

## **V. Dark Communication**

Prof. Randall Auxier, Southern Illinois University,  
Carbondale

20 h, biweekly, Wrocławskie Centrum Akademickie,  
Tuesday 16.00-17.30

DESCRIPTION: Dark Communication is a relatively new area of study. This is the first time a course has been offered at UWr, but as anyone can tell, the dark side of communication has come increasingly to the fore in our Western culture. This course will take you from the beginnings of modern dark communication, in the Romantic era, up to the present. The central question is "how did we get where we are?" We are probably still too close to the age of "fake news" and "alternative facts" to make a full assessment of the present, but we can learn plenty about the background that created our present context. I will not handle conspiracy theories in this course –that would be a course in itself—but we will brush up against the forms of communication that make conspiracy theories believable to some. What we will study is the deep structures of human desire, in religion, social and psychological settings, and in the broader culture. It is my contention that a certain quality and twist of desire accounts for the dark side of communication. We will examine this twist in its intercultural, interpersonal, organizational, historico-cultural, and political forms. The course is divided into five parts. First, we will look at the modern Romantic origins of our views about will and desire such that one's turn of mind may be described as "dark," and examine a new theory of dark communication. Second, we will look at interpersonal dark communication, and then in turn, organizational, historico-cultural, and finally political dark communication in successive sessions. Most of the examples will be from the point of view of the US (this is, after all, what I know the best), but we will apply the ideas to Poland and Europe and the wider world as well.