

42632 Mapping Controversies

Danish title:	Mapping Controversies	Point	
Language:	English	(ECTS)	5
Course type:	BSc/MSc- Advanced Course		

June

Schedule:

Scope and form:	Group work and lectures
Duration of Course:	3 weeks
Date of examination:	Decide with teacher, Decide with teacher
Type of assessment:	Evaluation of exercises/reports
Aid:	All written works of reference are permitted
Evaluation:	7 step scale, internal examiner
Mandatory Prerequisites:	BA or equivalent
Optional Prerequisites:	Students are expected to bring a laptop in order to fully profit from the course.
Participants restrictions:	Minimum 10, Maximum: 30

General course objectives:

Contemporary democracy frequently finds itself confronted with highly unstable forms of knowledge around which there exists no clear guide. Controversies rooted in the techno-political entanglements of science and society seem increasingly resilient to conventional political process and cannot simply be settled by 'the facts'.

How do we handle and engage with complex knowledge controversies? And what new forms of 'democratic equipment' might be of use in that enterprise? The course enables students to make practical use of a series of new web-based research tools and map out complex controversial issues in an easily accessible manner.

Learning objectives:

A student who has met the objectives of the course will be able to:

- Handle situations in which uncertainties are rendered more complex by the intervention of social or natural scientific knowledge.
- Identify and interrogate intermediate stages through which scientific or technical knowledge acquires authority.
- Apply a range of digital/qualitative research tools such as web crawls or bibliometric surveys to trace out the way in which issues become controversial.
- Use dynamic visualisation tools to map controversies in an accessible manner.
- Produce a website that enables the wider public to engage with a controversy and interrogate its makeup.
- Analyse the interplay between science and politics from a practical perspective.
- Provide a democratic instrument to aid the public engagement with science.
- Work collaboratively with large amounts of heterogenous data.

Content:

The course involves students in collaborative research projects requiring them to make use of one or more digital methods to map out a controversy of their choosing. The goal is to make it available and explorable by a general public through an online platform like a webpage or a blog.

Students can either bring their own case material from another course or choose one when they start (although this will have to be done from day one).

The course is structured as a combination of introductory lectures, group work and a series of practicums which will introduce the students to new tools and methods while exploring controversies from the hands-on perspective of trying to map them out.

Remarks:

"Mapping Controversies" was first taught by Bruno Latour at the École des Mines in Paris and has been jointly developed as an online programme involving Science Po, MIT, Oxford University, the University of Manchester, the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne and the University of Amsterdam. Each of these institutions teaches its own version of the course to a diverse mix of students ranging from environmental and political scientists to architects and engineers.

Responsible:

[Anders Kristian Munk](#), 424, 208, (+45) 4525 6021, ankm@man.dtu.dk

[Torben Elgaard Jensen](#), 424, 220, (+45) 4525 4667, tej@man.dtu.dk

Department: 42 Department of Management Engineering

Home page: <http://www.demoscience.org/>

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Keywords: Digital methods