

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School/Department:	Communications, Arts and Social Sciences
Programme:	Communications
FHEQ Level:	3
Course Title:	Foundations in Mass Media & Communications
Course Code:	COM 3100
Course Leader:	Dr. Susan Pell Russell Duke
Student Engagement Hours:	120
Lectures:	22.5
Seminar / Tutorials:	22.5
Independent / Guided Learning :	75
Semester:	Fall, Spring
Credits:	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to the study of mass media in contemporary modern societies. The course will pay particular attention to the production and consumption of mass media, including newspapers and magazines, television, film, radio, and the internet. Thus the course will encourage students to critically analyse the strategies of media giants, the impact of media ownership over democracy, the effects of media over culture, identities and public opinion. Each topic of the course will be examined with reference to contemporary examples of mass media.

Prerequisites: None

Aims and Objectives:

The aim of this course is to:

- 1) To provide a comprehensive introduction to the key areas of media and communications studies.
- 2) To introduce key concepts, the main theoretical approaches and current debates on modern mass media.
- 3) To present an overview of contemporary mass media, from newspapers and magazines, to TV and the internet.
- 4) To provide a good understanding as how the different medium operate as a business actor.
- 5) To explain how media ownership affects politics and public opinion.

- 6) To introduce debates on objectivity and truth in news production.
- 7) To explain audience theory and media effects.
- 8) To provide students with analytical tools to critically engage with the different medium.

Programme Outcomes:

3A(i); 3B(i); 3C(i); 3D(i)

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

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand key concepts in media and communications studies.
- Understand forms of communication, media and culture as they have emerged historically and appreciate the processes through which they have come into being, with reference to social, cultural and technological change.
- Exhibit an understanding of the processes linking production, distribution, circulation and consumption.
- Students should demonstrate an ability to conduct basic research and organise ideas to communicate orally and in written assignments.
- Show awareness of the ways mass media affects public opinion and shapes our personal views.

Indicative Content:

- Print Industry
- Film Industry
- Television Industry
- Advertising Industry
- Gender and Mass media
- Consumer Culture and Marketing Communication
- Media Effects
- Digital Media and Media Convergence
- Social media

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board.

Teaching Methodology:

In line with the aims and objectives of the course, sessions are structured to provide a stimulating learning experience which encourages students to reflect on their reading and develop skills of analysis, evaluation and presentation. To this end, formal lectures are combined with class discussions and exercises. Students are encouraged to prepare for class and to play an active part, to raise questions, following-up ideas and being prepared to make short oral presentations in class. Students will be required to make a presentation in class, which should be a critical analysis of a topic explored in the lectures. Students will also work in groups to put

in practice some of the concepts and ideas discussed in the lectures. There will be screenings of films and documentaries relevant to the course.

