

Master's Program in Cross Media Journalism

Six Questions to the Partners

IULM University Unit, November 2014

The content of the Master's Program will be developed according to the results of the consultation sessions and the work of our international scientific board. Therefore, rather than providing an insight into the course, we need to outline some general aspects of the scientific and thematic areas to be considered. For simplicity's sake, I will transform these topics into six different questions.

In order to better organize our work, we would be glad if you could send us your feedback by the end of next week, as we are supposed to discuss a first draft of the program in Sousse in December. Shortly after receiving your feedbacks, we will be available for a Skype meeting, so as to discuss the most controversial issues in depth.

1. Is there such a thing as a *Mediterranean* media system?

When comparing *journalism* in the two areas (Mediterranean vs. Tunisian), we are wondering whether the differences outnumber the similarities or the other way round. To what extent is it possible to use the same concept to refer to both Tunisian and European systems? Does "public opinion", to name one, mean the same thing in different regions? As a consequence, to what degree can we imagine a consistent didactic program about cross-media journalism, social media platforms, and so on?

1.a According to your answer, what subjects do you consider fundamental to our Master course?

a.

b.

c.

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2. Does copyright still matter in digital environments?

As we know, copyright is necessary, but innovation has made it nearly impossible to protect it, for both technological and practical reasons. However, all the professions related to information have traditionally been based on the exploitation of some kind of copyright – but what about the future? What are we supposed to teach to our

students: that copyright is no longer necessary, without any further indication, or that we should rather look for a new economic valorization of intellectual property?

2.a According to your answer, what subjects do you consider fundamental to our Master course?

a.

b.

c.

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3. Is Big Data challenging our idea of journalism?

Journalism is related to *finding* something: news, scoops, witnesses, data, interviews, and so on. But in recent years, due to the rise of Big Data, almost everything has become *already* available (provided you know where to look for, of course). Do digital archives change the way we perceive journalism? What instruments – both epistemological and practical – are needed in order to deal with this new complexity?

3.a According to your answer, what subjects do you consider fundamental to our Master course?

a.

b.

c.

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4. Should journalists care about the so-called “trans-media storytelling”?

According to current theories, only spreadable contents are likely to survive in networked environments: but what about news media? Does this concept apply to journalism, and if so, in which way? Is trans-media storytelling a matter of entertainment and integrated marketing (as in the case of TV series, movie market, and so forth) or is it also requiring a new definition of journalism as a profession?

4.a According to your answer, what subjects do you consider fundamental to our Master course?

a.

b.

c.

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5. Where to put the emphasis: *citizen journalism* or *networked journalism*?

Far from being a matter of words, this is actually a core problem: are we talking about citizen journalism, according to which professional journalists seem to be no longer indispensable, or networked journalism – a paradigm whereby journalists can be considered even more important? According to this second idea, what journalists have to do is mostly interact with all the new players in the information field, such as A-list bloggers, Twitter celebrities and citizen reporters in the strict sense of the word. In this second, more preferable case, what is your operational definition of networked journalism?

5.a According to your answer, what subjects do you consider fundamental to our Master course?

a.

b.

c.

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6. Finally, are we looking for new practical skills?

What are, in your opinion, the most relevant technical competences required of a XXI century journalist? By technical competences, in this case, we refer to the most practical skills, such as graphic design, video making, editing, social media strategy (with particular attention to the use of Twitter), and so forth.

6.a According to your answer, what subjects do you consider fundamental to our Master course?

a.

b.

c.

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6. What to teach

Are we missing something? Could you provide a list of the five (or more) most important topics to be included in our Master Curriculum (excluding the answers previously provided?)

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

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