

Media Studies and Production (MSP)

Course information contained within the Bulletin is accurate at the time of publication in June 2025 but is subject to change. For the most up-to-date course information, please refer to the Course Catalog.

MSP 5011. Introduction to Communication Concepts. 3 Credit Hours.

This class reviews various theoretical frameworks that have served as foundations for and have shaped the study of human communicative behavior in the form of mediated communication. It will sort out pivotal traditions of study, topics of debate, and conceptual problems in media studies, concentrating on theory development in the United States and Europe. Whether you are interested in pursuing a Ph.D. or in developing skills as a media practitioner, this course provides the necessary background to acquiring a deep understanding of the nature and practices of mediated communication.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

MSP 5021. Media Institutions. 3 Credit Hours.

History and societal role of the mass media with an emphasis on the internal structure and workings of the mass media industries and their interaction with government and the public.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of B- in (MSP 5011 and MSP 5114)

MSP 5042. Media Technology and Culture. 3 Credit Hours.

This course examines the relationships between technological developments and artifacts and cultural transformations. With a grounding in critical texts addressing the complex interplay between culture and media technologies, the course investigates the significance of both in social power, human agency, consciousness, identity, socio-political realities, public policy, knowledge, and the environment.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of B- in MSP 5011 (may be taken concurrently) and MSP 5114 (may be taken concurrently)

MSP 5110. Introductory Topics in Media Studies & Production. 1 to 4 Credit Hour.

Specific topic varies each semester. Please view course subtitle or consult with instructor for details.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

MSP 5114. Research for Media. 3 Credit Hours.

No matter your focus in the media field, you will need to understand how research connects with the media environment in which we live. It engages with media audiences, technologies, platforms, industry, history, policies and texts. This course combines theory and practice in ways that help you learn to collect and analyze your own data as well as understand research and analysis produced by others. Practical research methods interact dynamically with theories and socio-cultural contexts to form a combined skill set: conceptualizing, data gathering, interpreting, and creative media making. The main goal of this course is to provide you with research skills that you can apply to your professional and scholarly aspirations.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

MSP 5310. Introductory Topics in Media Studies & Production. 1 to 4 Credit Hour.

Specific topic varies each semester. Please view course subtitle or consult with instructor for details.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

MSP 5547. MA Project Workshop. 3 Credit Hours.

This workshop-style course gives students the preproduction and previsualization tools needed to design and produce a well-crafted, well-researched media production for their Media Studies and Production Master of Arts final graduate project.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of C in MSP 5011 (may be taken concurrently) and MSP 5114 (may be taken concurrently)

MSP 5551. New Media Literacies. 3 Credit Hours.

Examines intersection of education and participatory culture, literacy and technology change, the knowledge gap, informal learning and knowledge communities, emerging social skills and cultural competencies.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

MSP 5655. Communication in Media Organizations. 3 Credit Hours.

Whether managing the department of a television station or network, a broadband content site, a radio station or other media company, understanding how to work and lead within media organizations means understanding how to be an effective communicator for this unique field. This course is designed to blend the scholarship and foundational research on communication to explore communication skills within today's media organizations. It focuses on communication from leader to worker(s), from worker to leader(s), from peer to peer, within teams, inside the structures and outside. It also covers differences in communication styles and their effectiveness in large organizations, moderate and small businesses, team settings, cyber teams and when working independently. Topics include conflict resolution, managing cross-cultural workplaces, the impact of technology, online communication, emotions in the workplace, and current global trends. As an online class, work will consist of independent readings, weekly postings to a course online discussion board, online live chats, writing video commentaries, content review exams and a final project on a related topic.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of B- in (MSP 5011 and MSP 5114)

MSP 5663. Art and Business of Recording. 3 Credit Hours.

An examination of the creative, business, and legal issues involved in the process of a music recording project from the perspective of the Record Producer. Students develop skills related to the understanding of music industry contracts, project budgeting and financing, copyright and publishing. Significant time is also spent analyzing current industry trends, developing leadership skills, and individual growth of a unique production style within an historical perspective.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

MSP 5701. Producing and Directing. 4 Credit Hours.

Welcome to this advanced-level course in the theory and practice of television producing and directing. Students will work in teams to produce a quality television program from inception to completion. This process involves writing for TV, casting, filming and editing. Students will end the semester with a complete narrative project to add to their professional portfolio.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

MSP 5702. MA Documentary Production and Studies. 3 or 4 Credit Hours.

