Communication and Media (BA)

ACADEMIC DIRECTOR: James Richardson
CUNY School of Professional Studies
101 West 31st Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10001
Email Contact: James Richardson, james.richardson@cuny.edu
URL: http://sps.cuny.edu/programs/ba_commedia

The online Bachelor's Degree in Communication and Media (B.A.) offers an interdisciplinary curriculum focused on critical issues related to communications, with special emphasis on new and traditional media. Students also examine how social and organizational cultures influence how people communicate. Drawing on communication and media studies and the social sciences, courses develop students' abilities to:

- Interpret and evaluate various forms of communication, with special emphasis on web-based content;
- Use communication strategies that are responsive to cultural and audience differences and the requirements of new media; and
- Understand the global reach of communication and media and how they serve as powerful links between and among the world's cultures.

Required research courses will enable students to interpret current research and to focus on a particular interest relevant to communication and media. General education courses complement this specialized study and emphasize critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, effective communication and the exploration of the foundations of knowledge and culture.

Career and Academic Advancement Prospects
The online Bachelor's Degree in Communication and Media prepares graduates for careers in management, media and communications, social services, and international organizations. The degree also provides a strong foundation for graduate training in a wide variety of professional specializations.

Program Requirements
120 credits are required for the online Bachelor's Degree in Communication and Media.
- General Education - 39 credits required
- Required Communication and Media Courses - 33 credits
- General Electives – 48 credits. General electives may come from Communication and Media courses, additional general education courses or courses from other degree programs.

Required Basic Level Courses
- CM 203 - Communications & Media
- CM 311 - Writing for New Electronic Media
- RM 201 – Introduction to Research Methods

Required Perspective Courses
18 credits required from among the following courses:
- CM 301 - Mass Media Ethics: Issues, Cases and Moral Reasoning
- CM 302 - Communication Theory and Web Design
- CM 304 - Global Culture and Diversity
- CM 306 - Studies in Mass Communication
- CM 307 - Studies in Personality and Culture
- CM 308 - Studies in Urbanization
- CM 309 - Studies in Communication and Cultural Change
- CM 200 – Introduction to Design
- CM 333 - Communication in Business and Industry (Corporate Communications)
- ORGD 341 – Organizational Change and Leadership
Required Advanced Courses
Six credits required from among the following courses (at least three credits must be from one of the capstone courses, indicated with an asterisk):
CM 411 - Advanced Research Methods
CM 490 - Selected Topics in Communication and Culture
CM 491* - Independent Research
CM 499* - Senior Research Project

MINOR IN COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA
The Communication and Media minor provides broad exposure to the history, evolution and current state of media and mass communication in America. Students be introduced to the theory and execution of emerging technologies and will analyze the ethical questions that have become increasingly important in the use of media, media technology and public policy.

Minor Requirements
12 credits as follows:
- CM 203 - Communications and Media
- CM 301 - Media Ethics
- CM 302 - Communication Theory and Web Design
- CM 306 - Studies in Mass Communication

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

CM 203 Communications & Media 3 Credits
Prerequisite: None
This course will examine theories and concepts of communication as well as the terminology of recent debates concerning issues such as the relationship between “high” and “popular” culture; how gender, class, sexuality, ethnicity and race shape and are shaped by visual culture; and the impact of new media and information technology.

CM 301 Mass Media Ethics: Issues, Cases and Moral Reasoning 3 Credits
Prerequisite: None
This course is designed to give students an understanding of what it means to act “ethically,” the tools to identify and analyze ethical issues, and knowledge of the ethical norms of print and broadcast journalism, photojournalism, advertising and public relations. It will examine various ethical decision-making models, theories and problems through selected case studies both from the textbook, supplemental readings and current events. After completing this course, students should be able to apply ethical theories, values and principles to the mass media, while developing their own ethical foundations and identities.

CM 302 Communication Theory and Web Design 3 Credits
Prerequisite: None
This course examines the role of the designer in interpreting and presenting data as clear and meaningful visual communication for the web. Particular emphasis is placed on core theories and techniques including website aesthetics, information architecture, page layouts, and user research. Each will be discussed as well as practiced.

CM 304 Global Culture and Diversity 3 Credits
Prerequisite: Completion of at least one 200 level Communication and Media course
The contemporary world features astonishing cultural diversity, easily accessed through communication networks and international trade. This course will examine classical and contemporary theories of cultural development and its stages, as well as problems posed by global diversity: inequality, imperialism, miscommunication, and intercultural strife.

Note: For requirement purposes CM 304 is the equivalent to SOC 304.

CM 306 Studies in Mass Communication 3 Credits
Prerequisite: Completion of at least one 200 level Communication and Media course
This course examines the historical development of print, broadcast and digital media as well as major theories of communication. Topics will include political and social effects, propaganda and public opinion, and information versus entertainment.
CM 307       Studies in Personality and Culture            3 Credits
Prerequisite: Completion of at least one 200 level Communication and Media course
Culture is expressed through individual personalities, the product of both genetic unfolding and interaction with others in a specific cultural context. While a means of communication, language is also a way of organizing perception and understanding. In this course students will study the interaction between broad genotypes, individual personality, communication and culture.

CM 308       Studies in Urbanization                     3 Credits
Prerequisite: Completion of at least one 200 level Communication and Media course
This course emphasizes the study of cities and societies from a variety of perspectives, and examines a broad range of theoretical and practical public policy issues, including race and gender, immigration patterns, economic growth and decay, and population distribution.

CM 309       Studies in Communication and Cultural Change 3 Credits
Prerequisite: Completion of at least one 200 level Communication and Media course
This course examines cultural change resulting from new technologies, scientific discoveries, demographic changes, political conflict, and changes in the environment. Special emphasis will be given to how effective communication can help to resolve (and miscommunication can escalate) conflicts and stresses arising from such change.

CM 411       Advanced Research Methods                  3 Credits
Prerequisite: Completion of at least 15 credits of level 300 CM courses
This course aims to enhance and extend the methodological competencies developed in the first research course, with an emphasis on development of advanced skills in research design and analysis and application of these competencies to complex research questions. Students will learn how to select appropriate strategies, coordinate project planning and lead a research team. Methods for the effective communication of research findings, including writing about the research process and graphic representation of data, will be emphasized. Two major research projects will be required, the second of which provides a foundation for the Senior Research Project.

Note: For requirement purposes CM 411 is the equivalent to SOC 302.

CM 490       Selected Topics in Communication and Culture 3 Credits
Prerequisite: Completion of at least 15 credits of level 300 CM courses
A course offering qualified students the opportunity to study special topics within fields that may vary from semester to semester.

CM 491       Independent Research                       3 Credits
Prerequisite: Completion of at least 15 credits of level 300 CM courses
Independent research or project under faculty guidance. Written contract and report required.

CM 499       Senior Research Project                    3 Credits
Prerequisite: Completion of at least 15 credits of level 300 CM courses
All students will complete a senior research project under the direction of a faculty mentor. This capstone project builds upon work done in previous courses, allowing students to apply methods of scholarly and/or action research to issues of their own choosing. Work will be shared in a virtual "commons" open to all faculty and students working in the concentration.

CM 333       Communication in Business and Industry (Corporate Communications) 3 Credits
Prerequisite: None
This course is an overview of the various areas where media professionals must perform in a corporate or institutional environment to promote a brand or product, to specific, varied publics. In many ways the skills and practices of traditional Public Relations apply to Corporate Communications, however the nuances of dealing with different publics that the corporate communicator need to interact with, require careful study and consideration.

The importance of learning and mastering the skills involved in branding, promoting and protecting a brand – whether it is a breakfast cereal, an athlete or a candidate for president – are increasingly important and valuable in the current state of every organization and industry.
CM 200  Introduction to Design  3 Credits
Prerequisite: None
Design is a process of purposeful creation: A specific response to a specific event. This course is an introduction to the fundamentals of visual design and software skills. Throughout the semester we will explore the aesthetics and techniques of design and visual communication. Lectures, demonstrations and projects will allow students to build and manipulate both vector and bitmap graphics. Course projects will teach the logic and process of visual communication for print and online media, build fluency in design principles, and ready the student for the vibrant world in which design software is used.

CM 311  Writing for New Electronic Media  3 Credits
Prerequisite: None
A writing intensive content creation course designed to teach competence in writing for recently evolved electronic media and to foster an understanding of the theory and practice of writing for those media. The course will cover writing content for Internet news, Internet information, as well as writing content for such applications as wikis, blogs, podcasts, vlogs, and webisodes. Other applications may include techniques for writing instant messages, writing headlines for news alerts, and some writing applications for other hand-held electronic devices. Students will individually create blogs, podcasts, Internet news items, and other content. As groups, they will participate in discussion boards, create wikis, webisodes, and online newscasts.

RM 201  Introduction to Research Methods  3 Credits
Prerequisite: None
This course provides an introduction to research approaches characteristic of the social and behavioral sciences. These involve observations of behavior and other strategies that result in descriptive accounts, including field studies, content analysis, and surveys. Statistical methods for analyzing descriptive data, including measures of central tendency and variability and graphing will be included, along with questions about validity and research ethics. The course engages students in the planning, conducting, reporting and evaluation of research.

ORGD 341  Organizational Change and Leadership  3 Credits
Prerequisite: None
This course is designed to provide students with a conceptual framework and fundamental practical skills needed to plan, design, implement, and manage effective change within organizations. Specific attention is given to processes for assessing organizational functioning from a systems perspective, evaluating drivers of change and change strategies, and taking or leading action. Discover how to initiate and implement change, create solutions, and empower and motivate others to take action.