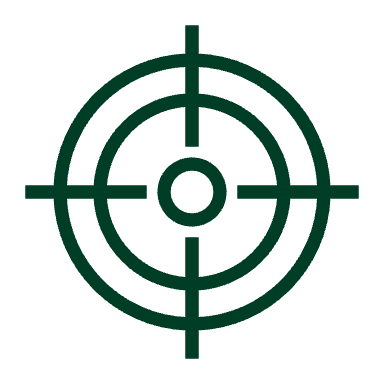


**Capstone project workshop** / סדנת פרויקט גמר

**Ella Klik & Denisa Reshef Kera|** **Science, Technology, and Society studies & Hermeneutics**Course No **271808-01**

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| **Course Type:** | Workshop |
| **Academic credits:** | 4 |
| **Year of study:** | 2025-2026 |
| **Semester:** | Fall & Spring |
| **Day & Time:** | Tuesday, 6-8 pm |
| **Reception Time:** | By appointment |
| **Lecturer Email:** | [denisa.reshef@biu.ac.il](mailto:denisa.reshef@biu.ac.il) & [ella.klik@biu.ac.il](mailto:ella.klik@biu.ac.il) |
| **Moodle Site:** | https://lemida.biu.ac.il |

**Course description and learning goals**

**Course Abstract**

This course serves as the culminating experience for students enrolled in the "Critical Thought and Emerging Technologies" MA concentration. The course asks students to synthesize the theoretical knowledge and methodological training acquired during the first year into an original, practice-based series of projects throughout the second year of the MA. Students will develop and execute creative research projects that critically engage with a topic of their choice relating to emerging technologies and the digital turn. Emphasis will be placed on innovative methodologies that challenge conventional academic formats, integrating speculative, artistic, and interventionist approaches to scholarship in the humanities. This capstone course, therefore, provides students with the opportunity to develop theoretically sound arguments through hands-on experience, preparing them for diverse endeavors in academia, media production, policy, design, and the creative industries. By engaging with multiple formats, students will experiment with different ways of producing and communicating knowledge in their respective fields (STS and Hermeneutics & Culture).

The course is structured around a series of thematic modules, each introducing a different research format or output.

Each module unfolds over several weeks:

**First**, an introduction to a format: A dedicated week exploring the format's affordances, examples, and methodological implications.

**Second**, brainstorming & work sessions: Guided discussions and workshops where students generate ideas and begin experimenting with the format. Through workshops, peer feedback, and mentorship, students will refine their project ideas, articulate research questions, and experiment with media-making techniques.

**Third**, group presentations & discussion: Students present their work-in-progress for peer and instructor feedback before moving on to the next module.

**Learning objectives**

* Synthesize theoretical knowledge and methodological training from the first year into an original, practice-based project.
* Critically engage with emerging technologies and the digital turn through creative research and multimodal inquiry.
* Experiment with diverse research formats, including speculative design, video essays, podcasts, policy papers, and interactive media.
* Develop hands-on experience in applying innovative methodologies that challenge conventional academic formats.
* Collaborate and provide peer feedback to refine projects through iterative design and conceptual development.

**Knowledge**

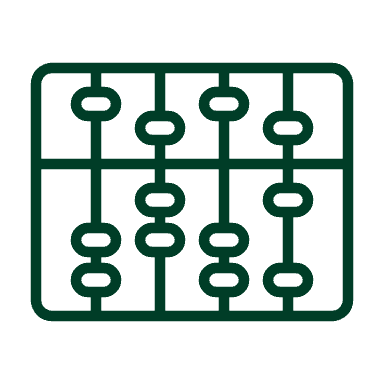
* **Develop** a strong foundation in the key ethical, regulatory, and philosophical challenges associated with emerging technologies.
* **Describe** critical ethical, legal, and regulatory challenges associated with emerging technologies such as AI, biotechnology, blockchain, quantum computing, and neurotechnology.
* **Define** core concepts, including algorithmic governance, digital rights, data sovereignty, techno-ethics, and regulatory frameworks.
* **Summarize** principles concerning emergent technologies, including AI ethics, data privacy laws, and responsible innovation policies.
* **Identify** ethical dilemmas in the development, deployment, and societal impact of new technologies.
* **Compare** philosophical, legal, and policy perspectives on the governance of emerging technologies, highlighting their strengths and limitations.