This course is designed to help students create informative, engaging, thoroughly researched short documentary video from inception through creation. Students will gain experience as producers, directors, and editors of nonfiction audio/visual media. To provide practical and authentic experiences, most classes will mix topical class discussions with screenings, hands-on practice in areas of idea generation, research tools, production basics, editorial logic, interview design, production management, legal and fiscal responsibility, rights, clearance, fair use, funding, and distribution.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

MSP 5707. Video Production Technique and Theory. 3 Credit Hours.

In this course, students gain hands-on skills in video production. Students will be exposed to a variety of production modes and filming strategies and will develop a final project through the stages of preproduction, production, postproduction, and exhibition at our final class screening event.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

MSP 5751. Audio Production Technique and Theory. 3 Credit Hours.

Students examine and are engaged in the processes and practices of audio recording, editing, and mixing for all media. This will include practical work on location sound gathering, sound effects creation, post production for visual media, design aesthetics for radio spots and podcasting, and music production techniques. Students will practice critical listening skills, and conduct recording and mix sessions in a variety of production settings, gaining hands-on experience with an industry standard Digital Audio Workstation.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

MSP 5788. Television Production Workshop. 8 Credit Hours.

Development of weekly half hour television programs exploring Philadelphia. Focuses on meeting professional standards in content, form, and technical quality. Summer only.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

MSP 5887. Graduate Radio Practicum. 1 to 4 Credit Hour.

Students design and produce radio announcing and talk show projects.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

MSP 8010. Intermediate Topics in Media Studies and Production. 3 Credit Hours.

Topic varies.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

MSP 8110. Intermediate Topics in Media Studies and Production. 4 Credit Hours.

Topics vary.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

MSP 8221. The History of Modern Media. 3 Credit Hours.

This course examines the origins, development and current state of digital, mass, immersive, and interpersonal media. From the invention of the telephone, through the advent of radio and television, to the creation of advanced digital devices, streaming, social media, and artificial intelligence, we explore the media technology that changed the world and our lives. Our focus is on the creative, social, organizational, economic, regulatory, and ethical issues that have challenged media makers, and the audiences they serve, in historical and political contexts. Students learn about the innovative figures whose contributions have shaped the current media environment. We take a topical and critical look at the creation of content, and the events and issues in media history as they've unfolded in a way that is designed to help you develop the tools to formulate your personal and professional vision for the future of media.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of B- in MSP 5021.

MSP 8252. Law and Ethics of Digital Media. 3 Credit Hours.

Why should you want to study digital media law? Almost every behavior you (the individual) or you (the media professional) engage in online can become a legal or ethical quandary. This course is intended to introduce students to American law and regulation as it pertains to digital media (internet, mobile media, digital communication). Because legal issues permeate society, it is important for potential communication professionals to understand the principles of media law, both as observers of the judicial process and as potential participants in legal matters stemming from professional activities. As digital communication technologies integrate into our media landscape, new legal and ethical issues are being debated and new law is made every day. Historical perspectives will be discussed, but the primary focus of the class is on the current status of communicators' legal rights and the theoretical underpinnings on which they're based. This course will help you both as citizens and as prospective media professionals.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

MSP 8254. Media Campaigns for Social Change. 3 Credit Hours.

This is an advanced course about the use of theory and research in the design, implementation and evaluation of public information campaigns conducted via mass and other media to promote positive social change. Students learn about key theories and research techniques regarding campaigns to affect knowledge, attitudes and behaviors on issues related to the individual, the social good, and collective betterment. Examples of media campaigns for social change and the issues or problems they address are smoking, drug abuse, safe sex, voter registration, recycling, animal welfare, disaster relief and many others. After accumulating knowledge and gaining an understanding of the key theories and methods of campaign design, students then apply this knowledge by creating, conducting and evaluating campaigns conducted on and off campus.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of B- in (MSP 5011 and MSP 5114)

MSP 8275. #ourmedia: Community, Activist, Citizens' and Radical Media. 3 Credit Hours.

All over the world, people are taking media technologies out of the hands of corporations and using them in their own unique ways: neighbors in Germantown, Philadelphia run their own radio station; the Maori of New Zealand write, direct, and produce films and TV series that reflect their realities and dreams; young women and men in Egypt and Tunisia use social media to mobilize against authoritarian regimes; and indigenous people in rural Mexico developed their own cell phone network. This course will take you on a journey around the world, exploring indigenous media in Mexico, New Zealand and Canada; radical media in Egypt and Tunisia; citizens' media in Colombia, Chile, Brazil, and Argentina; and immigrant media in Europe and the U.S. We will consider what it means for communities to create new narratives about and for themselves, outside of dominant corporate media structures. Along the way, the course will introduce issues of production, funding, regulation, technology, and design relevant to community/alternative/citizens' media.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of B in MSP 5011 and MSP 5014.

