COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Crime in the Age of Artificial Intelligence	

Academic staff	Core academic unit(s)
Coordinating: Jovita Žėkaitė-Maconko **Other:**	Faculty of Philosophy, Universiteto St. 9, LT-01513 Vilnius

Study cycle	Type of the course unit
First	Elective

Mode of delivery	Semester or period when it is delivered	Language of instruction
On-site	Spring semester	English

Requisites	
Prerequisites: -	**Co-requisites (if relevant): -**

Number of ECTS credits allocated	Student's workload (total)	Contact hours	Individual work
5	130	32	98

Purpose of the course unit		
The aim of the course is to introduce students to the key ideas of digital criminology, and to consolidate this knowledge through case-based and research-oriented learning. Through a digital criminology lens, the course examines how crime and deviance are constructed, represented and governed in digital environments. The course will examine phenomena such as cyberbullying and online harassment, cyberstalking, hate speech, online misogyny and image-based abuse, hacking and other forms of cybercrime, as well as citizen-led and informal forms of online justice. Particular attention is paid to the growing role of artificial intelligence in content generation, surveillance, content moderation, risk assessment and automated decision-making, and to its implications for both the commission and policing of crime. Having completed the course, students will be able to explain how digital technologies and online platforms shape the definition, visibility and governance of crime and deviance, recognise how emerging technologies reshape practices of harm, social control and informal justice, and understand the connections between crime and technology across different global and institutional contexts.		
Learning outcomes of the course unit	**Teaching and learning methods**	**Assessment methods**
Will be able to identify and explain the basic concepts and key debates of digital criminology, relating them to relevant concepts from cognate disciplines (sociology, law, psychology and other social sciences).	Interactive lectures, literature analysis	Oral presentation of a selected case study analysis Lecture reflections
Will be able to describe the forms of crime, harm and deviance examined in the course and relate them to their own academic interests and everyday digital life		
Will be able to apply key terms and		

concepts of digital criminology when critically analysing case studies, scholarly literature and public or media discourse on crime and technology.		
Will be able to critically assess the organisational, ethical and intercultural issues raised by governance and policy responses to crime and security challenges in digital environments.	Seminar discussions, guided debates on policy and governance responses, comparative case study analysis, group work drawing on students' diverse national/cultural backgrounds	Seminar tasks Seminar discussions
Will be able to discuss the social impact of crime and security problems in digital environments at regional, national and international levels, and reflect on how different societal groups are affected by, and represented in, responses to these problems.		
Students will be able to formulate and express a well-argued, evidence-based position on socially relevant questions concerning crime, technology and digital society.		

Content	**Contact hours**							**Individual work: time and assignments**	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Workshops	Laboratory work	Internship	**Contact hours total**	**Individual work**	**Tasks for individual work**
1. Introduction: crime, criminology and digital society. Cultural, critical and cyber criminologies at the crossroads	2		1				**3**	**6**	Reading; lecture reflection Powell, A., Stratton, G., & Cameron, R. (2018). *Digital criminology: Crime and justice in digital society*. Routledge, 10-33
2. Crime in mass media and the attention economy: moral panic, commodification and online fame	2		1				**3**	**8**	Reading; lecture & seminar reflection; Salter, M. (2017). Gamergate and the Subpolitics of Abuse in Online Publics. In *Crime, Justice and Social Media* (pp. 34–58), Routledge.
3. Power, corporate crime and the networked context	2		1				**3**	**8**	Case study analysis, seminar reflection;
4. Online communities and subcultures: from forums to platforms	2		1				**3**	**8**	Reading; lecture reflection Hammond, Michael. (2016) What is an online community? A new definition

									based around commitment; connection; reciprocity; interaction; agency; and consequences. International Journal of Web Based Communities 13 (1). pp. 118-136
5. Cybercrime & hacking	2		1				**3**	**8**	Reading; seminar reflection; Nina Klimburg-Witjes, Nina, Wentland, Alexander 2021 Article Hacking Humans? Social Engineering and the Construction of the "Deficient User" in Cybersecurity Discourses Science, Technology, & Human Values 2021, Vol. 46(6) 1316-1339
6. Networked hate: misogyny, image-based abuse and online harassment	2		1				**3**	**8**	Reading; lecture reflection; McGlynn, C., Johnson, K., Rackley, E., Henry, N., Gavey, N., Flynn, A., & Powell, A. (2021). 'It's Torture for the Soul': The Harms of Image-Based Sexual Abuse. *Social & Legal Studies*, *30*(4), 541-562.
7. Surveillance, privacy and algorithmic governance	2		1				**3**	**8**	Reading; lecture & seminar reflection; Hadjimatheou, K., & Fussey, P. (2025). 'The dream to know everything about everyone': Affordances of commercial data systems and digital net-widening in policing. *Theoretical Criminology*, *29*(3), 325-345.
8. Artificial intelligence, automated decision-making and crime	2		1				**3**	**8**	Reading; lecture & seminar reflection; Hart, M., Bavin, K.,

									& Lynes, A. (2025). Artificial intelligence, capitalism, and the logic of harm: Toward a critical criminology of AI. Critical Criminology, 33, 513–532.
9. Case study: a comparative policy analysis	-		8				**8**	**36**	select phenomenon/countries for the comparative policy analysis (oral presentation)
Total	**16**		**16**				**32**	**98**	