**Skills**

* **Analyze** real-world case studies addressing ethical, legal, and societal challenges in emergent technologies, such as bias in AI, privacy risks in genetic data, and ethical concerns in decentralized finance (DeFi).
* **Evaluate** existing regulatory and ethical frameworks and propose improvements for more responsible technological development.
* **Design** speculative futures that explore alternative governance models and ethical frameworks for emerging technologies.
* **Develop** a research-based project addressing an ethical, legal, or regulatory issue using appropriate methodologies and interdisciplinary approaches.
* **Critique** the governance, transparency, and accountability of decision-making systems in technological infrastructures.
* **Write** policy recommendations, ethical analyses, or regulatory proposals supported by empirical evidence and case studies.
* **Communicate** complex ethical and regulatory issues effectively using diverse formats, including infographics, articles, presentations, and videos.
* **Present** research findings and project outcomes persuasively in an interdisciplinary setting, integrating both theoretical insights and practical applications.

**Values**

* Critical Perspective – The ability to challenge dominant narratives, question biases and assumptions, and critically examine the power structures embedded in technological development and governance.
* Ethical Awareness – A nuanced understanding of the ethical dilemmas posed by emergent technologies, including their impact on privacy, equity, democracy, and social justice.
* Accountability & Responsibility – Recognition of the ethical obligations of technologists, policymakers, and society in ensuring fair, inclusive, and responsible innovation.
* Interdisciplinary Openness – Engagement with perspectives from philosophy, law, social sciences, and technology, fostering the ability to synthesize diverse viewpoints and bridge disciplinary boundaries.
* Constructive Debate & Open-Mindedness – A commitment to engaging in respectful, informed discussions on complex ethical and technological issues, considering diverse cultural, political, and ideological perspectives.
* Techno-Social Responsibility – Awareness of the broader societal and human rights implications of technological advancements, advocating for governance frameworks that prioritize equity, sustainability, and public good.
* Empowerment & Activism – Encouragement to take an active role in shaping conversations on the ethical and regulatory challenges of emergent technologies, whether through research, advocacy, policy work, or creative interventions.

