

# Media Communications with an Emphasis in Media Literacy (B.A.)

## Program Description

Students of media literacy apply critical thinking skills in analyzing the source of much of our information: the media. The emphasis in media literacy consists of the following areas of study: an awareness of the impact of the media on the individual and society; an understanding of the process of mass communication; the development of critical approaches with which to analyze and discuss media messages; an awareness of media content as a "text" that provides insight into our contemporary culture and ourselves; an awareness of the depiction of diverse groups within a culture by the media; and the cultivation of an enhanced enjoyment, understanding, and appreciation of media content.

## Locations

To learn where the B.A. in media communications is offered, please visit our Web site at [www.webster.edu/ugcatalog/comm\\_journ.html](http://www.webster.edu/ugcatalog/comm_journ.html)

## Portfolio Review Course Requirements

MEDC 1630 Media Literacy  
MEDC 2800 Cultural Diversity in the Media  
MEDC 3190 Introduction to Media Research

## Degree Requirements

51 required credit hours  
36 general education credit hours  
41 elective credit hours

## Required Courses

EPMD 1000 Introduction to Media Production	3 hours
MEDC 1010 Introduction to Mass Communications	3 hours
MEDC 1050 Introduction to Media Writing	3 hours
MEDC 1630 Media Literacy	3 hours
MEDC 2200 Ethics in the Media	3 hours
MEDC 2800 Cultural Diversity in the Media	3 hours
MEDC 3190 Introduction to Media Research	3 hours
MEDC 3900 Studies in Media Literacy	3 hours
MEDC 4100 The Law and the Media	3 hours
MEDC 4190 Media Research Methodologies	3 hours
MEDC 4620 Senior Overview*	3 hours
MEDC 4850 Seminar in Media Studies	3 hours

\*Capstone Course

A minimum of 15 credit hours must be chosen from the following:

MEDC 1500 Applied Media Aesthetics	3 hours
MEDC 3500 Political Communications	3 hours
SPCM 3600 Rhetoric	3 hours
MEDC 3700 Topics in International Communications	3 hours
MEDC 3800 Studies in Cultural Diversity	3 hours
MEDC 3850 Television: A Critical Study	3 hours
MEDC 3900 Studies in Media Literacy	3 hours
MEDC 4220 Genre Studies	3 hours
MEDC 4440 Patterns of Media Ownership	3 hours
JOUR 4500 Media Criticism for Publication	3 hours

## Course Descriptions

### EPMD 1000 Introduction to Media Production (3)

Students learn the basics of media production using the media tools of photography, film, video, audio production, and interactive media. Students apply these fundamentals by participating in hands-on group projects.

### JOUR 4500 Media Criticism for Publication (3)

Students learn to research and write media analysis within a journalism format. Students learn about the techniques of writing media literacy analysis designed for popular consumption in newspapers, magazines, and online publications. Students will analyze the content of news and entertainment media and prepare articles based on this research for publication. Prerequisite: JOUR 3130, MEDC 3190, or permission of instructor.

### MEDC 1010 Introduction to Mass Communications (3)

Students learn the history, development, and impact of the mass media, including print, photography, film, radio, and television and digital media. The course focuses on communication theories and research, media systems, structure and ethics, the relationship between the media and society, and future directions in media communications.

### MEDC 1050 Introduction to Media Writing (3)

Students learn the basics of media writing formats, the style, structure, and techniques involved in print journalism, scriptwriting, advertising, public relations writing, critical writing, and writing for the computer screen.

### MEDC 1500 Applied Media Aesthetics (3)

Students learn the basic aesthetic principles involved in the production of visual media by analyzing the various audio and visual stimuli that become elements of photography, video, or film forms; their nature; how these elements function individually and together; how they may be used creatively; and how a viewer may perceive them. Students learn the aesthetics of light, color, space, time, motion, and sound. Prerequisite: EPMD 1000.

