



VYTAUTAS
MAGNUS
UNIVERSITY
M C M X X I I

20 - 24 OCTOBER, 2025
IN KAUNAS

T4EUWEEK



COURSES

T4EU Week – TransformEd:
Renaissance of Liberal Arts



Co-funded by
the European Union

MAKING SENSE OF DISAGREEMENT: HOW TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH EPISTEMIC AND MORAL AWARENESS

4 ECTS

Auksė Balčytienė is a core founding person of the Journalism and Communications School at VMU. She has published extensively on the trends and effects of liberalization and digitalization on democratic change, as well as on socio-political factors in media institutional restructuring and individual agentive responses to changed information environments in the Baltic countries and beyond. She designs educational tools, organizes training sessions, and develops collaborative partnerships with teachers, librarians, journalists, and media activists. She is a member of different communications and media organizations (ECREA, BAMR) and an elected Academia Europaea member.



AUKSĖ BALČYTIENĖ

Description



This course comprises several parts, each symbiotically connecting to the primary objective of defining conceptual approaches and practical interventions for communication on complex issues and communication-based disagreements. In its first half of sessions, the course initiates the discussion and analysis by setting the ground for theoretical insights presenting fundamental definitions linked with contemporary digital media and communication challenges, particularly those associated with the epistemic crisis, namely the rise of manipulations, disinformation, discourse toxicity, and hate speech, all leading to vulnerabilities and inequalities, and contributing to disagreements and societal polarization. The theoretical tools applied include approaches from communication science, political science, psychology, sociology, and education science. The module's second half focuses on participating students' lived experiences and knowledge, aiming to balance what students know with what they value. Students will engage directly with knowledge by discussing concrete cases of digitally mediated conflicts and dysfunctional communication. They will participate in testing instruments for epistemic and moral awareness development by joining several workshops, such as "Media Walkshop", "Voices in Conversation", and "Concepts Game". All these experiences will assist students in investigating cognitive, emotional, and behavioural effects that manifest in mediated and non-mediated communication situations.

Study Field

Communication and Media

Target group

For Social Sciences and Humanities students, and, if interested, students from Technical disciplines

Forms of Teaching

Online meeting (4hrs), lectures and seminars (10hrs), interactive individual or group workshops (10 hrs)

Assessment

Poster-based oral presentation at the improvised conference

Before the learning sessions, students will be provided additional information (list of readings) and media sources



THE IDEA OF EUROPE

4 ECTS

Viktoras Bachmetjevas is a Lithuanian philosopher. He specializes in continental ethics, especially the thought of Emmanuel Levinas, as well as the 20th century and contemporary French philosophy. Key publications include edited volume *Philosophy of Humour: New Perspectives* (Brill, 2023, with Daniel O'Shiel), and the articles 'Between the Two Ethics: Why Assessor Wilhelm is Not a Judge' (*Kierkegaard Studies Yearbook*, 2020), 'Imaginary Construction and Lessons in Living Forward' (*History of European Ideas*, 2020), and 'Philosophy in Lithuania after 1989' (*Ideology and Politics Journal*, 2021). He translated Emmanuel Levinas's *Time and the Other*, Harry Frankfurt's *On Bullshit*, Timothy Snyder's *On Tyranny*, and prepared the critical apparatus (introduction, commentaries and indexes) for the Lithuanian editions of Soren Kierkegaard's *Repetition and Fear and Trembling*. He has held visiting positions at Yale University, Institute for Human Sciences in Wien and has given guest lectures at the Ecole normale superieure, Ecole des ponts, West Virginia University, Sofia University and elsewhere.



VIKTORAS BACHMETJEVAS



Description

This course will explore how the concept of Europe has evolved through philosophy, literature, politics, and cultural identity from antiquity to the present. It will examine foundational texts and thinkers—from Ancient Greece, through the Enlightenment, to post-war European integration—tracing how Europe has been imagined as both a geographical space and a shared civilizational project. The course highlights tensions between unity and diversity, inclusion and exclusion, and the shifting boundaries of "European identity." Students will engage critically with debates about culture, collective dreams, and memory in shaping Europe's self-understanding. Ultimately, the course, drawing on the texts like Immanuel Kant's *Perpetual Peace*, Paul Valery's *The Crisis of the Mind*, George Steiner's *The Idea of Europe* among others, encourages reflection on whether Europe is a historical idea, a political reality, or an ongoing philosophical question.

Study Field

Philosophy, Political Science

Target group

For all students with an interest in Europe

Forms of Teaching

Online meeting (4hrs), lectures (10hrs), workshops (10hrs)

Assessment

To be announced



CRITICAL HERITAGE

4 ECTS

Linara Dovydaitytė is associate professor of art history at Vytautas Magnus University; her interests focus primarily on memory and museums studies, with particular emphasis on dissonant heritage and nuclear culture.



