



## Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2025

### 8,695: Medien/Media: From the Airwaves to the Metaverse - Media, Innovations, Myths, and Social Imagination

ECTS credits: 3

#### Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Presentation, Analog, Group work group grade (20%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Written work, Digital, Individual work individual grade (80%)

Examination time: Term time

#### Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,695,1.00 Medien/Media: From the Airwaves to the Metaverse - Media, Innovations, Myths, and Social Imagination](#) -- English -  
- [Bory Paolo](#)

#### Course information

#### Course prerequisites

No prerequisite is required.

#### Learning objectives

At the end of the course students will:

- Acquire a broad perspective on the social and cultural aspects lying behind the conceptualization, the social impact, and the spread (or the failures) of media and communication technologies and infrastructures;
- Deepen their understanding of how the history of media technologies impacts contemporary innovations also embedding cultural and social values, political and economic strategies, and ideas of the future
- Understand and critically assess the narratives surrounding emerging media and communication technologies from a political, cultural and sociological points of view.

#### Course content

This course aims to provide students with an overview and a critical perspective on the narratives surrounding media, with a focus on the history of myths, narratives and the role of social imagination in constructing, spreading and familiarizing with media and communication technologies. In the course of this seminar, we will explore how media and communication technologies have been imagined as breakthrough innovations capable of changing perceptions of reality, global and local social practices, as well as driving political and economic endeavours over the last century until today. The course will critically scrutinize the main narratives and theories surrounding communication technologies such as broadcasting (radio and TV), the Internet, and VR/MR environments. Thematically, it will focus strongly on a socio-historical perspective, examining how mainstream narratives can impact the social and cultural reception of media innovations, while also highlighting the roles of hidden forms of resistance, subversion, and reinterpretation of media and communication technologies over time. Overall, the course will give students an insight of how the ways in which we narrate and “read” technological change through history and shared narratives impact the actual uses and deployment of media and communication technologies, both in the past and today, benefiting from a diachronic perspective characteristic of socio-historical inquiries.



## Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

Throughout the course, a list of examples coming from the history of media and ICT will be analyzed critically, using various sources and materials, including public speeches by prominent politicians and thinkers, sci-fi fiction and literature, major "media events," and theoretical and empirical contributions from the academic milieu.

The course will be structured as a "chronological flow" in which the myths and narratives surrounding different technologies will be addressed starting from some key texts or concepts. After an introduction to the meaning and relationship between myth/imaginary and media technologies, students will follow an interactive learning path in which the reading/viewing of some key contents will be followed by peer to peer discussion tables, in which the lecturer will take active part as moderator. The program will include traditional lectures, interactive seminars, and peer-to-peer discussions.

Contextual Studies are considered part of **Contact Learning**; thus, taking part properly implies **regular attendance**. It is the students' own responsibility to ensure that there is **no timetable clash** between the courses they have chosen. A detailed course outline and all relevant documents will be made available on **StudyNet**. Only the current timetable as published on **Courses** does apply.

## Course literature

The readings for the interactive seminars will be provided on StudyNet.

Mandatory resources are, for instance:

Balbi, G. 2023. *The Digital Revolution: A Short History of an Ideology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 1-36.

Bory, P. 2020. *The Internet Myth. From the Internet Imaginary to Network Ideologies*. London: University of Westminster Press, pp. 1-38.

## Additional course information

Paolo Bory is an Assistant Professor in Sociology of Culture and Communication at the Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano, where he teaches History of Technology and Innovation, Culture and Theories at MA level. In his research path, Paolo has analyzed the narratives and imaginaries surrounding ICTs such as the Internet, supercomputing, communicative AI and augmented and mixed reality systems. He is author of the monograph *The Internet Myth* (UWP 2020) and of several articles on international journals such as *New Media and Society*, *Convergence*, and *Public Understanding of Science*.

## Examination information

### Examination sub part/s

#### 1. Examination sub part (1/2)

##### Examination modalities

Examination type	Presentation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Group work group grade
Weighting	20%
Duration	--

##### Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

##### Remark

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##### Examination-aid rule



## Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

## Supplementary aids

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## 2. Examination sub part (2/2)

### Examination modalities

Examination type	Written work
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Written work
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	Off Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	80%
Duration	--

### Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

### Remark

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### Examination-aid rule

#### Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

## Supplementary aids

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## Examination content

1. **Written work** (80%, individual grade)  
This exam part consists of a written paper of a minimum of 15,000 and a maximum of 25,000 characters (bibliography and abstract excluded). Students will choose the topic of their final paper in agreement with the instructor.
2. **Presentation** (20%, group grade)  
Students will also present and discuss in groups with their peers a general topic/subject related to course contents that can be addressed more in depth in the final paper.

## Examination relevant literature

See course literature. Independent research is part of the examination performance.



## Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 13 (Monday, 25 March 2025) are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 23 January 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 17 March 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 14 (Monday, 31 March 2025);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before ending with de-registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 07 April 2025).