

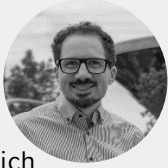


Exchange at the Department of Media and Communication (IfKW) Key Data for Incoming Students

DEPARTMENT DETAILS

Name of Department	Department of Media and Communication / IfKW (Institut für Kommunikationswissenschaft und Medienforschung)	
Name and number of Faculty	Faculty of Social Sciences – 15	
Postal Address	Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (LMU) Department of Media and Communication (IfKW) Oettingenstr. 67 80538 Munich, GERMANY	
Website	https://www.en.ifkw.uni-muenchen.de/	

CONTACTS

Incoming & Outgoing Students Jessica Kühn (Ms) Department of Media and Communication Oettingenstr. 67 Room A112 80538 Munich Phone: +49 8921809524 international@ifkw.lmu.de		Contract Management Dr. Bernhard Goodwin (Mr) Department of Media and Communication Oettingenstr. 67 Room A005 80538 Munich Phone: +49 8921809494 bernhard.goodwin@ifkw.lmu.de	
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DATES

Academic Calendar	The academic year is divided into two semesters : October 1st until March 31st and April 1st until September 30th.	  
Lecture Period	The summer semester lasts 14 weeks and the winter semester 15 weeks. The lecture periods can be found on the LMU website . These are the lecture periods for the academic year 2026/27: Winter semester 2026/27: 12 October 2026 – 05 February 2027 Summer semester 2027: 12 April 2027 – 16 July 2027	
Exam Period	The examination period is usually during the last week of lectures or at the beginning of the holidays. The specific times are determined by the lecturers. <i>If the end of the semester overlaps with the start of the new semester at the home university, we will find a flexible solution to enable students to complete their stay with us.</i>	
Application and Registration Procedure	Once you are nominated as an exchange student by your home university you need to register at LMU's central International Office . They provide information for exchange students who were already accepted as visiting students at LMU and who will spend one or two semesters at the Department of Media and Communication (IfKW).	
Welcome Event	We would like to welcome our exchange students at the Department of Media and Communication in the week before the start of the semester: We look very much forward to meeting you at our Welcome Day at the IfKW .	



Course
Information

COURSES

Courses taught in English	We offer at least 30 ECTS of English-taught courses each semester. This includes courses for exchange students only (incoming series), but also mixed courses / lectures. The courses are in the following modules: ▪ Empirical Communication Research ▪ Media System in Munich (Media Institutions or Professional Communication) ▪ Media Work (Journalism, Public Relations & Advertising, or Digital Media) ▪ Academic Writing
Online course catalogue of LMU	The up-to-date course catalogue is available at: www.lsf.lmu.de. Specific courses, including titles and descriptions, are published each semester (two months before the beginning of each semester).
Course types	Lectures at the IfKW are attended by 100 to 200 students and are held each week by a professor (usually in German). At home students are expected to read the relevant literature. Towards the end of the semester there will be a written exam (usually in the last week of the lecture period). After personal consultation with the lecturer, the examination modality can be changed if necessary (e.g. oral exam). Seminars are usually attended by 15 to 30 students. They will probably have to give a presentation (together with fellow students) and at the end of the semester they will most likely write a term paper. A seminar also involves reading relevant literature. On occasion, there will be practical exercises. Joint discussions play an important role in seminars. Empirical research seminars are advanced seminars designed for third-year or graduate students, focusing on empirical research. Students wishing to attend an empirical research seminar should have a high level of proficiency in the language of instruction and have comprehensive knowledge of empirical research methods.
ECTS / Credit points	For exchange students most of the regular seminars at the IfKW give 5 ECTS on under-graduate level and 7 ECTS on postgraduate level. Lectures give 4 ECTS. Empirical research seminars (4h/week, strong focus on empirical research methods) give 10-12 ECTS on under-graduate level, and 12-15 ECTS on postgraduate level.
Types of examinations	Mostly written exams (for lectures), presentations and assignments (for seminars), and possibly oral exams. <i>We are open to negotiation for specific examination, so it fits to the requirements of the home university.</i>
Course choice at the IfKW	A few weeks prior to the start of the semester, the international coordinator will send an online form for choosing classes in our department (wishlist). Students do not have to apply online for courses in the field of media and communication by themselves. Our coordinator will apply for them. IMPORTANT: This only works for courses at the IfKW – if students would like to attend courses in other departments, too, they have to subscribe to them by themselves (the best would be to write an e-mail to the international coordinator or lecturer).
Website	https://www.sw.lmu.de/ifkw/en/studies/international-students-at-ifkw/



Incoming Series

We strongly recommend attending the following seminars for all incoming exchange students.