Assessment Strategy	**Weight (%)**	**Assessment Timing**	**Assessment Criteria**
Group Research Project Case Study: A Comparative Policy Analysis	40	During lectures	Each group is required to prepare and deliver an oral presentation during lectures based on their selected project, Case Study: a comparative policy analysis. Students must select a specific social phenomenon or policy issue and conduct a comparative analysis of cases from different countries, examining data based similarities and differences in policy approaches, regulatory frameworks, and responses to the selected issue. Assessment criteria: relevance of the selected topic, justification of the chosen countries and cases, clarity of the research question and arguments, depth of comparative analysis, critical interpretation of findings, and quality and structure of the oral presentation.
Lecture Reflections	20	During lectures	At the end of each lecture, students are required to submit a short written reflection on the knowledge gained, key insights, and questions arising from the topics discussed. To receive the maximum score for this assessment component, students must submit at least 10 reflections. If fewer than 10 reflections are submitted, the score will be reduced proportionally to the number of reflections submitted.
Academic Discussion and Argumentation	40	During seminars	Academic Discussion and Argumentation (individual assessment). Students are individually assessed on the quality and consistency of their participation in seminar discussions throughout the semester, including critical discussions, case analyses and debates. Assessment criteria: the ability to apply theoretical knowledge, demonstrate critical and analytical thinking, formulate well-supported arguments, engage constructively in academic discussions, and critically evaluate the social, legal and ethical dimensions of the topics discussed.

Author(s)	**Year of Publication**	**Title**	**Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication**	**Publishing house or web link**
Required Reading				
Hadjimatheou, K., & Fussey, P.	2025	'The dream to know everything about everyone': Affordances of commercial data systems	*Theoretical Criminology*, Vol. 29, Issue	https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480625133495 4

		and digital net-widening in policing	3, pp. 325–345	
Hart, M., Bavin, K., & Lynes, A.	2025	Artificial intelligence, capitalism, and the logic of harm: Toward a critical criminology of AI	*Critical Criminology*, Vol. 33, Issue 3, pp. 513–532	https://doi.org/10.1007/s10612-025-09837-0
Klimburg-Witjes, N., & Wentland, A.	2021	Hacking Humans? Social Engineering and the Construction of the "Deficient User" in Cybersecurity Discourses	*Science, Technology, & Human Values*, Vol. 46, Issue 6, pp. 1316–1339	https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243921992844
McGlynn, C., Johnson, K., Rackley, E., Henry, N., Gavey, N., Flynn, A., & Powell, A.	2021	'It's Torture for the Soul': The Harms of Image-Based Sexual Abuse	*Social & Legal Studies*, Vol. 30, Issue 4, pp. 541–562	https://doi.org/10.1177/0964663920947791
Powell, A., Stratton, G., & Cameron, R.	2018	Digital Criminology: Crime and Justice in Digital Society (pp. 10–33)		Routledge
Salter, M.	2017	Gamergate and the Subpolitics of Abuse in Online Publics. In *Crime, Justice and Social Media* (pp. 34–58)		Routledge
Hammond, M.	2016	What is an online community? A new definition based around commitment, connection, reciprocity, interaction, agency, and consequences	International Journal of Web Based Communities, *Vol. 13, Issue, pp. 118–136*	https://doi.org/10.1504/IJWBC.2017.082717
Recommended Reading				
Hamilton, R. J.	2022	Platform-Enabled Crimes: Pluralizing Accountability When Social Media Companies Enable Perpetrators to Commit Atrocities	*Boston College Law Review*, Vol. 63, Issue 4, pp. 1349–1420	https://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/facsch_lawrev/2220/
Clayton, A., Hutchings, D. T.,	2021	Cybercrime is (often) boring: Infrastructure and alienation in a deviant subculture	*The British Journal of Criminology*, Volume 61, Issue 5, Pages 1407–1423	https://academic.oup.com/bjc/article/61/5/1407/6226588
Marwick, A. E.	2021	Morally Motivated Networked Harassment as Normative Reinforcement	*Social Media + Society*, Vol. 7, Issue 2	https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051211021378
Hayward, K. J., & Maas, M. M.	2021	Artificial intelligence and crime: A primer for criminologists	*Crime, Media, Culture: An International Journal*, Vol. 17, Issue 2, pp. 209–233	https://doi.org/10.1177/1741659020917434
Powell, A., Stratton, G., & Cameron, R.	2018	A Global Context: Networks, Corporations and States. In *Digital Criminology: Crime and Justice in Digital Society* (pp. 68–106)		Routledge
Salter, M.	2017	Becoming Facebook Famous: Commodification and Exploitation on Social Media. In *Crime, Justice and Social Media* (pp. 59–78)		Routledge
Brayne, S.	2017	Big Data Surveillance: The Case of Policing	*American Sociological*	https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122417725865

			Review, Vol. 82, Issue 5, pp. 977–1008	
Braithwaite, A.	2016	'It's about ethics in game journalism'? Gamergaters and Geek Masculinity	*Social Media + Society*, Vol. 2, Issue 4, pp. 1–10	https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305116672484
Baker, E., & Roberts, J. V.	2013	Globalization and the new punitiveness. In J. Pratt, D. Brown, M. Brown, S. Hallsworth, & W. Morrison (Eds.), *The New Punitiveness: Trends, Theories, Perspectives* (pp. 121–138)		Routledge