 **Lessons plan**

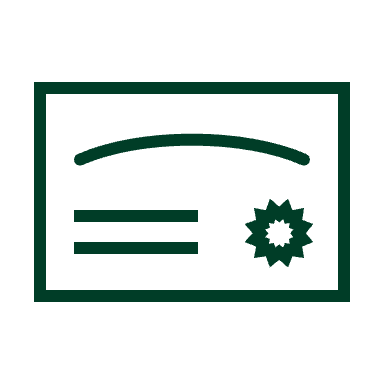
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| Lesson No. | Topic | Practice-Based Learning Activity | Required Reading | Assessment |
| 1 | Course Introduction & Project Proposal Workshop | Brainstorming project topics, initial proposals | Course Syllabus, Sample Capstone Projects |  |
| 2 | Video Essays - Introduction | Analysis of video essays, hands-on editing | C. Grant, 'The Audiovisual Essay' |  |
| 3 | Video Essays - Brainstorming & Work Sessions | Hands-on editing exercises, video tutorials |  |  |
| 4 | Video Essays - Group Presentations & Discussion | Peer critique and feedback | Peer review guidelines | Peer feedback & discussion |
| 5 | Audio Papers & Podcasts - Introduction | Exploring sound-based scholarship, audio experiments | K. Forson, 'Audio Papers and Sonic Scholarship' | Audio paper planning |
| 6 | Audio Papers & Podcasts - Brainstorming & Work Sessions | Recording and sound editing workshops | Sound editing tutorials |  |
| 7 | Audio Papers & Podcasts - Group Presentations & Discussion | Presentation and discussion of audio works |  | Peer feedback & discussion |
| 8 | Speculative Design - Introduction | Exploring speculative design & design fiction | A. Dunne & F. Raby, 'Speculative Everything' |  |
| 9 | Speculative Design - Brainstorming & Work Sessions | Prototyping speculative artifacts |  |  |
| 10 | Speculative Design - Group Presentations & Discussion | Critique of speculative designs |  | Peer feedback & discussion |
| 11 | Experimental Publishing - Introduction | Exploring alternative publishing methods | J. Drucker, 'Graphesis'; N. Thurston, 'Post-Digital Publishing' |  |
| 12 | Experimental Publishing - Brainstorming & Work Sessions | Experimenting with hypertext and layout | Hands-on hypertext tutorials |  |
| 13 | Experimental Publishing - Group Presentations & Discussion | Presentation of experimental publications |  | Publishing project review |
| 14 | Game Design - Introduction | Exploring games as research & storytelling | I. Bogost, 'Persuasive Games'; M. Flanagan, 'Critical Play' |  |
| 15 | Game Design - Brainstorming & Work Sessions | Prototyping interactive experiences | Game prototyping tutorials |  |
| 16 | Game Design - Group Presentations & Discussion | Discussion and feedback on game prototypes |  | Peer feedback & discussion |
| 17 | Creative Coding - Introduction | Introduction to creative coding platforms | C. Reas & B. Fry, 'Processing: A Programming Handbook' | Creative coding plan |
| 18 | Creative Coding - Brainstorming & Work Sessions | Coding experiments & interactive media development | Coding tutorials & case studies |  |
| 19 | Creative Coding - Group Presentations & Discussion | Presentation and critique of coding projects |  | Peer feedback & discussion |
| 20 | Regulatory Impact Assessment | Legal analyst: Evaluating governance models | Impact assessment report |  |
| 21 | Cultural Probes & Public Engagement | Ethnographer: Using participatory methods to study societal responses | Cultural probe kit |  |
| 22 | Cultural Probes & Public Engagement | Ethnographer: Using participatory methods to study societal responses | Cultural probe kit | Final policy paper review |
| 23 | Exhibition Pitches - Introduction | Curating knowledge for public engagement | C. Bishop, 'Radical Museology' |  |
| 24 | Exhibition Pitches - Brainstorming & Work Sessions | Designing exhibition pitches |  |  |
| 25 | Exhibition Pitches - Group Presentations & Discussion | Presentation and critique of exhibition proposals | Critique of exhibition pitches | Peer feedback & discussion |
| 26 | Independent Work & Mentorship Sessions | Independent capstone project work | Self-directed research | Capstone project progress report |
| 27 | Independent Work & Mentorship Sessions | Mentorship & project refinement | Faculty feedback & refinement | Mentor evaluation & feedback |
| 28 | Final Project Showcase & Reflection Paper Submission | Final project presentations | Presentation evaluations | Final project presentation |

**Final grade**

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| Description of the learning product | % |
| The final project and report will aggregate the practice-based components previously developed throughout the course (and have passed peer and instructor reviews).  The submission will also include a written report and a presentation.  • Presentation of creative Practice-Based Capstone Projects  • Critical Reflection Paper (1500-3000 words)  Grading criteria: Research depth, creativity, feasibility of solutions, and clarity of communication. | 70% |
| Weekly Engagements leading to project proposal & Work-in-Progress Presentation | 30% |

**Course requirements**

* **Assignments** — you are to present a proposed project in the third week of each module
* **Final assignment submission** — you are to submit a portfolio with all of the exercises presented throughout the year along with a short reflection paper (1500-3000 words) summarizing the projects and any critical insights gained.
* **Final presentation**
* **Active participation**
* **Attendance** is required.

 **Prerequisites**

First-year MA in Critical Thought and Emerging Technologies



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