Media Change: Contemporary cases, consequences and conceptualisations		
Course Code: 15IFKW_0 Type: Lecture Period: Winter Semester (Start: October) Duration: 1 semester Frequency: Weekly Weekday: Wednesday, 10-12 a.m. Lecturer Thurman Credits: 4 ECTS	Course Content: This lecture series is about how and why certain features of the media landscape have changed, and others haven't, and why some of them have changed very slowly. Computers and the internet have left the media landscape much altered. The world is not what it was, but neither is it novel all the way to its extremities. The lectures focus on various contemporary cases of media change, concerning how media content is produced, paid-for, distributed, and regulated; and how that content is consumed—and that consumption measured. The cases cover everything from AI to audience measurement, personalization to pornography. The cases are examined through two lenses. Firstly, a lifecycle model of media evolution that looks at how media—new and old—co-evolve through adaptation, competition, and cooperation. And secondly, Professor Thurman's own Six Rs framework—Revolution, Resistance, Rapidity, Regulation, Reversals, and Remediation—which conceptualises media change as a non-linear and sometimes slow process that is driven by much more than technology and is incessantly incorporating the past.	Level of Study: Undergraduate <u>and</u> Postgraduate Requirements: / Language Requirements: English (CEFR level B2)
Professional Communication in Munich		
Course Code: 15IFKW_1 Type: Seminar Period: Winter Semester (Start: October) Duration: 1 semester Frequency: Weekly Weekday: tba. Lecturer Kühn Credits: 7-10 ECTS	Course Content: This seminar focuses on professional communication in online, print and broadcasting media. Students take part in field trips to different media companies in Munich, communication professionals give a talk and students try out to write in different journalistic styles. The acquired knowledge will be implemented in a weblog, written by the participating students. The acquired knowledge will be implemented in a weblog, planned, edited and written by the participants.	Level: Undergraduate <u>and</u> Postgraduate Requirements: / Language Requirements: English (CEFR level B2)

Writing for Academic Purposes

Course Code:

15IFKW_2

Type:

Seminar

Period:

Winter Semester (Start: October)

Frequency:

Presumably three dates

Weekday:

tba.

Duration:

1 semester

Lecturer

Estgen

Credits:

2 ECTS

Course Content:

This course for exchange students only focusses on scientific basics, dos and don'ts in writing an academic (research) report – especially in the field of communication: knowledge of the most relevant libraries and online catalogues, use of important digital databases, central sources, online search methods, quotation and citation (APA) as well as bibliography exercises and a library tour (IfKW library).

We recommend this course to all incoming students who have no experience with the APA7th citation style, as this is the standard for academic work at the IfKW and is therefore a basic requirement for most exams/assignments.

Level:

Undergraduate and Postgraduate

Requirements:

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Language

Requirements:

English (CEFR level B2)

Media Audience Measurement: Origins, Operations, Objections, and Outcomes

Course Code:

15IFKW_3

Type:

Lecture

Period:

Winter Semester (Start: October)

Duration:

1 semester

Frequency:

Weekly

Weekday:

Thursday, 2-4 p.m.

Lecturer

Thurman

Credits:

4 ECTS

Course Content:

This lecture series introduces students to how audiences are measured in the media industries and why this matters. It begins by explaining the basic economics of audience measurement and how the industry is organised. It then explores key criticisms, including 'audience commodification' and advertising fraud. The course then looks at how audience measurement developed in the twentieth century, initially serving newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations, and then websites. This helps students understand how today's methods evolved. Next, the series examines media audience measurement in the twenty-first century. As well as describing contemporary methods of multiplatform audience measurement, the course examines the disruption caused by streaming, social media, and new online companies, and the responses by governments and the legacy media ecosystem. Finally, students learn how audience data are used in practice—by advertisers and marketers, but also by researchers and policymakers. Overall, the course provides an accessible introduction to how media audiences are measured, why, and with what consequences.

