

CULTURAL STUDIES - COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA CONCENTRATION - FOR STUDENTS MATRICULATED AFTER SEPT. 1, 2013 BUT BEFORE SEPT. 7, 2021

Sept. 1, 2013 – AOS Guidelines: Cultural Studies

Concentrations in communication should demonstrate knowledge of processes, procedures, methodologies and media involved in the dissemination of information and ideas. Twenty-first-century studies in communication and media include an examination of media's impact on culture, democracy and digital identity in an era of rapid technological change and emerging environments.

Areas of focus include:

- Communication, which could include one or more of the following sub-areas: rhetorical communication (public speaking), nonverbal communication, interpersonal communication, intrapersonal communication, mass communication, relational communication, organizational communication, intercultural communication, health communication and/or political communication.
- Media and culture (with a focus on interpretation of film, television, music and new media artifacts).
- Digital media studies (with a focus on new, Web-based, mobile, immersive and emergent media).
- Applied communication (such as writing for social and digital media, journalism, advertising, or public relations).

Students are expected to demonstrate the development of the following knowledge and skills, as appropriate to their area of focus.

Knowledge

- Foundational understanding of the selected sub-area (for example, an introduction to mass communication or knowledge of visual or media literacy).
- Theory: an understanding of the theoretical and philosophical frameworks and/or methods for communications and media analysis.
- History: a knowledge of the history and associated politics of media institutions/industries in a culture; knowledge of the role of media in culture/society, democracy and the development of digital identity.
- Currency: knowledge of current developments and critical perspectives in one or more media fields; knowledge of emergent/new media and the future of a specific media or communication field.
- Ethics: an ability to understand and apply ethics in communication and media fields demonstrated through knowledge of ethics, law, policy, or a consideration of bias in media, such as sexism or racism.
- Legal and policy developments in communication/media.

Skills/Practical Applications of Knowledge

- Strong writing and research skills.
- Fluency in communicating with and about contemporary communication tools.
- Ability to create and critique media artifacts.
- Ability to develop and critique media campaigns.
- Interpretation of media, which can include visual or media literacy and/or more advanced analysis, including analysis of diversity in media.
- Capstone or culminating project: students should work with their mentors to choose or develop a capstone study towards the end of their programs, or demonstrate similarly appropriate culminating work.

Courses in this area generally meet the following college level learning goals: active learning, breadth and depth of knowledge; social responsibility; communication; critical thinking and problem solving; information and digital media literacy.

Additional Considerations

Writing courses are foundational and students concentrating in communication should have the equivalent of College Writing or Introductory Composition.

Students wishing to go into marketing, advertising or PR should demonstrate the requisite knowledge which may be gained, for example, from course work in the BME marketing area. These courses have a logical progression and some require prerequisites.

Communication and media fields require strong research and citation skills at a professional level. Studies in this area reflect this requirement. Prior to taking upper-level courses, students must understand the difference between scholarly journals and academic books, popular magazines and newspapers and Web sources. They should be able to cite these properly and write in a sophisticated style.

Students wishing to attend graduate school should consult the requirements of potential schools as they plan their degree program. Many in communications or business fields, for example, will expect them to take courses in statistics and qualitative and/or quantitative research methods.