

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School / Department:	Communications and the Arts
Programme:	BA Communications and Media Studies
FHEQ Level:	4
Course Title:	Introduction to Communications and Media
Course Code:	COMM 4101
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 UK credits

Course Description:

The course provides a comprehensive introduction to the evolution of mass media and communication in a constantly changing global landscape. Starting by looking at how this has evolved from physical forms such as print and broadcast to digital forms such as different iterations of the internet, social media and the use of AI. This will incorporate both production and consumption of media within industries such as advertising, public relations, journalism, television, film, music and gaming. Important contemporary issues will be addressed alongside recent events and tools and theories to understand these issues will be applied in order to develop student's media literacy. This will also be applied to complex topics that circumvent the media and communication world such as media ownership.

Prerequisites:

None

Aims and Objectives:

The aim of this course is to provide a comprehensive introduction to the key areas of media and communications studies whilst providing students with analytical tools to critically engage with the different medium. A thorough understanding of the history of global media will be explored focusing on how this has shaped how we digest and interact with contemporary content (in both physical and digital form) and documenting how this is evolving. Students will be introduced to key concepts and theoretical approaches alongside current debates on modern mass media ownership that effects content and public opinion in both the business and entertainment sectors. These tool help to arm students with the necessary tools to engage with the complex evolving digital media landscape by introducing debates on objectivity and truth in news production and how this relationship is changing through the use of the internet, social media and the rise of artificial intelligence.

Programme Outcomes:

4AI; 4BI

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 broad knowledge and understanding of the core theories and methods in communications and media studies.
- Demonstrate a broad understanding of the key issues of and core methods in communications and media studies.

Indicative Content:

- Historical evolution of media from print to digital.
- Theoretical frameworks of media and consumption (such as cultivation, social learning theory, encoding-decoding)
- Audiences and reception (e.g. spectatorship, active audiences, para-social relations)
- Structure of the media industries (e.g. ownership, law and regulation)
- Media professionals and working in media (e.g. journalism, artists, producers, PR, influencers, etc)
- Media production and content creation
- Funding the media (e.g. advertising, subscriptions, etc)
- The rise of technology (e.g. Digital Media and AI)
- Media representation in Society
- Entertainment industries (sound, vision and interactive (gaming) entertainment)
- Future trends in communication.

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:

This course will be delivered face to face through a combination of lectures and interactive sessions. In addition to classroom activities, there are guided learning elements that are tutor led and arranged through Blackboard. These activities can be asynchronous online sessions, flipped classrooms, set readings with discussion boards or set guest lectures for example. Set activities are monitored by the instructor to ascertain student engagement. Students are encouraged to prepare for class and to play an active part, to raise questions, following-up ideas and interact with a wide range of provided material.

Indicative Text(s):

McDougall, J. and Pollard C. (2019) *Media Studies: The Basics*; 2nd edn. London: Routledge

Turow, J. (2022) *Media Today: An Introduction to Mass Communication*, 8th edn.

London: Routledge.

Sylvia IV, J.J. (2024) *Introduction to Communication and Media Studies*. Fitchburg State University: ROTEL.

Journals

International Journal of Communication.

M/C Journal.

Websites

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

The Guardian. Available at: www.guardian.com (Accessed: November 2024).

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

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

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

All Sides. Available at: <https://www.allsides.com/unbiased-balanced-news> (Accessed: November 2024).

Medium (Human Resources Stories). Available at: <https://www.medium.com> (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	Nov 2024	