

Master's Programme

## **MA Digital Cultures regular**

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

### **Transformations in Digital Cultures**

#### **Full course description**

This module focuses on the impact of recent transformations of our media landscape on society, digital technology and culture. Digitalization, the process of integrating digital technologies into all areas of our lives, has produced new interfaces between society, culture and doing social research. We will discuss how the architecture of the web controls but also enables user practices. We will start with an analysis of the web, specifically search engines and social media. User and (online) communities use but also partly depend on digital technology, they make use of digital data, online networks and the specific characteristics of digital media. These often include digital natives who are growing up with an understanding that sharing (digital) data is essential of how friendships and communities are being built and maintained. The internet has facilitated and allowed for individual users and communities to create, configure and control content. At the same time users give information about the number of connections (friends), activities within the networks (status updates, likes, shares). Numbers, ranks and scores structure our online presence; they are used by us but also by observers with commercial or political interests. Can we observe technomoral changes in the ways we deal with e.g. privacy? The method introduced in this module is the qualitative interviewsocial network analysis. We will contact social network analyses and will use the software Gephi as a tool to support this method. At the same time we will critically reflect on the use of digital tools for research.

#### **Course objectives**

Introduction in digital cultures; introduction digital sociology; introduction to social media and user practices as e.g. net activism and hacking; introduction in problem based learning; introduction to qualitative interviewing.

#### **Recommended reading**

Marres, N. (2017). Digital Sociology. Cambridge, UK: Pluto Press.

DCU4000

Period 1

2 Sep 2019

25 Oct 2019

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

- [K. Wenz](#)

Teaching methods:

PBL, Lecture(s), Work in subgroups

Assessment methods:

Final paper, Assignment

Keywords:

digitalization, digital citizens, netactivism, cultural participation, technomoral change

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Research Design

### Full course description

In this module students will draw together what they have learned so far they will apply their theoretical insights, research methods, and practical skills in order to design their research plan for the second semester thesis. Each of the five first-semester modules has emphasised a particular disciplinary and/or theoretical approach and a specific methodology, but always in a problem oriented and interdisciplinary context. In the second semester students will develop their own research on developments and issues in contemporary media culture; the research plan will support them in connecting their own research questions and strategies to the previous modules. Students will design this research plan in a step-by-step process. These steps will be prepared by an introductory lecture. In the first week students will explore their thesis topic and discuss their ideas. Students will also take part in a workshop on how to peer-review a research proposal. In the following weeks, students will support each other by engaging in weekly peer-review sessions in which they critically evaluate the work of their colleagues.

### Course objectives

Assisting students in phrasing research questions and designing a research plan; instructing students on how to peer-review a research proposal.

### Recommended reading

- Basingstoke [etc.]: Palgrave/Macmillan. Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. (2003).
- Bertrand, I., & Hughes, P.(2005). *Media Research Methods: Audiences, Institutions, Texts*.
- Linders, A. (2008). Documents, Texts, and Archives in Constructionist Research. In *Handbook of Constructionist Research* (pp. 467-490). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Ridley, D. (2012). *The Literature Review: A step-by-Step Guide for Students*. London: Sage.
- *The Craft of Research*. Chicago [etc.]: University of Chicago Press. Stokes, J. (2013). *How to Do Media and Cultural Studies*. Los Angeles [etc.]: SAGE.

Media Studies: Digital Cultures

Period 4

3 Feb 2020

6 Mar 2020

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

6.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [J.A. Post](#)

Teaching methods:

Lecture(s), PBL, Work in subgroups

Assessment methods:

