Department	13 General and Interdisciplinary Studies
Course title	**From Ancient Utopias to Cyberutopias. An Introduction to Political Philosophy**
Hours per week (SWS)	2
Number of ECTS credits	2
Course objective	The lectures are intended to provide a critical perspective of the information society in order to understand its related historical development, pursued goals and problems arisen by its deployment. The inquiry will provide an outlook to the historical development of political philosophy. Through colloquial discussions, students' ability to defend critically their own viewpoints will be promoted.Additionally, by means of an interdisciplinary attitude (integrating aspects of scientific, technical and social concern) the student shall gain an interdisciplinary ability to integrate different focus of social relevance to practical problems.
Prerequisites	
Recommended reading	MATTELART, Armand (2003). The Information Society: An Introduction. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.MILLER, David (2003). Political Philosophy - A Very Short Introduction. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press More literature hints and direct access to materials used within the lectures are available at the course website: https://sites.google.com/unileon.es/utopias-and-the-inf-soc
Teaching methods	Seminar in English, in which the lecturer will provide a general orientation in the subject, presenting the most important perspectives of political philosophy in dialectical confrontation between utopic and dystopic positions, and inviting to go directly to most relevant sources. The student selects a utopic-dystopic perspective within a set of utopic families, proposed by the lecturer, to be thereafter developed and summary discussed within the seminar.
Assessment methods	Through a short and open discussion of the topic and a written paper in English.
Language of instruction	English
Name of lecturer	Dr. José Maria Diaz Nafria
Email	In order to establishing an early contact with the lecturer (who shall provide hints, announcements and materials), it is recommended to send an e-mail to Prof. Díaz Nafría (diaz- naf@hm.edu) as soon as possible. Additionally, a course website will be used to the same purpose (see below).
Link	
Course content	The dreams and projects of the so called Information Society are founded in a utopic vision, essentially linked to the European Modernity and particularly rooted by Bacon, Leibniz and other prominent philosophers. Some of the foundational utopic projects can even be traced back to middle ages, as we can see in the works of Aquinas, Lull or Kues, but even further away to the sources of political philosophy in antiquity. In particular, Plato sowed the seeds of the utopic tradition whose latest leaves are the cyberutopias. However, despite all the used efforts and progress-oriented designs, dystopias are displayed again and again, reflecting the dark, hidden and usually unnoticed side of the targeted hope, which in the current world generally gains the upper hand.
Remarks	