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Theme 1: Critical Cultural Studies

Abstract: Integrating the humanities into academic courses in social sciences

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In order to integrate and assimilate the humanities into social science curricula, I propose integrating “hybrid” interdisciplinary courses within existing curricula. In this way, interdisciplinary observation, critical thinking, and humanist thought can be embedded into the teaching of core social sciences courses at the foundation of the structured academic education that students acquire.

On this basis, and in the spirit of this concept, I have successfully taught a number of courses over several years in the Department of Communication Studies at the Max Stern Yezreel Valley College. I propose to discuss one of these courses as a test case for how philosophy can be integrated in an interdisciplinary manner into social sciences BA programs.

The course “Communication and Humanist Thought” combines the department’s core discipline of communications studies with a humanities discipline (philosophy). Structured as an interdisciplinary course, it exposes students to critical humanist thought in the context of patterns of communication in society, public opinion, the individual and the crowd, etc. Throughout the course, students use philosophical texts to analyze cases from current communications, while expanding concepts and ideas beyond the classical theories taught in communications studies, with the aim of developing a broad, critical approach to this field.