Final paper

Keywords:

research plan, research questions, Theory, Methodology, peer-review

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Real Virtualities

### Full course description

Media extend our senses and our engagement with the world—as Marshall McLuhan, the father of media studies, famously said. In this process media they do not leave things untouched, but transform how we experience our environment and how we act in it. Through news media we are an immediate witness to events all over the globe. With webcams webcamera's we access the world online from wherever we are. Our cellphones help us to keep our friends with us anywhere we go. In these processes, off- and online experience and action, becomes inextricably entangled. This course reflects on the emerging culture of 'real virtuality'. Students will be introduced to two main philosophers that have dealt with the changing relationship between 'the real' and 'the virtual' (W. Benjamin, J. Baudrillard). The issues they address in relationship to older media such as photography, film and television will be related to new media practices, such as telepresence and augmented reality, and evaluated in the light of these. The methodology introduced is (post)phenomenology. Where the thinkers mentioned above take an overarching approach, Donr. Ihde's phenomenology focuses on concrete sets of perceptual relations between users, media and the world and helps to make more nuanced analyses. During the course students will discuss different media applications, including media artworks, and work towards their own analysis of an application in the light of the themes discussed.

### Course objectives

Introduction to three relevant philosophical positions and hands on introduction to the phenomenological analysis of media.

### Recommended reading

See course book for required and recommended reading.

Media Studies: Digital Cultures

DCU4001

Period 1

2 Sep 2019

25 Oct 2019

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

6.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [D.J. Kamphof](#)

Teaching methods:

PBL

Assessment methods:

Assignment, Final paper

Keywords:

Reality, virtuality, mediation

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## **Design Thinking and Maker Culture**

### **Full course description**

This course will introduce students to the theories, methods, and principles of Design Thinking and the ethos of Maker Culture. Design thinking combines what is desirable from a human point of view with what is technologically feasible and economically viable. It has become a crucial tool and mindset that enables projects, organisations and companies to think creatively beyond traditional logical and analytical approaches, helping them to be agile and critically responsive to change. This course takes a design-derived perspective on challenge-oriented learning and problem solving and analysis. It will provide models for how to generate creative ideas for deriving solutions to problems in a variety of contexts and will introduce students to different 'making practices'. The course will provide human/user-centred understanding to the formulation of problems, and their resolution. A group project (within which project management will be taught), will provide the vehicle from which to apply these theories and methods. This year's group project will centre around designing an app-based audio-narrative/soundscape. Training in the fundamentals of audio editing/recording will equip students with the professional skills necessary to produce their narrative, while an introduction to key concepts and approaches in sound studies will help students to ground them conceptually.

### **Course objectives**

By the end of this course students will understand the twin theories of design thinking and maker culture. They will combine these methods, along with project management and audio editing/recording skills, in a project-and-team-based learning approach to the development of an app-based audio soundscape.

## Recommended reading

Sterne, J.(ed.) (2012). The Sound Studies Reader. London: Routledge.

Sayers, Jentery (ed.) (2017). Making Things and Drawing Boundaries: Experiments in the Digital Humanities. Minnesota Press.

DCU4007

Period 2

28 Oct 2019

20 Dec 2019

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

6.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [S. Schreibman](#)

Teaching methods:

Lecture(s), PBL, Work in subgroups

Assessment methods:

Assignment

Keywords:

Design Thinking, project management, Maker Culture, Sound Technologies and Cultural Practices  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Machines of Knowledge

### Full course description

This course will introduce students to the transformation of the World Wide Web from an information space to one that is increasingly seen as a series of dynamic knowledge sites. These new types of sites, typically database driven (whether through a custom-designed database or software like WordPress) take advantage of the affordances of Web 2.0, including more dynamic multimodality, interactivity (with greater amounts of user-generated content), and enhanced usability. These changes in how content is generated, shared, and delivered raise new issues, including the ethics and challenges of creating, curating, and preserving digital content.

This course will explore how this new approach to generating web content changes user expectations and forms of practice; how it has introduced a new dialogue between the textual and the contextual and between words and image. As the internet becomes the de facto space for information, and increasingly a place to create, share, and remix (participation culture) both our and found objects, we will explore notions such as value, memory, power, and representation in the digital transformation in terms of who controls the narrative.