Level:

Undergraduate and Postgraduate

Requirements:

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Language

Requirements:

English (CEFR level B2)



Bachelor's Program

Corporate Film Production: From Concept to Screen		
Course Code: 15IFKW_4 Type: Seminar Period: Winter Semester (Start: October) Duration: 1 semester Frequency: two block sessions Weekday: Saturday, 07/11/26 Saturday, 23/01/26 Lecturer Kranewitter Credits: 5 ECTS	Course Content: Want to Master Visual Storytelling in the Business World? Join us to discover how leading companies use film to connect with audiences, build their brand, and drive engagement in today's digital landscape. This course bridges creative filmmaking with strategic communication—perfect for international students interested in media production, marketing communications, or corporate storytelling. Develop skills that translate across cultures and industries. By course end, you'll have the tools to conceptualize, pitch, and produce corporate films that resonate with diverse audiences.	Level: Undergraduate Requirements: open to students in communication sciences or related fields Language Requirements: English (CEFR level B2)
What Drives Health Decisions? Media and Market Research in Health Contexts		
Course Code: 15IFKW_5 Type: Seminar Period: Winter Semester (Start: October) Duration: 1 semester Frequency: Weekly Weekday: Thursday, 8-10 a.m. Lecturer Berlekamp Credits: 5 ECTS	Course Content: How do people make decisions about visiting doctors, taking medication, and choosing therapies? How are messages in health campaigns perceived and understood? How successful are new health apps? Which attitudes and motives influence health-related behaviors? How are hospitals or pharmaceutical companies perceived? This seminar addresses these and related questions. It introduces students to the principles and practices of media and market research. In this semester, the thematic focus will be on media and market research in the health sector. We will engage both theoretically and practically with the fundamentals of media and market research in the health sector. On this basis, students will work in small groups to develop and present their own project. Through this process, students will learn essential work techniques used in professional research environments and gain insight into diverse areas of the media and marketing industries.	Level: Undergraduate Requirements: open to students in communication sciences or related fields Language Requirements: English (CEFR level B2)

Strategic Communication in Practice: Managing Reputation in the Age of AI

Course Code:
15IFKW_6

Type: Seminar

Period:
Winter Semester (Start: October)

Duration: 1 semester

Frequency: block sessions
Wednesday, 14/10/26, 1-4 p.m.
Wednesday, 28/10/26 to 20/01/2027,
9-12 a.m., bi-weekly
Wednesday, 27/01/27, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Lecturer
Kagenbeck

Credits:
5 ECTS

Course Content:

This hands-on seminar explores how reputation and trust are actively shaped in today's fast-moving, AI-driven media environment. Drawing on real-world experience from a startup, corporate, and consulting, students will learn how to craft messages, manage narratives, and communicate effectively in high-pressure situations. Through practical exercises and guest perspectives also from journalists, the course offers a real-world view of how strategic communication works.

Level:

Undergraduate

Requirements:

open to students in communication sciences or related fields

Language

Requirements:
English (CEFR level B2)

Podcasting Essentials: Concept to Creation

Course Code:
15IFKW_7

Type: Seminar

Period:
Winter Semester
(Start: October)

Duration: 1 semester

Frequency: Weekly

Weekday:
Wednesday, 4-6 p.m.

Lecturer
Peter

Credits:
5 ECTS

Course Content:

Ever wanted to start your own podcast? As a rapidly growing medium, podcasting offers the perfect opportunity to explore interesting topics or create engaging entertainment. This weekly course is designed to help you make the most of this evolving platform. In this seminar, you will work with your peers to brainstorm and refine your podcast ideas. With plenty of freedom to choose your own topics, you'll have the flexibility to create content that truly resonates with you and your audience. The course is taught in English and provides a solid understanding of podcasting techniques and strategies. However, you're welcome to produce your podcast in German if you prefer. Please bring your own laptop and mobile phone; recording equipment will be provided.

