COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School / Department: Communications and the Arts

Programme: BA Communications and Media Studies

FHEQ **Level:**   5

Course Title: Communication in Mediated Environments

Course Code: COMM 5101

Total Hours: 160 (Lev 3-5) (4 US Credit)
Timetabled Hours: 45
Guided Learning Hours: 15
Independent Learning Hours: 100

Credit   16 UK CATS credits
                                      8 ECTS credits
                                      4 US credits

Course Description:

This course explores the ways in which media and communications technology impacts our understanding of the world, ourselves, and our interactions with others. Drawing on theories of mediation, representation, and technology, students will critically examine how different forms of media construct, reflect, and challenge societal norms, values, and identities. They will engage with key debates that affect our patterns of representation, consumption, interaction, participation, and self-hood, examining how these are shaped by digital and emerging technologies, such as advanced forms of artificial intelligence. Throughout the course, students develop critical understanding of the relationship between technologies and society and reflect on their own use of digital media.

Prerequisites:

40 Credits

Aims and Objectives:

The aim of this course is to have students engage with key issues in media and society and to reflect on their own positions, practices, and assumptions of media usage. Students will develop a critical understanding of the theoretical approaches to understanding our mediated environments and how we negotiate and decode content as individuals and audiences in these spaces. The course also introduces students to conceptual frameworks for critically assessing issues of consumption and cultural production, visual representations whilst examining the role digital technologies play in changing identities, relationships, and practices. This helps to addresses key issues in digital society by offering students the tools to evaluate their own practices and ever-changing demands of technology. By the end of the course, students will be equipped to critically analyse the role of media and technology in shaping their own lives, whilst developing an awareness of the socio-political and ethical dimensions of mediated communication.

Programme Outcomes:

5AII, 5BI, 5CI

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification. This is located at the archive maintained by Registry and found at: https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical engagement with theories and concepts used in communications and media studies, particularly concerning mediated environments.

- Demonstrate critical understanding of the key problems and issues addressed in communications within mediated environments.

- Demonstrate the ability to formulate and communicate arguments cogently, retrieve and generate information, and select appropriate criteria to evaluate sources and/or data.

Indicative Content:

- Media Literacy and Critical Thinking

- Mediation and Representation (e.g. semiotics, media rituals, encoding-decoding)

- Theoretical approaches to mediated communication (i.e.. media effects, uses and gratification theory, social constructionism, participatory culture, feminist media studies, network society, platform social, sharing economy, post-humanism).

- Interpersonal communication in digital spaces (e.g. context collapse, trolling, anonymity and asynchronous communication)

- Media consumption patterns and cultural identity (e.g. digital forms of marginalisation, inclusion/exclusion)

- Approaches to technology and society (e.g. media ecology, affordance theory, theories of technology, technological determinism)

- Changing self (e.g. presentation on and offline, quantified self, mobility)

- Decoding images and representations and cultural artifacts (e.g. advertising, photography, cinema, modern art and propaganda)

- Media and the internet (e.g. changes to audiences, media, producers, and advertising)

- Emerging and evolving technologies (e.g. social media platforms, algorithms, Artificial Intelligence in everyday practices)

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and located at: https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/

Teaching Methodology:

Course meetings will consist of interactive lectures on assigned readings, small group discussions, reflection activities and the presentation of audio-visual materials.

Indicative Text(s):

Athique, A. (2013) *Digital Media and Society: An Introduction.* Cambridge: Polity.

Boyd, D. (2014) *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Chouliaraki, L. (2012) *Self-Mediation: New Media, Citizenship and Civil Selves*. London: Routledge.

de Zengotita, T. (2007) *Mediated: How the Media Shape the World Around You*. New York: Bloomsbury USA.

Fuchs, C. (2024) *Social media: A critical introduction. 4th edn.* London: Sage.

Lister, M., Dovey, J., Giddings, S., Grant, I. and Kelly, K. (2008) *New Media: A Critical Introduction.* 2nd edn. London: Routledge.

Jones, R. H. and Hafner, C. A. (2021) *Understanding Digital Literacies: A Practical Introduction.* 2nd edn. London: Routledge.

Lindgren, S. (2022) *Digital Media and Society*. 2nd edn. London: Sage.

McQuail, D., and Deuze, M. (2020) *Mcquail's Media & Mass Communication Theory*. 7th edn. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Orton-Johnson, K. (2024) *Digital Culture and Society.* London: Sage.

Journals

International Journal of Communication.

Websites

AllSides. Available at https://www.allsides.com/unbiased-balanced-news (Accessed: November 2024).

The Atlantic. Available at: https://www.theatlantic.com/world/ (Accessed: November 2024).

The BBC. Available at: www.bbc.co.uk (Accessed: November 2024).

The Conversation. Available at: https://theconversation.com/uk (Accessed: November 2024).

Corporate Watch. Available at: https://corporatewatch.org/ (Accessed: November 2024).

Garr Reynold's Presentation Zen Tips. Available at: https://www.garrreynolds.com/Presentation (Accessed: November 2024).

The media page at The Guardian. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/uk/media (Accessed: November 2024).

Media News International. Available at: https://mnilive.com/ (Accessed: November 2024).

Media/Culture Journal. Available at: https://journal.media-culture.org.au/index.php/mcjournal (Accessed: November 2024).

Medium. Available at https://medium.com/ (Accessed: November 2024).

The New York Times. Available at: https://www.nytimes.com (Accessed: November 2024).

Non-Profit organisation, TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design). Available at: https://www.ted.com/ (Accessed: November 2024).

Oxford Internet Institute. Available at: https://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/ (Accessed: November 2024).

See syllabus for complete reading list.

Change Log for this CSD:

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or AB)	Change Actioned by Registry Services
First edition document	Nov 2024	