Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Information Society

2026/2027

Code: 107572
Credits: 6

Degree programme	Type	Course
Business and Information Technology	OP	4

Contact lecturer

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Group languages

You can consult this information at the end of the document.

Prerequisites

The course will be held according to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) perspective.

Objectives

This course offers a sociological analysis of some of the most important trends in contemporary societies: technological innovation, globalization, the evolution of labor markets, and social inequalities. Special emphasis is placed on these phenomena in relation to the development of digital economies.

Learning outcomes

- CM26 (Comply with ethical, legal and intellectual property principles in relation to the processing of private information in the business field.) Comply with ethical, legal and intellectual property principles in relation to the processing of private information in the business field.

Contents

- Introduction.
- Major theories of the Information Society.
- D. Bell.
- M. Castells.
- A. Giddens.
- Neo-Marxist and critical theories.
- Postmodernity.
- Critiques and limitations.
- Explaining the Information Society: social mechanisms and explanation in the social sciences.
- Social action and decision-making in the digital society.
- Rationality, norms and emotions.
- Risk and uncertainty.
- Bounded rationality.
- Information asymmetries.
- Trust and reputation.
- Technological change, innovation, risk and uncertainty.
- Diffusion of innovations.
- Technological controversies: nuclear energy and recent developments in artificial intelligence.

- From individual interactions to collective phenomena.
- Individualism, holism and emergence.
- Game theory.
- Agent-based modelling.
- Social networks.
- Small worlds.
- Random networks, small-world networks and scale-free networks.
- M. Granovetter and the strength of weak ties.

7Collective action and coordination dilemmas.

- M. Olson.
- D. Heckathorn.
- Exit, Voice and Loyalty.
- Critical mass and threshold models.

8Information, social influence and diffusion.

- Social influence.
- Informational cascades.
- Rumours.
- Imitation.
- Network effects.
- Virality.

9Institutions and coordination in the digital society.

10 Inequalities in the Information Society.

- The digital divide.
- Inequalities in access.
- Inequalities in digital skills.
- Algorithms and inequality.

11New information ecosystems: information, disinformation and artificial intelligence.

- Bots.
- Fake news.
- Generative AI.
- Traditional media.
- Digital social networks.
- Echo chambers.
- Polarization.

Learning activities and methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Theoretical Sessions	33	1.32	CM26
Practical sessions	20	0.8	CM26
Tutorials	10.5	0.42	CM26
Individual work. Analysis and learning readings	55	2.2	CM26
Preparation for the seminars	31.5	1.26	CM26

The teaching methodology combines theoretical sessions with class debates, on the one hand, and practical seminars, on the other.

The practical seminars will be a space for dialogue on the course material based on various resources available on the virtual campus: texts, case analyses, film forums, etc.

Annotation: within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continuous assessment activities

Title	Weight	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Reading quizzes	20%	0	0	CM26
Exams	50%	0	0	CM26
Seminars	30%	0	0	CM26

Continuous Assessment

Continuous assessment consists of three components: two midterm examinations, reading quizzes based on the compulsory bibliography, and participation in practical seminars (which may include the submission of in-class assignments).

Students will be considered eligible for assessment provided that they have completed assessment activities accounting for at least two-thirds of the final course grade. Students who do not meet this threshold may be recorded as "Not Assessable."

Any student who copies or attempts to copy during an examination will receive a final grade of 0 (Fail) for the course and will forfeit the right to the resit assessment. Likewise, any student who submits coursework containing evidence of plagiarism or who is unable to justify the arguments presented in their work will receive a grade of 0 for that assignment and a formal warning. Repeated misconduct will result in a final course grade of 0 (Fail) and the loss of the right to the resit assessment.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

Restricted use: In this course, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is permitted exclusively for support tasks, such as bibliographic or information searches. Students must clearly identify any parts generated using AI tools, specify the tools employed, and include a critical reflection on how these tools influenced both the process and the final outcome of the assignment. Failure to disclose the use of AI in assessed work will be considered a breach of academic integrity and may result in a partial or full penalty for the assignment, as well as more severe disciplinary measures in serious cases.

Resit Assessment

Students who are eligible for assessment but do not pass the course through continuous assessment will be

entitled to take the resit assessment. Resit assessments will follow the same format as the corresponding continuous assessment activities. Specifically, midterm examinations will be retaken through equivalent examinations, while reading quizzes will be replaced by equivalent reading quizzes, and so forth.

Students who pass the course through the resit assessment may obtain a maximum final grade of 5 (Pass).

Bibliography

The bibliography of required readings, and therefore evaluable content, will be compiled in a reading dossier accessible through the virtual campus.

Software

No specific computer program is used.

Course groups and languages

The information provided is provisional until November 30. After this date, you will be able to consult the language of each group through this link. To access the information, you will need to enter the course CODE

Type of teaching	Group	Language	Semester	Shift
(TE) Theory	20	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(PAUL) Classroom practices	20	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed