

Course title	Disinformation, Synthetic Media and Media Literacy				
Course code	BCOM-330				
Course type	Elective				
Level	1 st Cycle				
Year / Semester	2 nd -3 rd -4 th year				
Teacher's name	Communications Faculty				
ECTS	6	Lectures / weeks	1 / 12	Laboratories / week	NA
Course purpose and objectives	The general goal of the course is to help students critically analyze false, misleading, and synthetic media; understand the social, technological, political, and economic systems that shape information disorder; and apply media literacy, verification, ethical reasoning, and communication strategies to respond responsibly in civic, professional, and organizational settings. The main objectives of the course are to: 1. Build conceptual knowledge of information disorder: Introduce students to key terms including misinformation, disinformation, malinformation, propaganda, conspiracy narratives, rumors, hoaxes, and synthetic media. 2. Develop historical awareness: Examine how propaganda, persuasion, and strategic communication have changed from legacy media environments to contemporary digital platforms. 3. Explore the sociology of belief and sharing: Help students understand how cognitive bias, emotion, identity, trust, repetition, and social influence shape how people interpret and spread information. 4. Analyze digital platforms and attention economies: Examine how algorithms, monetization, influencers, bots, engagement metrics, and platform design affect the visibility and spread of misleading content. 5. Understand synthetic media and generative AI: Introduce students to deepfakes, AI-generated images, voice cloning, synthetic video, AI-written content, and the ethical challenges of realistic media manipulation. 6. Strengthen verification and fact-checking skills: Train students to evaluate sources, trace claims, conduct lateral reading, use reverse image search, triangulate evidence, and assess credibility. 7. Evaluate detection, labeling, and provenance systems: Explore the strengths and limits of AI-detection tools, watermarking, metadata, content credentials, platform labels, and other trust technologies.				

	8. Apply ethical, legal, policy, and communication responses: Prepare students to assess harms, consider free expression and privacy, evaluate platform policies, and design prebunking, debunking, or media literacy interventions.		
Learning outcomes	After completion of the course students are expected to be able to: 1. Define and distinguish misinformation, disinformation, malinformation, propaganda, conspiracy narratives, satire, hoaxes, and synthetic media. 2. Compare historical propaganda techniques with contemporary digital influence campaigns using specific examples. 3. Explain how cognitive biases, emotion, identity, trust, and social pressure affect belief formation and online sharing behavior. 4. Analyze how platform algorithms, monetization models, influencers, bots, and engagement incentives contribute to the spread of misleading or harmful content. 5. Evaluate synthetic media examples for authenticity, context, intended purpose, potential harm, and ethical disclosure. 6. Conduct a basic verification workflow using lateral reading, source triangulation, reverse image search, claim tracing, and credibility assessment. 7. Critique the strengths and limitations of AI-detection tools, watermarking, metadata, provenance systems, and platform labeling practices. 8. Design a media literacy response plan that uses prebunking, debunking, audience analysis, ethical reasoning, and measurable communication objectives.		
Prerequisites	None	Required	YES
Course content	1. Information Disorder: Key Concepts and Definitions 2. History of Propaganda, Persuasion, and Influence 3. Sociology of Belief and Sharing 4. Social Media, Algorithms, and Attention Economies 5. Synthetic Media and Generative AI 6. Verification, Fact-Checking, and Source Evaluation 7. Detection, Provenance, and Trust Technologies 8. Ethics, Law, Policy, and Public Response		
Teaching methodology	Lectures, Hands-on workshops, Class Discussion, Practical Exercises, Group Activities, Cases, In-class Exercises, Student-led Presentations.		

Bibliography	Required Textbooks / Reading:				
	Title	Author(s)	Publisher	Year	ISBN
	Media and information literate citizens: Think critically, click wisely! Media & information literacy curriculum for educators and learners	Grizzle, A et all	UNESCO	2021	978-92-3-100448-3
	The synthetic eye: Photography transformed in the age of AI.	Ritchin, F.	Thames & Hudson.	2025	9780500297391
	Recommended Textbooks / Reading:				
	Title	Author(s)	Publisher	Year	ISBN
	Information disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making	Wardle, C., & Derakhshan, H.	Council of Europe	2017	Online Resource
Assessment	1. Analysis of a Synthetic Media Item of Choice 2. Comprehensive Open Book Examination 3. Attendance				
Language	English				