### Course objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to problematise approaches to the digitisation, curation, and preservation of web-based content while interrogating the role of World Wide Web in

Media Studies: Digital Cultures  
the production of knowledge.

## Recommended reading

Whitelaw, M. 2015. Generous Interfaces for Digital Cultural Collections. Digital Humanities Quarterly 9(1). <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/9/1/000205/000205.html>

See the course book for required and recommended reading.

DCU4008

Period 2

28 Oct 2019

20 Dec 2019

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

6.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [S. Schreibman](#)

Teaching methods:

Lecture(s), PBL, Work in subgroups

Assessment methods:

Assignment

Keywords:

Digital storytelling, Multimodality, World Wide Web, participatory culture

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## Creating Digital Collections I

### Full course description

Building on the theory covered in 'Machines of Knowledge: Web Presences as Digital Narratives' this course (divided into two parts) is designed to provide students with the skills and competencies to design a specific type of website, that of a digital collection. It will do so by having students consider the ethical, methodological, theoretical, and practical issues regarding representation, reconstruction, and reproduction. Taking a project-based approach to PBL, students will collaboratively work to develop a digital collection (depending on the year this might be a collection of images, tweets, text, or 3D objects). In 2019-2020 the course will focus on material culture with the ultimate aim to create a 3D digital collection.

In Part I of the course, students will be introduced to the tools and methods that they will use for the digitisation of the collection, including digital photography protocols, capturing and processing software, and online 3D repositories. Particular emphasis will be placed on the field of computational imaging; a field in computer science that studies the computational extraction of information from digital photographs that has democratised preservation and dissemination of heritage. They will also delve into different debates in the digitisation of material culture, including authenticity, reconstruction, transparency, and the aura of the digital.

## Course objectives

In Part I of the course students will develop skills in the use of digital 3D recording tools and methods. By the end of this course, students will have the ability to use digital tools and methods to record 3D material culture. They will also begin to design the digital collection that will be realised in Part II of the course.

## Recommended reading

Historic England (2017). Photogrammetric Applications for Cultural Heritage. Guidance for Good Practice.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/photogrammetric-applications-for-cultural-heritage/>

PARTHENOS (2017). Digital 3D Objects in Art and Humanities: challenges of creation, interoperability and preservation, Nov 2016, Bordeaux, France. pp.71.  
<https://hal.inria.fr/hal-01526713>

Reu, J. (2019). Image-Based 3D Modeling. In The Encyclopedia of Archaeological Sciences, S. L. López Varela (Ed.). doi:10.1002/9781119188230.saseas0316

Jones, S. et al.(2018) 3D heritage visualisation and the negotiation of authenticity: the ACCORD project, International Journal of Heritage Studies, 24:4, 333-353, DOI: 10.1080/13527258.2017.1378905

DCU4009

Period 3

6 Jan 2020

31 Jan 2020

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

3.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinators:

- [S. Schreibman](#)
- [K. Papadopoulos](#)

Teaching methods:

Lecture(s), PBL, Work in subgroups

Assessment methods:

Assignment

Keywords:

3D modelling, digitisation, material culture, online collections, heritage

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Creating Digital Collections II

## Full course description

In part II of this course, students will utilise the 3D artefacts created in Part I of this course to create an online collection and disseminate the research. Working in small teams, students will contribute to specific aspects of the final project based on their skills, expertise, and interests. This will include project management, content development, web design, creation of video content and audio narratives, technical integration, and social media. This course will explore, both theoretically and practically, the narrative being created in the design and presentation of artefacts while situating this collection within a conversation of other similar web-based artefacts, collections, and narratives.

## Course objectives

To apply design thinking practices and maker culture ethos to the creation of a digital collection while being cognizant in its design and technical choices of audiences and stakeholders. To understand how and what the project design communicates (however intentional/unintentional) about past cultures as well as our own situatedness in time and space. They will design wireframes for the digital collection to be implemented in the next study period.

## Recommended reading

See the course book for required and recommended reading.

