic hours		Study Form/ Organization of independent work of students and task description
		Contact hours	**Independent work hours**	
The date is specified before the implementation of the course	1. Introduction to the course. Conceptual framework: Mediatization, social acceleration. Digital divides, generations. Digital literacies (1. March)	4	6	lecture, seminar, independent work
	2. Platformisation and the fragmentation of the public sphere (2. March)	4	7	lecture, seminar, independent work
	3. Post-truth society, fake news and the emergence of affective publics (22. March)	4	7	lecture, seminar, independent work
	4. Personified web, calculated publics and the datafication of everyday life. Data activism, algorithmic bias and privacy issues (23. March)	4	7	lecture, seminar, independent work
	5. Personal publics: imagined	4	7	lecture, seminar,

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	audiences, self-presentation and the commodified self. Celebrification of culture; the phenomenon of micro-celebrities and influences. (5. April)			independent work
	6. Group presentations based on empirical case-studies (6. April)	4	22	lecture, seminar, independent work
	Hours total:	**24**	**56**	