MSP 8441. Media and Children. 3 Credit Hours.

Influence of the media on children's development. Includes problems of studying socialization effects, media usage patterns, functions of the media, effects on family interaction, social class and race, political socialization, sexual behavior, consumer behavior, music, and aggression.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of B- in (MSP 5011 and MSP 5114)

MSP 8446. Psychological Processing of Media. 3 Credit Hours.

Research and theory concerning the contemporary psychological significance of media. Topics include attention, memory, comprehension, emotional response, arousal, picture perception, unconscious processing, and person perception as they relate to traditional (radio, TV, print, film) and emerging (virtual reality, teleconferencing) media.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of B- in (MSP 5011 and MSP 5114)

MSP 8457. Political Communication. 4 Credit Hours.

Covers political communication theories, modes, means and institutions and serves as an introduction to how communication scholars study politics and the media.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of B- in (MSP 5011 and MSP 5114)

MSP 8471. Media and Globalization. 3 Credit Hours.

This course explores questions of media ownership, content, flow, cultural values, political power and technological impact in relation to one of today's most used but least understood terms: globalization. Lectures, discussions, class activities, videos/films and course readings focus on how history (colonialism, imperialism, international relations), industrialization (industrial vs. "developing"), political systems (more democratic vs. less democratic), economics (more privatization vs. less privatization), culture (religion, language and world view), and the strategies of global media corporations such as Disney and Netflix have influenced the ways media function in different countries and the ways media flow between countries. To do so, the course surveys mass communication systems in a variety of countries and examines the interrelationships between them.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of B- in MSP 5021.

MSP 8473. The Role of Information in Society. 3 Credit Hours.

This course examines emerging information and communication technologies (ICTs) and their social implications, including new media industries and stakeholder perspectives. It explores the impact of ICTs on society and its institutions, what these technologies reveal and what they obscure, how data are socially constructed, the modalities of technological infrastructure, and the constraints and affordances of ICTs for individuals and organizations. Topics covered may include self-tracking and wearable technologies and their impact on our bodies and identities, data visualization, open data, knowledge vs. information, surveillance and privacy, internet moderation and regulation, environmental impacts of ICTs, and new and old forms of labor in digital economies. Throughout, emphasis is placed on how data are socio-technical constructions manipulated and shaped by actors with different goals.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of B- in (MSP 5011 and MSP 5114)

MSP 8614. Creating a Media Business. 3 Credit Hours.

Students explore what is required to own and operate a media business. From imagining the concept for a creative media business to successfully marketing its services or products, to ensuring the sound operation of the business, students will become familiar with the conditions necessary for survival and success.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

MSP 8657. Current Issues in Media Management. 3 Credit Hours.

Marketing strategies for networks, stations, and cable systems. Topics included relationships with government, networks, employee groups, and ownership; personnel policies and supervision, budgets and reports.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: Minimum grade of B- in MSP 5655.

MSP 8741. Emergent Media Production. 3 Credit Hours.

Welcome to Emergent Media Production, a hands-on production studio/theory course in which students design and produce creative work using new and emerging storytelling technologies. This course is for students who already possess intermediate skills in media creation and are interested in furthering their skills and exploring new and innovative media technologies.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

MSP 9333. Master Colloq/Comp Exam. 2 Credit Hours.

Comprehensive examination colloquium required for all MA students.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

MSP 9787. Television Practicum. 4 Credit Hours.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

MSP 9845. Masters Colloquium. 1 Credit Hour.

Current problems and opportunities in the field, discussions and presentations of current research, and lectures by senior scholars.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

MSP 9983. Directed Readings in Communication. 1 to 4 Credit Hour.

Tutorial course supervised by a specific MSP faculty member. Obtain required form from SMC Graduate Office in 344 Annenberg Hall.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

MSP 9985. Internship. 1 to 4 Credit Hour.

Open only to MSP MA students with at least 20 semester hours completed. Students work as unpaid interns at compatible media industries and organizations. Enrollment limited to availability.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

MSP 9991. Directed Projects in Communication. 1 to 4 Credit Hour.

Tutorial course supervised by a specific MSP faculty member. Obtain required form from SMC Graduate Office in 344 Annenberg Hall.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.

MSP 9996. MA Thesis/Project. 1 to 8 Credit Hour.

MA Thesis/Project. No more than six credits may be counted toward the degree. See MSP Policies and Procedures.

Repeatability: This course may be repeated for additional credit.