# COMX923
# Researching Digital Life

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Instructor Contact Details

Lecturer-in-charge: Dr. Yuan Li
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Office location: Huajiachi Campus, Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China
Consultation Time: Book appointment by sending email to: wlwyxy_29@zju.edu.cn

Teaching Times, Modes and Locations

Course Duration: 21 Dec 2025 to 09 Jan 2026
Modes: Face-to-face
Location: Huajiachi Campus, Zhejiang University via face-to-face

Academic Level

Postgraduate

Credit Points:

The course is worth 6 units of credit point.

Credit Hours

The number of credit hours of this course equals to the credits of a standard semester- long course.

Contact Hours

The course contains a total of 53 contact hours, which consists of orientation, lectures, seminars, quiz, discussion, research, case study, small tests, assignments, on-site field trip(s), in-class and after-class activities, revision, self-study, and final exam. Students will receive an official transcript which is issued by Zhejiang University when completing this course.

Enrolment Requirements

Eligibility requires enrollment in an overseas university as an undergraduate or postgraduate student, proficiency in English, and pre-approval from the student's home institution.

Course Description:

This subject explores the transformative changes in the global media environment, preparing you to become a knowledgeable worker in the dynamic professional employment market. Key trends such as global communication networks, media digitalization, mobile content creation, human-machine interaction, virtualization, artificial intelligence, big data, and the democratization of video, sound, and text are examined within their social contexts. Drawing on interdisciplinary studies from humanities, arts, social sciences, and business, you will learn to create professional public media content showcasing your digital knowledge and skills. The course also delves into the central role of digital media in society, culture, and daily life, mediating individual experiences, reconfiguring communities, and forming networks. Key theories are introduced to explore digital media's impact on visuality, identities, power relations, and more. Students will be equipped with research tools to design projects using ethnographic and text-mining methods, enabling a deep understanding of digital cultures and sociality.

Prerequisite:

N/A

Learning Resources

● Lindgren, Simon (2022) Digital Media & Society. Second Edition. London: Sage.

● Boulianne, S., & Theocharis, Y. (2020). Young people, digital media, and engagement: A meta-analysis of research. Social science computer review, 38(2), 111-127.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

・Develop a deep and critical understanding of key concepts and theories in the social studies of digital media. This includes the ability to articulate and debate the merits of emerging media both verbally and in written communication.

・Gain a comprehensive understanding of key debates surrounding digital media.

・Demonstrate strong collaboration and teamwork skills. Engage in group activities and discussions to explore and analyze digital media topics, contributing to a productive and inclusive learning environment.

・Collaboratively conceive, develop, and present a research proposal and research report. Utilize ethnographic and text-mining methods to investigate digital cultures, and demonstrate the ability to work effectively within a team to achieve these academic objectives.

Course Delivery:

- Face-to-face Lecture mode includes lectures, seminars, quiz, discussion, research, case study, small tests, assignments, on-site field trip(s), in-class and after-class activities, revision, and final exam.

The following course will be taught in English. There will also be guest speakers and optional field trips available for students who would like to enhance their learning experience. All courses and other sessions will be run during weekdays.

Topics and Course Schedule:

| WK | Topic | Activities |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Orientation | |
| 1 | Introduction to Digital Culture and Society | Lecture; Tutorial |
| 1 | Social Media Platforms in Modern Society<br><br>Methodologies, Ontologies and Epistemologies | Lecture; Tutorial |
| 1 | Beyond optimism and pessimism<br><br>Research Design and Implementation | Lecture; Tutorial |
| 1 | Interaction and Identity<br><br>Research Ethics | Lecture; Tutorial |
| 1 | Communities and Networks | Lecture; Tutorial |
| 2 | Visuality and Visibility<br><br>Arts-Based Methods<br><br>Participatory Methods | Lecture; Tutorial |
| 2 | Seminar | |
| 2 | Emotions and Affect<br><br>Power and Exploitation | Lecture; Tutorial |
| 2 | Data Visualization and Mapping | Lecture; Tutorial |
| 2 | Quiz | Closed book |

| 2 | Activism and Mobilization | Lecture; Tutorial |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | Datafication and Algorithms<br><br>Data Analytics | Lecture; Tutorial |
| 3 | Researching Digital Society | Lecture; Tutorial |
| 3 | Social Media and the Capitalist Crisis | Lecture; Tutorial |
| 3 | Epilogue: Digital Media and Social Change | Lecture; Tutorial |
| 3 | Social Media, Big Data, and Critical Marketing | Lecture; Tutorial |
| 3 | Revision | Tutorial |
| 3 | Final exam | Closed book |

Assessments:

| Class participation | 15% |
|---|---|
| Quiz | 15% |
| Assignments | 20% |
| Final exam | 50% |

Grade Descriptors:

| HD | High Distinction | 85-100 |
|---|---|---|
| D | Distinction | 75-84 |
| Cr | Credit | 65-74 |
| P | Pass | 50-64 |
| F | Fail | 0-49 |

**High Distinction 85-100**

• Treatment of material evidences an advanced synthesis of ideas Demonstration of initiative, complex understanding, and analysis.
• Work is well-written and stylistically sophisticated, including appropriate referencing, clarity, and some creativity where appropriate.
• All criteria addressed to a high level.

**Distinction 75-84**
• Treatment of material evidences an advanced understanding of ideas Demonstration of initiative, complex understanding and analysis Work is well-written and stylistically strong.
• All criteria addressed strongly.

**Credit 65-74**
• Treatment of material displays a good understanding of ideas.
• Work is well-written and stylistically sound, with a minimum of syntactical errors.
• All criteria addressed clearly.

**Pass 50-64**
• Treatment of material indicates a satisfactory understanding of ideas Work is adequately written, with some syntactical errors.
• Most criteria addressed adequately.

**Fail 0-49**
• Treatment of ideas indicates an inadequate understanding of ideas Written style inappropriate to task, major problems with expression.
• Most criteria not clearly or adequately addressed.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to uphold the university's academic honesty principles which are an integral part of the university's core values and principles. If a student fails to observe the acceptable standards of academic honesty, they could attract penalties and even disqualification from the course in more serious circumstances. Students are responsible for knowing and observing accepted principles of research, writing and any other task which they are required to complete.

Academic dishonesty or cheating includes acts of plagiarism, misrepresentation, fabrication, failure to reference materials used properly and forgery. These may include, but are not limited to: claiming the work of others as your own, deliberately applying false and inaccurate information, copying the work of others in part or whole, allowing others in the course to copy your work in part or whole, failing to appropriately acknowledge the work of other scholars/authors through acceptable referencing standards, purchasing papers or writing papers for other students and submitting the same paper twice for the same subject.

This Academic Integrity policy applies to all students of the Zhejiang University in all programs of study, including non-graduating students. It is to reinforce the University's commitment to maintain integrity and honesty in all academic activities of the University community.

Policy
The foundation of good academic work is honesty. Maintaining academic integrity upholds the standards of the University. The responsibility for maintaining integrity in all the activities of the academic community lies with the students as well as the faculty and the University. Everyone in this community must work together to ensure that the values of truth, trust and justice are upheld.
Academic dishonesty affects the University's reputation and devalues the degrees offered. The University will impose serious penalties on students who are found to have

violated this policy. The following penalties may be imposed:

- ✓ Expulsion
- ✓ Suspension
- ✓ Zero mark /fail grade
- ✓ Marking down
- ✓ Re-doing/re-submitting of assignments or reports, and
- ✓ Verbal or written warning.