

Subject card

Subject name and code	Fake news as an instrument of politics, PG_00150622						
Field of study	Diplomacy						
Date of commencement of studies	October 2024	Academic year of realisation of subject			2025/2026		
Education level	Bachelor's studies	Subject group			Optional subject group Humanistic-social subject group		
Mode of study	full-time studies	Mode of delivery			at the university		
Year of study	2	Language of instruction			Polish		
Semester of study	3	ECTS credits			3.0		
Learning profile	academic	Assessment form			credit		
Conducting unit	Rada Uczelni						
Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers)	Subject supervisor		dr Konrad Ćwikliński				
	Teachers						
Lesson types	Lesson type	Lecture	Tutorial	Laboratory	Project	Seminar	SUM
	Number of study hours	0.0	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30
	E-learning hours included: 0.0						
Learning activity and number of study hours	Learning activity	Participation in didactic classes included in study plan		Participation in consultation hours		Self-study	SUM
	Number of study hours	30		0.0		30.0	60
Subject objectives	<p>Course Objectives (EN):</p> <p>The aim of the course Fake News as a Political Tool is to provide students with an in-depth understanding of the mechanisms behind the creation, dissemination, and strategic use of disinformation in political, social, and diplomatic contexts. The course explores fake news as a tool of influence, manipulation, and information warfare both domestically and internationally.</p> <p>During the course, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learn definitions and typologies of fake news and related forms of disinformation (e.g., misinformation, malinformation); • analyze specific examples of how fake news has been used in national and global politics; • develop skills to identify the sources, motives, and distribution channels of disinformation (social media, bots, manipulated news platforms); • gain knowledge about state institutions, international organizations, and media efforts to combat disinformation; • explore fact-checking and OSINT methods and apply them to current case studies; • develop critical thinking and information credibility assessment skills; • discuss the political, social, and ethical implications of fake news dissemination (including its impact on elections, security, polarization, and public discourse). 						

Learning outcomes	Course outcome	Subject outcome	Method of verification
	[DYPL3_K02] Is prepared to participate in public life and in teams implementing various social, political and civic projects at various levels of participation.	Understands the necessity of continuously improving media and information competencies (e.g., through education and source verification) in order to counteract the effects of disinformation and the post-truth phenomenon	[SK1] oral statement/conversation/discussion [SK8] observation of student's independent or team work
	[DYPL3_U06] Can analyse basic solutions for problems in the field of diplomacy.	The student is prepared to work in public institutions and international organizations, understanding the threats posed by information manipulation.	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/discussion [SU8] observation of student's independent or team work
	[DYPL3_U09] Has the ability to prepare written works in Polish or a foreign language on the issues and problems of political sciences and diplomacy with the use of basic theoretical approaches as well as various sources..	The student is able to prepare methodologically sound written works (essays, reports) on disinformation phenomena and their impact on politics and diplomacy.	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/discussion [SU2] presentation/project/paper/report [SU8] observation of student's independent or team work
	[DYPL3_U07] Can use research methods and techniques to describe and analyse phenomena occurring in the sphere of diplomacy.	The student can apply discourse analysis methods and fact-checking techniques to study disinformation phenomena in the international sphere	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/discussion [SU8] observation of student's independent or team work
	[DYPL3_W13] Has knowledge of democracy, civil society, and the essence of historical and contemporary public discourse in diplomacy.	The student has knowledge of the impact of fake news on public discourse and civil society – in historical and contemporary perspectives.	[SW1] oral statement/conversation/discussion [SW5] implementation of a problem task
	[DYPL3_W03] Has a basic knowledge of social, political, and cultural ties between structures and institutions operating in the field of political science and diplomacy.	The student understands the political and social bonds between the media, society, and diplomacy, also in the context of disinformation.	[SW1] oral statement/conversation/discussion [SW5] implementation of a problem task
	[DYPL3_W14] Has knowledge of mass media and communication tools and their role in society in the context of their use in diplomacy.	The student knows the communication tools in the media and their use in shaping diplomatic narratives, as well as the risks arising from their misuse.	[SW1] oral statement/conversation/discussion [SW5] implementation of a problem task
	[DYPL3_U01] Is able to correctly interpret and explain the behaviour of individuals and social groups in social life, especially political life relating to diplomacy.	The student is able to identify and interpret the influence of disinformation on the behavior of individuals and social groups, especially in the political and diplomatic context.	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/discussion [SU2] presentation/project/paper/report [SU8] observation of student's independent or team work
	[DYPL3_K05] Is prepared to work in public organisations and institutions, including public administration bodies, political parties and other national and international organisations.	The student is prepared to work in public institutions and international organizations, understanding the threats posed by information manipulation.	[SK1] oral statement/conversation/discussion [SK6] demonstration of practical skills [SK8] observation of student's independent or team work
Subject contents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction to the concept of fake news: definitions, typologies, differences between disinformation, misinformation, and malinformation. 2. Mechanisms of fake news production and dissemination social media, bots, clickbait, deepfake. 3. Fake news in domestic and international politics case studies (e.g., elections, information warfare, social crises). 4. The role of states, international organizations, and media in countering disinformation. 5. Fact-checking and OSINT tools for information verification. 6. Fake news and security: threats to democracy, manipulation of public opinion, social polarization. 7. Fake news in the context of hybrid warfare and cybersecurity. 8. The role of media literacy and citizens informational competence. 9. Workshops and analysis of current examples of information manipulation. 10. Group project presentations and seminar discussions. 		
Prerequisites and co-requisites	<p>Basic knowledge of social and political sciences, awareness of current international events, ability to critically analyze information sources.</p> <p>Willingness to work individually and in groups using multimedia and press materials.</p>		

Assessment methods and criteria	Subject passing criteria	Passing threshold	Percentage of the final grade
		Participation in classes and final assignment	60.0%
Recommended reading	Basic literature	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wardle C., Derakhshan H., Information Disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework, Council of Europe, 2017. 2. McIntyre L., Post-Truth, MIT Press, 2018. 3. Lewandowsky S., Ecker U.K.H., Cook J., The Debunking Handbook 2020. 4. Kłosiński M., Post-Truth Society in the Era of Populism, Warsaw 2020. 	
	Supplementary literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports from EU DisinfoLab • Analyses by NASK and GovTech Poland on disinformation • OSINT publications (e.g. Bellingcat) • Selected reports from the European Commission on disinformation combating 	
	eResources addresses		
Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the difference between disinformation and misinformation. • What techniques are used in fake news production? • Analyze a case of fake news used in a political campaign. • Present EU actions against disinformation. • Is fact-checking an effective tool against fake news? 		
Work placement	Not applicable		

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