



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
Media and Communication Studies

# Syllabus

## Social Media & Social Theory

<b>Course Code:</b>	MKGA92
<b>Course Title:</b>	Social Media & Social Theory <i>Sociala medier och samhällsteorier</i>
<b>Credits:</b>	7.5
<b>Degree Level:</b>	Undergraduate level
<b>Progressive Specialisation:</b>	First cycle, has only upper-secondary level entry requirements (G1N)

**Major Field of Study:**  
MKA (Media and Communication Studies)

### Course Approval

The syllabus was approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences 2021-09-13, and is valid from the Spring semester 2022 at Karlstad University.

### Prerequisites

Registered for MKGA02 Introduction to Media and Communication Studies (15 ECTS credits), and MKGA03 Text, Communication and Organisation (15 ECTS credits), or equivalent

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. summarise the evolution of social networking platforms since the late 1990s in terms of functionalities and business models under different cultural circumstances,
2. compare major social theory concepts and approaches explaining the societal impact of social media in terms of economics, politics, and social relations,
3. problematise how the design and function of different social media platforms frame and affect social relations,
4. give an account of how social relations can be explored by means of digital media analyses and discuss their potentials and limitations, and

5. reflect upon their own media practices with regard to different social theory perspectives.

### **Content**

The course deals with the representation of social relations in networked digital media with an emphasis on the corresponding impact on social interactions. It provides an overview of the development of social media platforms and discusses the evolution of new media practices as a result of these platforms. The focus is on the ways social theories understand, frame, explain and reflect upon social media and related phenomena. Furthermore, the course deals with the means of connecting theoretical approaches to data analyses. Four different perspectives, namely political economy, participation and activism, values inscribed in technology, and everyday media practices, are introduced as a basis for discussing the development of social media. Instruction is in the form of lectures and seminars, and individual/group assignments.

### **Reading List**

See separate document.

### **Examination**

Learning outcomes 1-5 are assessed based on an individual written hand-in assignment, a written exam, and a group assignment which is presented in writing and orally in a mandatory seminar. Assessment is also based on oral group peer review performance.

If students have a decision from Karlstad University entitling them to Targeted Study Support due to a documented disability, the examiner has the right to give such students an adapted examination or to examine them in a different manner.

### **Grades**

One of the grades Distinction (VG), Pass (G), or Fail (U) is awarded in the examination of the course.

### **Quality Assurance**

Follow-up relating to learning conditions and goal-fulfilment takes place both during and upon completion of the course in order to ensure continuous improvement. Course evaluation is partly based on student views and experiences obtained in accordance with current regulations and partly on other data and documentation. Students will be informed of the result of the evaluation and of any measures to be taken.

### **Course Certificate**

A course certificate will be provided upon request.

### **Additional information**

The local regulations for studies at the Bachelor and Master levels at Karlstad University stipulate the obligations and rights of students and staff.