Level:

Undergraduate

Requirements:

open to students in communication sciences or related fields

Language

Requirements:
English (CEFR level B2)

Advertising in Transition: Markets, Platforms, and Strategies

Course Code: 15IFKW_8 Type: Seminar Period: Winter Semester (Start: October) Duration: 1 semester Frequency: Weekly Weekday: Tuesday, 8-10 a.m. Lecturer tba. Credits: 5 ECTS	Course Content: How does advertising work behind the scenes? And why does it matter for journalism, media, and the platforms we use every day? This seminar explores the economic and structural forces reshaping advertising, from foundational concepts like the commodification of media audiences to the practical dynamics of today's advertising markets. Students will learn how audiences are measured and monetized, how platforms and intermediaries have changed the flow of advertising money, and how media companies have responded strategically to these developments. Through real-world case studies from the advertising industry, the seminar combines conceptual understanding with hands-on analysis — equipping students with analytical and strategic skills for careers in media, advertising, and market research.	Level: Undergraduate Requirements: open to students in communication sciences or related fields Language Requirements: English (CEFR level B2)
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A Court of Misogyny and Spice? Exploring Dark Romance Audiences using Quantitative Survey Methodology

Course Code: 15IFKW_9 Type: Empirical Research Project Period: Winter Semester (Start: October) Duration: 1 semester Frequency: Weekly Weekday: Tuesday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Lecturer Schulze Credits: 10 ECTS	Course Content: On TikTok, #BookTok has become one of the most influential literary publics of recent years, turning reader recommendations, emotional reactions, and genre debates into powerful drivers of literary trends. One genre that has particularly profited from this visibility is Dark Romance, a subgenre popular among New Adult readers in which romance is often linked to morally ambivalent antiheroes, power, possessiveness, transgression, violence, and explicit sexual content. Its success has sparked considerable debate: while some understand Dark Romance as a safe space for exploring desire, submission, and the reclaiming of female pleasure beyond purity culture, others criticize the genre for romanticizing abuse, reproducing reductive gender and class relations, and placing women in the caretaker role of violent or "monstrous" men. Accounting for the heterogeneity of the genre, the seminar takes up this multifaceted debate and explores who reads Dark Romance and how reading practices relate to attitudes toward relationships, gender, power, misogyny, and transgressive behavior. Using cultivation theory and social learning theory as theoretical starting points, students will develop and conduct a quantitative survey study on Dark Romance audiences. They will work through the central steps of an empirical research project: developing research questions and hypotheses, operationalizing key constructs, designing a standardized questionnaire, sampling and collecting data, and preparing the results for a written research report. In doing so, students learn to combine quantitative survey methodology with communication theory, applied to a timely and societally relevant cultural phenomenon.	Level: Undergraduate Requirements: open to students in communication sciences or related fields ; prior knowledge of qualitative and quantitative methods is helpful; knowledge of scientific citation is required (AP7th) Language Requirements: English (CEFR level B2)
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Exploring Rage Bait on Social Media: Conceptualization and Audience Perceptions

Course Code:
15IFKW_10

Type:
Empirical
Research Project

Period:
Winter Semester
(Start: October)

Duration:
1 semester

Frequency:
Weekly

Weekday:
Tuesday, 2-6
p.m.

Lecturer
Kaskeleviciute

Credits:
12 ECTS

Course Content:

Social media platforms increasingly reward content that provokes strong reactions, a dynamic that content creators are aware of. Particularly, posts designed to elicit outrage by being frustrating, provocative, or offensive – often referred to as “rage bait” – frequently attract traffic or user engagement. Such content can shape online interactions and influence how users experience and navigate digital spaces. “Rage bait” is the Oxford Word of the Year 2025, highlighting the concept’s relevance in public debate. From a scientific perspective, we will discuss where (and how) “rage bait” as a concept can be situated in the academic literature and how it relates to other concepts (e.g., polarization, anger appeals, populism). We will study audience experiences with “rage bait”. We explore questions such as: What kinds of content do social media users consider rage bait? How do they process, perceive, and cope with rage bait content? What kind of emotional reactions does rage baiting elicit? How is the use of rage bait across different actors (e.g., influencers, news media, politicians) considered? What motivates people to engage with – or avoid – rage bait content? And how do individuals consider the role of platforms and specific platform affordances in this regard? We will investigate these and related questions collectively through qualitative, semi-structured interviews. Students will conduct interviews, analyze them, and present their results in an oral presentation format as well as a scientific research paper.

