

Historical Criticism of Pictures and Text in Mass Media (A002066)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 5.0

Study time 150 h

Course offerings in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 1)

Dutch

Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

De Koster, Margo

LW03

lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

Master of Science in Teaching in Languages(main subject African Languages and Cultures)

crdts

5

offering

A

Master of Science in Teaching in Arts and Humanities (main subject Archaeology)

5

A

Master of Science in Teaching in Arts and Humanities (main subject Art History, Musicology and Theatre Studies)

5

A

Master of Science in Teaching in Social Sciences(main subject Communication Science)

5

A

Master of Science in Teaching in Languages(main subject East European Languages and Cultures)

5

A

Master of Science in Teaching in Arts and Humanities (main subject History)

5

A

Master of Science in Teaching in Languages(main subject Oriental Languages and Cultures)

5

A

Master of Science in Communication Science(main subject Film and Television Studies)

5

A

Master of Science in Communication Science(main subject Journalism)

5

A

Master of Arts in History

5

A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

mass media, representation, manipulation, bias, framing, discourse analysis, historical criticism, media ethics, investigative journalism

Position of the course

Optional course that provides students from various disciplines with a theoretical and methodological framework for the historical-critical analysis of media messages in past and present

Contents

By means of theoretical insights from other disciplines (semiotics, iconology, cultural studies,...) students are made aware of rhetorical and visual strategies and the conscious or unconscious manipulation through text and image in a historical perspective. The focus is on the relationships between (visual) language, power and history.

Apart from introductory classes on concepts and methods (semiotics and framing) and examples of the application of historical criticism of texts and images in diverse media in the past and present (from war photography to newspaper reporting and new media, f.e.), the course consists of several guest lectures by prominent media professionals and academics, as well as an excursion (exhibition, movie screening, debate, etc.).

Initial competences

The competences acquired in a Bachelor's degree at the Faculty of Arts and Letters, Political and Social Sciences or Law and Criminology.

Final competences

- 1 Show advanced insight in the functioning of mass media in past and present.
- 2 To use advanced insight into the conceptual and methodological framework of historical and media critique to analyze and evaluate complex trends and problems in mass media.
- 3 To use and evaluate basic theories and models from bordering sciences regarding mass media in an original and in-depth manner, with special attention to interdisciplinarity.
- 4 To critically reflect on and apply the course contents to public debates regarding the media.
- 5 To critically deal with bias and manipulation of specific media contents in past and present.
- 6 To critically assess societal problems and current views regarding the media and contextualize them historically in scientific work.
- 7 To form ethical and nuanced opinions on historical and actual developments in the media.
- 8 To critically reflect upon the limits of one's own competences, thinking, and actions in dealing with media discourse.
- 9 Apply the principles of digital source criticism to self-discovered research objects in an independent and scientific manner
- 10 Have an advanced understanding of the impact of digital technology on the humanities and critically evaluate the opportunities and limitations in the long term
- 11 Independent reflection on the social impact, needs and ethical dimensions of the digital turn

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Seminar, Excursion, Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

Seminars and guest lectures; independent work (in small groups), consisting of two papers on image- and framing-analysis; minimum one excursion to a relevant exhibition, movie screening or debate.

Study material

Type: Slides

Name: Slides of (guest) lectures
 Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
 Optional: no
 Language : Dutch
 Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Reader

Name: Theoretical-methodological literature and literature for the (guest) lectures
 Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
 Optional: no
 Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Audiovisual Material

Name: Knowledge clips on theory and methods of image- and framinganalysis
 Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
 Optional: no
 Language : Dutch
 Available on Ufora : Yes

References

Nihil

Course content-related study coaching

Online support through Ufora, MS Teams and via email

Questions can be put to the lecturer (Prof. Dr. Margo De Koster) before or after each lecture.

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Oral assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Oral assessment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible

Extra information on the examination methods

Two forms of evaluation are used within this course unit: the oral examination (40%) and the paper (60%)

The oral exam measures knowledge of concepts and models and the ability to critically analyse complex issues relating to media and society in the past and present, various forms of manipulation and distortion, impact and reception of media messages in word and image. The oral examination consists of one or two thinking questions on the (guest and discussion) lectures and the reader.

The paper consists of two small papers and tests the extent to which students can independently (in small groups) make a historical-critical image and framing analysis of media content and report on it in writing.

Calculation of the examination mark

40% periodical, 60% non-periodical (paper written in small groups).

Students who do not participate in one or more parts of the assessment, or students who obtain a mark of less than 10/20 for one of the parts cannot pass the course evaluation. If the average mark is higher than 10/20, the final mark will be reduced to 9/20.

Facilities for Working Students

The course largely consists of interactive guest and discussion lectures with media professionals and no lecture recordings are made. Attendance is therefore strongly recommended. No replacement assignments can be made.

Facilities:

1. Possibility to make the papers individually
2. Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year
3. Alternative time for feedback is possible

For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy