

Ph.D. in Digital Media & Communication

College of Arts

2026



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College of Arts

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Doctor of Philosophy in Digital Media and Communication (2026)

1. Program overview

The PhD in Digital Media & Communication addresses the profound transformations reshaping media, communication, and society in the digital age. The program offers advanced theoretical and methodological training focused on emerging areas, including artificial intelligence in media, platform governance, digital ethics, datafication, immersive media, and the societal impact of new technologies.

What distinguishes the University of Bahrain experience is its strong alignment with regional priorities, Arab-centric research perspectives, and close engagement with industry and public institutions. Graduates are prepared for careers as university faculty, digital media researchers, policy advisors, consultants, and strategic communication leaders. The program strengthens Bahrain's research ecosystem by producing scholars capable of contributing to global academic debates while addressing local and regional digital challenges.

2. Program Objectives

The program aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Develop high-level expertise in digital media technologies, platforms, and cultural impact.
2. Produce scholars capable of interdisciplinary media research at the regional and global levels.
3. Contribute to the knowledge economy by addressing the socio-cultural, political, and ethical challenges of the digital age in the GCC and Arab contexts.

1. Program Learning Outcomes

Students of the PhD in Media and Communication will be able to:

1. Employ advanced and interdisciplinary theoretical frameworks in media and communication studies within sophisticated research and critical contexts.
2. Design original doctoral research to contribute to the production of new knowledge in various media and communication fields.
3. Analyze the societal, cultural, ethical, and regulatory implications of digital media and communication in regional and global contexts.
4. Apply diverse and advanced research methodologies that suit the nature of research issues in the field of media and communication.
5. Publish advanced scientific research findings in peer-reviewed academic journals.

6. Develop innovative solutions to enhance digital media and communication systems at both regional and global levels.
7. Apply principles of ethical integrity and professional standards in specialized research and practice within the media and communication sector.

3. Admission Requirements

1. The applicant must have a master's degree in media & communication from the University of Bahrain or any recognized university with a cumulative GPA of no less than 3.00 out of 4.00 or its equivalent in other grading systems.
2. The applicant must hold an IELTS certificate in English or its equivalent with a minimum score of 5.5 or pass the English language exam conducted by the University of Bahrain. The applicant is exempt from the English language test if they hold a master's degree from the University of Bahrain.
3. The applicant must pass the admission interview held by the Department of Mass Communication, Tourism, and Arts.
4. The applicant must attach the required documents for admission to postgraduate programs as indicated on the university's website (Steps for Graduate Studies Application). <https://www.uob.edu.bh/admission-requirements/?lang=ar>

4. Admission Procedures

1. Applications for admission to the program must be submitted to the Deanship of Admissions and Registration within the deadlines specified in the academic calendar. Applicants are required to complete the official application forms prepared by the Deanship of Admissions and Registration and submit them together with all required supporting documents.
2. Upon receipt of the application, the Deanship of Admissions and Registration will review and verify the submitted documents. Following this verification process, the Deanship will inform the applicant of the admission decision.

5. Degree Requirements

1. Successfully complete all program hours (75 credit hours).
2. Achieve a cumulative GPA of no less than 3.00 out of 4.00.
3. Pass the dissertation course with a successful grade (80 or above).

6. Program Duration

The program lasts 3.5 years (at least), with students able to complete graduation requirements within a period ranging from 7 to 12 semesters.

7. Language of Instruction

The language of instruction is Arabic and English.

8. Career Opportunities

Graduates of the PhD program in Digital Media & Communication can pursue various careers, including:

- University faculty in digital media and communication.
- Media and communication consultants for government or private sector.
- Digital content strategists and innovation leaders.

9. Number of Program Hours

The total number of credit hours for the Doctor of Philosophy in Digital Media & Communication program is 75 credit hours, including 6 courses (20CH), and a PhD Thesis (55CH). The minimum academic load for a student in one semester shall be (3) courses, and the maximum shall be (4) courses. The student may also register for fewer than (3) courses in one semester, only once during their study period.

10. Attendance Pattern

The Program follows a full-time, in-person attendance model, with lectures typically held once a week from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, according to the study plan. The College also adopts an e-learning policy as an essential tool supporting the teaching and learning process.

11. Detailed Study Plan

Year 1- Semester 1

Course Code	Course Title	Course Hours			Course Type	Pre-Requisite	Major CGPA
		LEC	PRAC	CRD			
DMC791	Advanced Theories in Digital Media and Communication	3	0	3	MR	---	Yes
DMC792	Quantitative Research Methods in Digital Media & Communication	4	0	4	MR	---	Yes
DMC793	Readings in Digital Media & Communication	3	0	3	MR	---	Yes
				10			

Year 1- Semester 2

Course Code	Course Title	Course Hours			Course Type	Pre-Requisite	Major CGPA
		LEC	PRAC	CRD			
DMC794	Qualitative Research Methods in Digital Media & Communication	4	0	4	MR	---	Yes
DMC795	Critical Approaches to Post-Digital Technologies	3	0	3	MR	---	Yes
DMC796	Dissertation Proposal Seminar	3	0	3	MR	---	Yes
				10			

Year 2 - Semester 3

Course Code	Course Title	Course Hours			Course Type	Pre-Requisite	Major CGPA
		LEC	PRAC	CRD			
DMC798A	Thesis	0	0	11	---	---	Yes
				11			

Year 2 - Semester 4

Course Code	Course Title	Course Hours			Course Type	Pre-Requisite	Major CGPA
		LEC	PRAC	CRD			
DMC798B	Thesis	0	0	11	---	---	Yes
				11			

Year 3 - Semester 5

Course Code	Course Title	Course Hours			Course Type	Pre-Requisite	Major CGPA
		LEC	PRAC	CRD			
DMC798C	Thesis	0	0	11	---	---	Yes
				11			

Year 3 - Semester 6

Course Code	Course Title	Course Hours			Course Type	Pre-Requisite	Major CGPA
		LEC	PRAC	CRD			
DMC798D	Thesis	0	0	11	---	---	Yes
				11			

Year 4 - Semester 7

Course Code	Course Title	Course Hours			Course Type	Pre-Requisite	Major CGPA
		LEC	PRAC	CRD			
DMC798E	Thesis	0	0	11	---	---	Yes
				11			

12. Course Descriptions

Course Code	DMC791	Course Title	Advanced Theories in Digital Media and Communication نظريات متقدمة في الإعلام الرقمي والاتصال
<p>تركز هذه الحلقة الدراسية للدكتوراه على الأطر النظرية والنماذج النقدية المتقدمة في دراسات الإعلام الرقمي والاتصال، بما يشمل المداخل متعددة التخصصات ذات التأثير الكبير على البحوث المعاصرة في هذا المجال، وتتنعم في النماذج الأساسية والناشئة، بما في ذلك نظرية ما بعد الرقمية، ودراسات المنصات، والثقافة الخوارزمية، وأركيولوجيا الاعلام، والديناميات الاجتماعية والسياسية عبر الشبكات. كما يقيم الدارسون أثر تكنولوجيا الاعلام والاتصال في التحولات الكبرى للسلطة والهوية والخطاب والبنى الاجتماعية في السياقات العالمية، ويحللون الأدبيات التأسيسية والمبتكرة في هذا المجال، بما يعزز لديهم الأطر النظرية والفكرية الممهدة لإنجاز اطروحة الدكتوراه.</p> <p>This PhD seminar investigates advanced theoretical frameworks and critical discussions in communication and digital media studies, incorporating multidisciplinary perspectives that influence contemporary research in the field. The course investigates core and emerging paradigms, including post-digital theory, platform studies, algorithmic culture, media archaeology, and networked sociopolitical dynamics.</p> <p>Students will evaluate how media technologies transform power, identity, discourse, and social structures in global contexts. By engaging in meticulous analyses of foundational and innovative literature, participants will enhance their theoretical framework and contextualize their research within broader academic discussions.</p>			

Course Code	DMC792	Course Title	Quantitative Research Methods in Digital Media & Communication الرقمي والاتصال مناهج البحث الكمي في الإعلام
<p>يتناول هذا السمنار مناهج البحث الكمي في دراسات الإعلام والاتصال، مع التركيز على التصميم التجريبي والمنهجيات الإحصائية. سيتعلم الطلاب تصميم الاستبيانات، وتقنيات أخذ العينات، وتصور البيانات، مع تطبيق هذه الأدوات لتحليل سلوك الجمهور، وتأثيرات الوسائل الإعلامية، واتجاهات المحتوى. من خلال مشاريع عملية باستخدام برنامج SPSS، سيكتسب المشاركون مهارات إنتاج رؤى دقيقة وقابلة للتطبيق، مما يؤهلهم لإجراء بحوث رصينة وتفسير البيانات المعقدة في ظل المشهد الرقمي المتطور.</p> <p>This seminar explores quantitative research in media and communication, focusing on empirical design and statistical methodologies. Students will master survey design, sampling, and data visualization while applying these tools to analyze audience behavior, media effects, and content trends.</p> <p>Through hands-on projects using software like SPSS, participants will learn to produce valid, actionable insights. By the end of the course, students will be equipped to conduct rigorous research and interpret complex data within the evolving digital media landscape.</p>			

Course Code	DMC793	Course Title	Readings in Digital Media & Communication قراءات في الإعلام الرقمي والاتصال
<p>يمكن هذا المقرر طلاب الدكتوراه من تطوير قراءاتهم لأهم الكتب والأبحاث والمراجع، الكلاسيكية منها والمعاصرة، في مجال الإعلام والاتصال الرقمي. ويستكشف المفاهيم الجوهرية والأطر النظرية والمنهجيات المستخدمة في أدبيات الإعلام والاتصال الرقمي. ويهدف إلى تأسيس قاعدة مثبته في المعرفة النظرية والتطبيقات العملية المتعلقة في هذا المجال. كما يهدف إلى تشجيع طلاب الدكتوراه على مراجعة واستعراض أهم الأدبيات في هذا المجال بشكل نقدي من خلال سمنار أكاديمي تفاعلي يساعدهم في إعداد مراجعات لأهم الأدبيات المتعلقة بمقترحات أطروحاتهم.</p> <p>The course provides PhD students with the opportunity to develop readings in key books, papers, and foundational references, both classical and modern, in the field of digital media and communication. It explores major topics, theoretical frameworks, core concepts, and essential methodologies found in the literature of digital media and communication. The course aims to provide a strong foundation in both theoretical knowledge and practical applications in digital media and communication. It seeks to encourage PhD students to critically review and present key literature in digital media and communication in an interactive academic seminar. Additionally, it aims to enable PhD students to develop a literature review related to their dissertation proposal.</p>			

Course Code	DMC794	Course Title	Qualitative Research Methods in Digital Media & Communication مناهج البحث الكيفي في الإعلام الرقمي والاتصال
<p>يتناول هذا السمنار المنهجيات النوعية—مثل الإثنوغرافيا، والمقابلات المتعمقة، ومجموعات التركيز، وتحليل الخطاب—المصممة خصيصاً لدراسات الإعلام والاتصال. سنستكشف كيفية تحليل المحتوى الإعلامي وتجارب الجمهور، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على توظيف البيانات الرقمية مثل تحليلات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي والآثار الرقمية. سنتعلم كيفية التعامل مع التعقيدات الأخلاقية والمنهجية في البيانات الرقمية، واكتساب خبرة عملية باستخدام برمجيات تحليل البيانات النوعية مثل MAXQDA و NVivo. بحلول نهاية المقرر، ستكون مؤهلاً لتصميم وإجراء وتحليل مشاريع بحثية رصينة تواكب المشهد الرقمي المتطور.</p> <p>This seminar examines qualitative methodologies—including ethnography, in-depth interviews, focus groups, and discourse analysis—tailored for media and communication studies. We will explore how to analyze media content and audience experiences, with a specific focus on leveraging digital data like social media analytics and web traces. You will navigate the ethical and methodological complexities of digital environments while gaining hands-on experience with professional software such as MAXQDA and NVivo. By the end, you will be equipped to design, conduct, and critically analyze robust research projects within our evolving digital landscape.</p>			

Course Code	DMC795	Course Title	Critical Approaches to Post-Digital Technologies مقاربات نقدية للتكنولوجيا ما بعد الرقمية
<p>تبحث هذه الحلقة الدراسية للدكتوراه متعددة التخصصات الأبعاد الثقافية والسياسية والاجتماعية للتقنيات الرقمية في عصر ما بعد الرقمية. ومن خلال النظرية النقدية والبحث متعدد التخصصات، يدرس الطلاب القضايا الرئيسية لما بعد الرقمية بما في ذلك حوكمة المنصات، والسلطة الخوارزمية (التحيز، وأخلاقيات الذكاء الاصطناعي، وصنع القرار الآلي)، والثقافات الرقمية المجسدة (الواقع المعزز/الواقع الافتراضي، والهويات الرقمية)، وعدم المساواة الرقمية العالمية (الغزو المعلوماتي، والتفاوت الاتصالي). كما يركز المقرر على التفكير النظري والبحث المستقل، مما يمكن الطلاب من تحليل التقنيات الناشئة وتأثيراتها المجتمعية بشكل نقدي.</p> <p>This interdisciplinary doctoral seminar examines the cultural, political, and ecological dimensions of digital technologies in the post-digital era. Through critical theory and interdisciplinary research, students explore key post-digital issues, including Platform Governance, Algorithmic Power (bias, AI ethics, automated decision-making), Embodied Digital Cultures (AR/VR, identity performance), and Global Digital Inequities (data colonialism, access disparities). Emphasis is placed on theoretical reflection and independent research, enabling students to analyze emerging technologies and their societal impacts critically.</p>			

Course Code	DMC796	Course Title	Dissertation Proposal Seminar مقترح الأطروحة سيمينار
<p>يهدف هذا السيمينار البحثي إلى تمكين طلاب الدكتوراه علمياً بكل ما يتعلق بإعداد المقترحات البحثية لأطروحاتهم. كما يقودهم إلى وضع كل مهاراتهم البحثية موضع التنفيذ ضمن مشروع أكاديمي أصيل ومستقل ومتكامل حول واحدة من القضايا أو المشكلات الراهنة في مجال الإعلام الرقمي والاتصال، مما يساهم في إنتاج المعرفة وتطويرها.</p> <p>This research seminar aims to scientifically empower doctoral students in all aspects of preparing research proposals for their dissertations. It further guides them to put their research skills into practice within an original, independent, and integrated academic project addressing current issues or problems in the field of digital media and communication, thereby contributing to the production and development of knowledge.</p>			

Course Code	DMC798 (A,B,C,D,E)	Course Title	Thesis الأطروحة
<p>على مدى خمسة فصول دراسية، يُنجز الطالب بحثاً علمياً أصيلاً ومستقلاً يساهم في إنتاج معرفة جديدة في مجال الإعلام الرقمي والاتصال. تركز الأطروحة على توظيف أدوات التحليل المتقدمة ومنهجيات البحث العلمي الرصينة لمعالجة القضايا الإعلامية والاتصالية الراهنة. يمرّ الباحث بالمراحل الأساسية في إعداد الأطروحة تحت إشراف أكاديمي مباشر، على أن تشمل مراجعة الأدبيات العلمية، وتصميم البحث، وجمع البيانات، وتحليلها، ثم استخلاص النتائج وتفسيرها. كما يلتزم خلال إعداد الأطروحة بمعايير البحث العلمي وأخلاقياته. يعرض الباحث البحث النهائي بفعالية ويدافع عنه في إطار أكاديمي رسمي، كما يتحرى استيفاء المعايير الأكاديمية الدولية تمهيداً لنشر نتائج البحث.</p> <p>Over the course of five semesters, students undertake original and independent research that contributes new knowledge to the field of digital media and communication. The doctoral thesis emphasizes the use of advanced analytical tools and rigorous research methodologies to address complex media-related issues, integrating relevant theoretical frameworks with empirical evidence.</p> <p>Under the close supervision of academic advisors, students' progress through the essential stages of thesis development, including an in-depth literature review, research design, data collection, data analysis, and the synthesis of findings. The thesis process requires strict adherence to ethical research standards, the ability to communicate research outcomes effectively, and the successful defense of the work in a formal academic setting. The outcome is a doctoral dissertation that meets international scholarly standards and is suitable for publication.</p>			