Level:

Advanced
Undergraduate

Requirements:

open to students in communication sciences or related fields ; prior knowledge of qualitative and quantitative methods is helpful; knowledge of scientific citation is required (AP7th)

Language

Requirements:

English (CEFR level B2)

Autonomy and the AI Informant: Exploring How AI Use Shapes Users' Sense of Autonomy and Informedness

Course Code:
15IFKW_11

Type:
Empirical Research Project

Period:
Winter Semester
(Start: October)

Duration:
1 semester

Frequency:
Weekly

Weekday:
Wednesday, 2-6 p.m.

Lecturer
Primig

Credits:
12 ECTS

Course Content:

Generative AI has become a normal everyday tool for many people. It drafts texts or images, it summarises literature, generates "ideas" or code, and so on. Public debate focuses on whether this makes people smarter or dumber (for example because of deskilling) and how it disrupts the job market (with slop or efficiency, depending on the camp). In this seminar, we take a step back and converse with users instead of talking about them: When does AI use feel like an extension of one's own thinking, and when like handing it over? For a theoretical understanding of the stakes, students will learn important concepts such as epistemic autonomy (Matheson, Kawall, Mattioni), cognitive sovereignty and automation bias (Branda & Ciccozzi; Momennejad & Crawford), and the importance of epistemic friction (Xu; Medina). We will derive an interview guide together with which students will be able to conduct independent semi-structured interviews and answer their own research questions within the course theme. Students will learn to conduct thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke) on the interview data with the open source analysis tool OpenQDA.

Level:

Advanced
Undergraduate

Requirements:

open to students in communication sciences or related fields; prior knowledge of qualitative and quantitative methods is necessary! knowledge of scientific citation is required (AP7th)

Language

Requirements:

English (CEFR level B2)



Master's Program

Corporate Film Production: From Concept to Screen (Advanced)

Course Code:
15IFKW_12

Type:
Seminar

Period:
Winter Semester (Start:
October) and Summer
Semester (Start: April)

Duration:
1 semester

Frequency:
two block sessions

Weekday:
Saturday, 07/11/26
Saturday, 23/01/26

Lecturer
Kranewitter

Credits:
7 ECTS

Course Content:

Want to Master Visual Storytelling in the Business World? Join us to discover how leading companies use film to connect with audiences, build their brand, and drive engagement in today's digital landscape. This course bridges creative filmmaking with strategic communication—perfect for international students interested in media production, marketing communications, or corporate storytelling. Develop skills that translate across cultures and industries. By course end, you'll have the tools to conceptualize, pitch, and produce corporate films that resonate with diverse audiences. In this course, master's students will complete a self-reflection assignment, which will facilitate a deeper understanding of the skills taught in the course.

Level:

Postgraduate

Requirements:

open only to MA students in communication sciences or related fields

Language

Requirements:
English (CEFR level B2)

What Drives Health Decisions? Media and Market Research in Health Contexts (Advanced)

Course Code:
15IFKW_13

Type:
seminar

Period:
Winter Semester
(Start: October)

Duration:
1 semester

Frequency:
Weekly

Weekday:
Thursday, 8-10 a.m.

Lecturer
Berlekamp

Credits:
7 ECTS

Course Content:

How do people make decisions about visiting doctors, taking medication, and choosing therapies? How are messages in health campaigns perceived and understood? How successful are new health apps? Which attitudes and motives influence health-related behaviors? How are hospitals or pharmaceutical companies perceived?

This seminar addresses these and related questions. It introduces students to the principles and practices of media and market research. In this semester, the thematic focus will be on media and market research in the health sector. We will engage both theoretically and practically with the fundamentals of media and market research in the health sector. On this basis, students will work in small groups to develop and present their own project. Through this process, students will learn essential work techniques used in professional research environments and gain insight into diverse areas of the media and marketing industries.

In this course, master's students will complete a self-reflection assignment, which will facilitate a deeper understanding of the skills taught in the course.