DCU4010

Period 4

3 Feb 2020

6 Mar 2020

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

3.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinators:

- [S. Schreibman](#)
- [K. Papadopoulos](#)

Teaching methods:

Lecture(s), PBL, Work in subgroups

Assessment methods:

Assignment, Assessment

Keywords:

3D modelling, digitisation, material culture, online collections, heritage

## MA Digital Cultures Thesis

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Workshops supporting Thesis and Internship

### Full course description

For further information please contact the course coordinator.

DCU4700

Period 4

9 Mar 2020

26 Jun 2020

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

0.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [S. Schreibman](#)

Teaching methods:

Skills

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Thesis

### Full course description

Students write an extensive MA thesis of at least 24.000 words, for which they independently and individually conduct research in the field of media/digital cultures. The MA thesis is written under supervision of one of the MA teaching staff members (but they may also choose another supervisor from the FASoS staff). For the assessment a second reader will be added.

### Course objectives

The thesis, as a traditional final assessment of a MA programme, provides students with the opportunity of engaging in in depth research and deepening their knowledge of a specific field in media/digital cultures. The thesis is research-oriented and students often choose it as preparation for a second MA programme or for future research. Students have wide latitude in their choice of topic, with the caveat that it draws from the theories, methods, and/or practices taught in the MA MC:DC programme.

DCU4800

Period 4

9 Mar 2020

26 Jun 2020

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

24.0

Instruction language:

Media Studies: Digital Cultures

English

Coordinator:

- [S. Schreibman](#)

Assessment methods:

Final paper

## **MA Digital Cultures Internship**

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

### **Workshops supporting Thesis and Internship**

#### **Full course description**

For further information please contact the course coordinator.

DCU4700

Period 4

9 Mar 2020

26 Jun 2020

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

0.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [S. Schreibman](#)

Teaching methods:

Skills

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## **Internship**

#### **Full course description**

Many students choose to undertake an internship. Students are responsible for finding their own placement and we advise students pursuing this option to begin early in the study year to secure a position. For non-Dutch speaking students it may pose challenges to find a placement in the Maastricht region. Thus students may choose to return to their home country for this part of their study. The internship starts in April and should last at least two months. We have a database of past placements to help students in securing an internship opportunity.

#### **Course objectives**

To develop students' expertise within a professional context and to apply knowledge learned in the course to a real-world project.

Media Studies: Digital Cultures

DCU4990

Period 4

9 Mar 2020

26 Jun 2020

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

10.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [S. Schreibman](#)

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Internship report

### Full course description

The internship report can best be described as a diary of the practical work undertaken during the internship. It describes the projects(s) the student worked on. It may include a development, business or marketing plan or a white paper. The report should critically reflect and evaluate the internship within the context of the MA MC:DC programme. The report is marked by the faculty supervisor and a second reader.

### Course objectives

The goal of this report is to introduce the internship to the reader, as well as to reflect on the practical aspects of the project and evaluate its results. The report should include a reflection that relates the professional and practical aspects of the internship to the theories and methods studied in the course. This report should provide insight into the professional experience of the student, as well as what aspects of the programme proved useful within a work context.

DCU4991

Period 4

9 Mar 2020

26 Jun 2020

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

2.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [S. Schreibman](#)

Assessment methods:

Final paper

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Internship thesis

### Full course description

Those students who undertake an internship also have to write a short internship thesis of 12.000 words. This short thesis has to be clearly related to at least one of the courses and must be finished before the internship starts in May. The internship thesis is written under supervision of one of the staff members.

### Course objectives

The thesis, as a traditional final assessment of a MA programme, provides students with the opportunity of engaging in research and deepening their knowledge of a specific field in media/digital cultures. Students have wide latitude in their choice of topic, with the caveat that it draws from the theories, methods, and/or practices taught in the MA MC:DC programme.

DCU4890

Period 4

9 Mar 2020

26 Jun 2020

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

12.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [S. Schreibman](#)

Assessment methods:

Final paper