



INSTITUTO UNIVERSITARIO DE INVESTIGACIÓN
EN ESTUDIOS NORTEAMERICANOS
“BENJAMIN FRANKLIN”

Course	Digital Foundations
Program, semester, year	International Studies Program, Spring, 2027
Credits ECTS	3 USA
Instructor's full name and email	Lori Welsh, lwelsh@dbq.edu
Block dates (days and time)	Monday-Thursday, 9 am-12 pm
Classroom	TBA
Class hours	45
Office Hours	TBA
Requirements	Laptop if possible
Language of instruction	English
Type of teaching	In person

INTRODUCTION

Digital Foundations is an immersive 3-week study abroad course designed for undergraduate students of all levels seeking to explore and apply the most current and relevant topics shaping today's digital landscape. This course bridges classroom learning with real-world digital experiences.

Students will examine a broad range of digital topics including artificial intelligence, social media, cybersecurity, digital ethics, data literacy, and emerging technologies, while drawing direct connections to everyday life. Through hands-on projects and collaborative activities, students will not only learn about digital concepts but actively apply them in context.

No prior technical background is required. The course is intentionally designed to be accessible to students across all majors and experience levels, fostering interdisciplinary dialogue and diverse perspectives. By the end of the program, students will have developed a foundational fluency in digital topics, a global perspective on how technology shapes society, and a portfolio of applied work reflecting their learning abroad.

COMPETENCES

General Competences (GC):

GC1: Demonstrate foundational literacy in key digital topics, including AI, cybersecurity, data, social media, and emerging technologies

GC2: Analyze how digital tools, platforms, and policies function in a personal, professional, and global context

GC3: Apply digital skills hands-on through content creation using digital content tools

GC4: Evaluate digital ethics, privacy policy, and the societal implications of technology through critical thinking

GC5: Connect classroom concepts to real-world professional digital environments through hands-on projects and collaborative activities

METHODOLOGY

Daily course content will span in-class discussion surrounding current topics, topic-based content, hands-on activities, including outside-of-class digital reflections and research.

PREPARATION FOR CLASS

- *Students will be expected to actively participate in class discussions.*
- *Students will need to read all the articles/readings related to the topic before coming to class. While in class, students should show preparation for the readings by asking relevant questions and making comments related to the topic.*

- *Students should think about questions and the relations of the readings when assigned with other previous knowledge. Write comments and reflections related to the articles/readings, which can be shared in class to start debates and discussions.*
- *Student takes notes during class presentation and discussions.*

EVALUATION

The evaluation of this course is as follows:

PARTICIPATION	20 %
DIGITAL JOURNAL (ONGOING)	20 %
HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES	20 %
DATA VISUALIZATION	20 %
CAPSTONE PRESENTATION	20 %

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a violation of academic norms and as such it can result in a failed course. In extreme cases it can include the expulsion from the program. In order to avoid this, it is recommended to remind students of how to cite and rephrase the works of authors when writing papers.

ATTENDANCE (Instituto Franklin-UAH Policy)

Attendance is mandatory. Students are not permitted to miss any classes of the program without proper justification (i.e., emergencies, health problems); in this case, students have to show a medical note. The following types of excuses are not justified: family visits, illnesses without a medical note, personal trips, etc. Each unjustified absence will result in a grade deduction of 10 points in the final grade of the class (example: from A to B). Students will not be allowed, in the classroom or on fieldtrips, to arrive 10 minutes late or more. If a student has continual delays, he/she will be penalized with an absence, and the instructor may not allow them into class or the visit.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (Instituto Franklin-UAH Policy)

Students with special needs should contact Antonio Fernández: antonio.fernandezm@uah.es. The Instituto Franklin-UAH can accommodate these students who show, through a medical note or a note from their academic advisor, that they require help in order to fulfill the program.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN CLASS

The use of technology is essential today in education, but if it is used inappropriately, it can be harmful for students. Students must ask for permission from the teacher in order to use any technological devices. Faculty should make clear to students in what instances technology can be used.

USE OF BLACKBOARD

All courses offered by Instituto Franklin-UAH can be taught through the Blackboard virtual classroom. Also, teachers can have materials, forums, etc., in the virtual classroom even if they don't teach the class virtually. For more information about using it, contact Antonio Fernández: antonio.fernandezm@uah.es

CLASS SCHEDULE

DAYS	CLASS SCHEDULE	ASSIGNMENTS
MONTH		
BLOCK		
TBA		

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bibliographies will be provided/discussed as current-topic articles are presented.

INSTRUCTOR

Lori Welsh, Assistant Professor, MBA