LINARA DOVYDAITYTĖ



Description

This course offers an introduction to critical heritage studies, with particular emphasis on addressing the complex and contested legacies of modernity. Through a combination of lectures, workshops, and site visits, students will engage with key concepts and best practices in the field. As part of their learning, students will develop a case study focused on a specific locality, community, or issue, fostering both critical reflection and independent insight.

Study Field

Heritage studies

Target group

Especially for Humanities and Social Sciences students

Forms of Teaching

Online meeting (4hrs), lectures, workshops and site visits (26hrs)

Assessment

Written assignment

Learning Objectives

- Explain and critically assess the roles of heritage in relation to social, political, economic, and environmental contexts.
- Evaluate heritage practices from multiple critical perspectives at local, national, and global levels.
- Apply key concepts to analyze heritage politics and practices.
- Develop and express an informed understanding of heritage through a focused case study.



GLOBALIZATION AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION

4 ECTS

Mantas Macikas is a political science specialist with a strong background in international and government relations, he previously worked as a policy analyst at the Hudson Institute in Washington, D.C. Currently serving as an advisor to the Mayor of Klaipėda and lecturing at Vytautas Magnus University. His research focuses on great power competition and China–U.S. relations, combining academic rigor with practical policy experience.



MANTAS MACIKAS

Description



In modern democracies the public life is local and global at the same time. As a result of intensive transnationalization, regional integration, and other global processes a new kind of (trans-border, transnational) communication emerges which requires reorientation from predominantly local and national interests to more global and international concerns. In addition, certain problem areas (environmental issues, health safety, regulation of financial matter, fraud and corruption, assuring security, fighting terrorism, etc.) require an understanding, which involves a so-called transnational view on contradictory issues. This course is designed to address the recent rise of transnational communication cultures in their global as well as local contexts. It stresses the significance of contextual factors (local political, economic and cultural conditions) in transnational communication. This course also puts a strong emphasis on communication analysis, comparative methodology and analytical thinking. Classes are designed to offer critical review of available research; also, students learn how to apply creative thinking by designing small-scale media products.

Study Field

Public Communication

Target group

For all interested students

Forms of Teaching

Online meeting (4hrs), lectures (10hrs), workshops (10hrs)

Assessment

Individual presentation

Learning Objectives

- Understand the most important trends in social development and recognize these in different contexts of global communication.
- Apply theoretical approaches to the analysis of the trends and consequences of global communication and reflect on the experiences gained in theoretical discussions and in the actual practices of developing media products.
- Freely and creatively apply the most relevant concepts linked with the phenomenon of “mediated globalization”.



FIELD NOTES TO FRONTLINES: ANTHROPOLOGY THAT MATTERS

3 ECTS

“Anthropos” is an applied anthropology organisation with the main goal to contribute to a more sustainable and socially responsible society and solutions of various sectors by applying anthropological knowledge, approach and methods. Organisation does it by conducting educational and social projects, advocacy initiatives, and applied research.



anthropos



Description

This intensive course explores the field of applied and engaged anthropology, focusing on practical methodologies, ethical considerations, and representation issues when working with diverse cultural and social groups. Students will examine the challenges of conducting anthropological work outside academia, including communication with stakeholders, ethical research practices with vulnerable populations, and advocacy for equitable cultural representation.

Study Field

Anthropology, Sociology, Ethnology, Cultural Studies

Target group

For Social Sciences and Humanities students

Forms of Teaching

Online meeting (4hrs), lectures (10hrs), seminars and workshops (10hrs)

Assessment

Group presentation

Learning Objectives

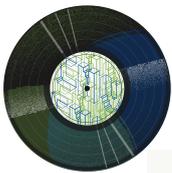
- Understand the foundational principles and practices of applied anthropology.
- Develop ethical approaches to research with sensitive and diverse groups.
- Analyze critical issues of representation, cultural "othering", and diversity.
- Apply anthropological methods to practical contexts including education, government, and NGO settings.



CREATING A MUSICAL FROM SCRATCH: INTERNATIONAL MUSICAL THEATER WORKSHOP

4 ECTS

Andrius Kurienius is a theater director, actor, and lecturer at the Vytautas Magnus University Music Academy, where he teaches musical theater. He specializes in the fields of performing arts and musical theater, works with young creators, nurtures their artistic abilities, and is committed to achieving high professional standards.



Description

This intensive workshop guides international students through the collaborative process of creating and performing an original musical production. Under the guidance of a professional theater director, participants will explore all aspects of musical theater creation—from writing and composing to staging and performing—culminating in a public performance of their original work.



ANDRIUS KURIENIUS

Study Field

Performing Arts

Target group

For all interested students

Forms of Teaching

Online meeting (4hrs), lectures (5hrs), seminars (15hrs)

Assessment

Presentation

Learning Objectives

- Develop fundamental skills in musical storytelling, performance, and collaboration.
- Gain practical experience in the creative process of developing a musical.
- Enhance intercultural communication through artistic expression.
- Build confidence in public performance and creative problem-solving.



4 ECTS

Auksė Miškinytė is a lecturer and researcher specializing in geographic information systems (GIS) and their applications in human health and environmental studies. Her research explores how spatial data and geospatial analysis can be used to investigate health outcomes, monitor environmental risks, and support evidence-based public health and urban planning.



AUKSĖ MIŠKINYTĖ



Description

In a world driven by data, maps are no longer static tools – they are dynamic, interactive platforms for storytelling, decision-making, and societal change. Geographic information systems (GIS) empower individuals and communities to visualize, analyse, and solve complex global challenges. Through an interdisciplinary lens, students will learn to harness spatial technologies to address issues like climate justice, urban inequality, public health disparities, and environmental conservation.

Study Field

Environmental Science

Target group

For all interested students, especially for Environmental and Natural Science students

Forms of Teaching

Online meeting (4hrs), lectures (10hrs), practical classes(16hrs)

Assessment

Project and presentation

Learning Objectives

- Explain the basic concepts and principles of geographical information systems.
- Use geographical information systems for environmental monitoring and explain functions, structure and formats of geographic information systems.
- Evaluate different geographical information systems data collection approaches and data sources.
- Apply basic cartographic principles, for mapping and explaining key environmental problems.



BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION: UNDERSTANDING, THREATS & SOLUTION

4 ECTS

Gintarė Sujetovienė is an ecologist and environmental scientist, academic teacher. She is experienced in monitoring the impact of pollution and anthropogenic activities, such as shooting ranges, industrial, urban areas on different environmental matrixes (soil, plants) and at ecosystem level. Her scientific interests concern on how different types of ecosystem services are affected by land use change, and the consequences for human well-being.



GINTARĖ SUJETOVIENĖ



Description

The aim of the course is to gain the knowledge about biodiversity and its protection to reduce the negative impact of anthropogenic activity on it. The course focuses on the basic concepts of biodiversity, spatial distribution, biodiversity value, causes of extinction, methods of biodiversity protection, the importance of monitoring and species restoration measures.

Study Field

Environmental Science

Target group

For all interested students, especially for Environmental and Natural Science students

Forms of Teaching

Online meeting (4hrs), lectures (16hrs), seminars (10hrs)

Assessment

Written test, presentation

Learning Objectives

- Explain main biodiversity concepts and patterns.
- Define the value of biodiversity and characterize causes of biodiversity extinctions, their extent.
- Describe changes in environment and biodiversity under direct and indirect threats.
- Ground main biodiversity conservation strategies and describe significance of species and ecosystem monitoring and main means for species restoration.



4 ECTS

Jūratė Žaltauskaitė is a doctor of Biomedical Sciences, ecotoxicologist. Main research interests are chemical toxicity assessment and its determinants, with an emphasis on the effects of climate change on chemical toxicity and response of living organisms, remediation of the contaminated sites.



JŪRATĖ ŽALTAUSKAITĖ



Description

Climate change is on today's science, political and social agenda. This course provides the fundamentals of climate change science, policy framework, consequences, sector- and region-specific strategies for mitigation and adaptation. The special emphasis will be placed on the intersections of the climate change science with society: policy, economics, culture.

Study Field

Environmental Science

Target group

For all interested students, especially for Environmental and Natural Science students

Forms of Teaching

Online meeting (4hrs), lectures (16hrs), seminars (10hrs)

Assessment

Written test, presentation

Learning Objectives

- Explain the complexity of the Earth system and analyze the interaction between the processes in atmosphere, hydrosphere, cryosphere, lithosphere and biosphere.
- Explain the climate and environmental changes and processes in the past.
- Summarize long-term environmental and ecosystems changes.
- Analyze the causes and consequences of ecosystems changes and economic, social, politic systems impact and interaction with natural ecosystems.



Choose Your Course. Experience Kaunas.

Join T4EU Week! 🌍

📅 October 20–24 | 🕒 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

During Transform4Europe Week in Kaunas you'll take part in one course that runs throughout the week – but don't worry, you can rank your top 3 course choices when applying!

Each course will include both components:

- ✨ Online (prior to the T4EU Week)
- ✨ In-person sessions in Kaunas

✉️ After your home university selects participants, you'll get all the info you need to get started.

✨ Transform your student experience in Kaunas!