Level:

Postgraduate

Requirements:

open only to MA students in communication sciences or related fields

Language

Requirements:
English (CEFR level B2)

Strategic Communication in Practice: Managing Reputation in the Age of AI (Advanced)

Course Code:

15IFKW_14

Type:

seminar

Period:

Winter Semester (Start: October)

Duration:

1 semester

Frequency:

block sessions

Weekday:

Wednesday, 14/10/26, 1-4 p.m.
Wednesday, 28/10/26 to 20/01/2027,
9-12 a.m., bi-weekly
Wednesday, 27/01/27, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Lecturer

Kagenbeck

Credits:

7 ECTS

Course Content:

This hands-on seminar explores how reputation and trust are actively shaped in today's fast-moving, AI-driven media environment. Drawing on real-world experience from a startup, corporate, and consulting, students will learn how to craft messages, manage narratives, and communicate effectively in high-pressure situations. Through practical exercises and guest perspectives also from journalists, the course offers a real-world view of how strategic communication works.

In this course, master's students will complete a self-reflection assignment, which will facilitate a deeper understanding of the skills taught in the course.

Level:

Postgraduate

Requirements:

open only to MA students in communication sciences or related fields

Language

Requirements:

English (CEFR level B2)

Podcasting Essentials: Concept to Creation (Advanced)

Course Code:

15IFKW_15

Type:

seminar

Period:

Winter Semester
(Start: October)

Duration:

1 semester

Frequency:

Weekly

Weekday:

Wednesday, 4-6 p.m.

Lecturer

Peter

Credits:

7 ECTS

Course Content:

Ever wanted to start your own podcast? As a rapidly growing medium, podcasting offers the perfect opportunity to explore interesting topics or create engaging entertainment. This weekly course is designed to help you make the most of this evolving platform. In this seminar, you will work with your peers to brainstorm and refine your podcast ideas. With plenty of freedom to choose your own topics, you'll have the flexibility to create content that truly resonates with you and your audience. The course is taught in English and provides a solid understanding of podcasting techniques and strategies. However, you're welcome to produce your podcast in German if you prefer. Please bring your own laptop and mobile phone; recording equipment will be provided.

In this course, master's students will complete a self-reflection assignment, which will facilitate a deeper understanding of the skills taught in the course.

Level:

Postgraduate

Requirements:

open only to MA students in communication sciences or related fields

Language

Requirements:

English (CEFR level B2)

Advertising in Transition: Markets, Platforms, and Strategies

Course Code: 15IFKW_16 Type: Seminar Period: Winter Semester (Start: October) Duration: 1 semester Frequency: Weekly Weekday: Tuesday, 8-10 a.m. Lecturer tba. Credits: 7 ECTS	Course Content: How does advertising work behind the scenes? And why does it matter for journalism, media, and the platforms we use every day? This seminar explores the economic and structural forces reshaping advertising, from foundational concepts like the commodification of media audiences to the practical dynamics of today's advertising markets. Students will learn how audiences are measured and monetized, how platforms and intermediaries have changed the flow of advertising money, and how media companies have responded strategically to these developments. Through real-world case studies from the advertising industry, the seminar combines conceptual understanding with hands-on analysis — equipping students with analytical and strategic skills for careers in media, advertising, and market research.	Level: Postgraduate Requirements: open to students in communication sciences or related fields Language Requirements: English (CEFR level B2)
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A Court of Misogyny and Spice? Exploring Dark Romance Audiences using Quantitative Survey Methodology

Course Code: 15IFKW_17 Type: Seminar Period: Winter Semester (Start: October) Duration: 1 semester Frequency: Weekly Weekday: Tuesday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Lecturer Schulze Credits: 12 ECTS	Course Content: On TikTok, #BookTok has become one of the most influential literary publics of recent years, turning reader recommendations, emotional reactions, and genre debates into powerful drivers of literary trends. One genre that has particularly profited from this visibility is Dark Romance, a subgenre popular among New Adult readers in which romance is often linked to morally ambivalent antiheroes, power, possessiveness, transgression, violence, and explicit sexual content. Its success has sparked considerable debate: while some understand Dark Romance as a safe space for exploring desire, submission, and the reclaiming of female pleasure beyond purity culture, others criticize the genre for romanticizing abuse, reproducing reductive gender and class relations, and placing women in the caretaker role of violent or "monstrous" men. Accounting for the heterogeneity of the genre, the seminar takes up this multifaceted debate and explores who reads Dark Romance and how reading practices relate to attitudes toward relationships, gender, power, misogyny, and transgressive behavior. Using cultivation theory and social learning theory as theoretical starting points, students will develop and conduct a quantitative survey study on Dark Romance audiences. They will work through the central steps of an empirical research project: developing research questions and hypotheses, operationalizing key constructs, designing a standardized questionnaire, sampling and collecting data, and preparing the results for a written research report. In doing so, students learn to combine quantitative survey methodology with communication theory, applied to a timely and societally relevant cultural phenomenon. The seminar fosters independent, critical, and organized work, while strengthening key competencies such as analytical thinking, methodological proficiency, and project management.	Level: Postgraduate Requirements: open to students in communication sciences or related fields; prior knowledge of qualitative and quantitative methods is helpful; knowledge of scientific citation is required (AP7th) Language Requirements: English (CEFR level B2)
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Autonomy and the AI Informant: Exploring How AI Use Shapes Users' Sense of Autonomy and Informedness

Course Code: 15IFKW_18 Type: Empirical Research Project Period: Winter Semester (Start: October) Duration: 1 semester Frequency: Weekly Weekday: Wednesday, 2-6p.m. Lecturer: Primig Credits: 15 ECTS	Course Content: Generative AI has become a normal everyday tool for many people. It drafts texts or images, it summarises literature, generates "ideas" or code, and so on. Public debate focuses on whether this makes people smarter or dumber (for example because of deskilling) and how it disrupts the job market (with slop or efficiency, depending on the camp). In this seminar, we take a step back and converse with users instead of talking about them: When does AI use feel like an extension of one's own thinking, and when like handing it over? For a theoretical understanding of the stakes, students will learn important concepts such as epistemic autonomy (Matheson, Kawall, Mattioni), cognitive sovereignty and automation bias (Branda & Ciccozzi; Momennejad & Crawford), and the importance of epistemic friction (Xu; Medina). We will derive an interview guide together with which students will be able to conduct independent semi-structured interviews and answer their own research questions within the course theme. Students will learn to conduct thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke) on the interview data with the open source analysis tool OpenQDA.	Level: Postgraduate Requirements: open to students in communication sciences or related fields; prior knowledge of qualitative and quantitative methods is necessary! knowledge of scientific citation is required (AP7th) Language Requirements: English (CEFR level B2)
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Exploring Rage Bait on Social Media: Conceptualization and Audience Perceptions

Course Code: 15IFKW_19 Type: Seminar Period: Winter Semester (Start: October) Duration: 1 semester Frequency: Weekly Weekday: Tuesday, 2-6 p.m. Lecturer: Kaskeleviciute Credits: 15 ECTS	Course Content: Social media platforms increasingly reward content that provokes strong reactions, a dynamic that content creators are aware of. Particularly, posts designed to elicit outrage by being frustrating, provocative, or offensive – often referred to as "rage bait" – frequently attract traffic or user engagement. Such content can shape online interactions and influence how users experience and navigate digital spaces. "Rage bait" is the Oxford Word of the Year 2025, highlighting the concept's relevance in public debate. From a scientific perspective, we will discuss where (and how) "rage bait" as a concept can be situated in the academic literature and how it relates to other concepts (e.g., polarization, anger appeals, populism). We will study audience experiences with "rage bait". We explore questions such as: What kinds of content do social media users consider rage bait? How do they process, perceive, and cope with rage bait content? What kind of emotional reactions does rage baiting elicit? How is the use of rage bait across different actors (e.g., influencers, news media, politicians) considered? What motivates people to engage with – or avoid – rage bait content? And how do individuals consider the role of platforms and specific platform affordances in this regard? We will investigate these and related questions collectively through qualitative, semi-structured interviews. Students will conduct interviews, analyze them, and present their results in an oral presentation format as well as a scientific research paper. The seminar fosters independent, critical, and organized work, while strengthening key competencies such as analytical thinking, methodological proficiency, and project management. Specific thematic focuses vary each semester.	Level: Postgraduate Requirements: open to students in communication sciences or related fields; prior knowledge of qualitative and quantitative methods is helpful; knowledge of scientific citation is required (AP7th) Language Requirements: English (CEFR level B2)
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