### MEDC 1630 Media Literacy (3)

Students learn to systematically decode, evaluate, and analyze information conveyed through the channels of mass communication. They learn the process, language, and effects of the media and develop a critical awareness of messages conveyed through channels of mass communications, as reflected in children's programming, advertising, journalism, and political communications.

### MEDC 2200 Ethics in the Media (3)

Students learn the ethical considerations applied to journalism, broadcast journalism, photography, audio, film, video, interactive digital media, the internet, public relations, and advertising. Students learn to analyze the ethical dilemmas facing media professionals. Prerequisite: MEDC 1010.

### MEDC 2800 Cultural Diversity in the Media (3)

Students learn how the media portrays images, messages, and impact regarding race, gender, class, and sexual orientation, and how groups that are marginalized in the media affect the economics and history of the industry. Students investigate the multiple ways that they have learned about cultural diversity through personal reflection, formal education, and the media.

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### **MEDC 3190 Introduction to Media Research (3)**

Students learn qualitative and quantitative media research methodologies, including content analysis, focus groups, and field research. The course provides strategies and methodologies for examining the process and impact of the media. Prerequisite: MEDC 1010.

### **MEDC 3500 Political Communications (3)**

Students learn the role of the media on the American political process. Topics include the history and evolution of political media, the role of the press and its influence on the political process, and how media strategies are created, developed, and produced. Political advertising campaigns are analyzed. Prerequisite: MEDC 1010.

### **MEDC 3700 Topics in International Communications (3)**

Students learn the cultural aspects of international media communications; international advertising; international public relations; international communications as a political tool; international communications and cultural stereotypes; and media systems as a reflection of a country's cultural, political, and economic structures. Prerequisites may vary with topic. May be repeated once for credit if content differs.

### **MEDC 3800 Studies in Cultural Diversity (3)**

Students learn the relationship between the media and the issue of cultural diversity in the United States. Students consider media coverage of groups, including people of color, gays and lesbians, women, and ethnic groups. Students learn a framework for examining the impact of media coverage of these groups on society, and explores issues related to the role and responsibilities of the media in this area. Prerequisite: MEDC 2800. May be repeated for credit if content differs. Cross-listed with SPCM 3800.

### **MEDC 3850 Television: A Critical Study (3)**

Students learn how the medium of television affects human thinking and behavior within the context of American culture. Students investigate and study questions elicited through reading, discussion, and research. Prerequisite: MEDC 1010.

### **MEDC 3900 Studies in Media Literacy (3)**

Students learn the social issues embedded in media literacy analysis by studying case studies, the operation of specific media, and significant developments in the field. Prerequisite: MEDC 1630. May be repeated for credit if content differs.

### **MEDC 4100 The Law and the Media (3)**

Students learn the specifics of First Amendment freedoms and the laws that restrict or regulate the flow of information in American society, libel and privacy torts, information access problems, shield laws, broadcast regulation, copyright laws, and constraints on political communication and advertising. Junior or senior standing is advised.

### **MEDC 4190 Media Research Methodologies (3)**

Students learn specific methodologies in media research and design and implement a research plan. Topics vary and may include applied research in advertising and public relations or theoretical research including media literacy, content analysis, etc. Prerequisite: MEDC 3190 or permission of instructor. May be repeated for credit if content differs.

### **MEDC 4220 Genre Studies (3)**

This course offers an in-depth study of genres that appear in the media, such as reality shows, film noir, and the evening news. Students learn a range of approaches to the study of genre, including: formulaic, ideological, historical, cultural, and audience response analysis. Students conduct primary research on a particular genre using selected approaches. Prerequisite: MEDC 3190.

### **MEDC 4440 Patterns of Ownership in Media (3)**

Students learn the impact of media economics on content by studying media ownership patterns, such as state-run, state-owned, privately owned, and individually owned systems, and topics such as cross-promotion, conflicts of interest, bottom-line programming decisions, and internal organizational/staffing decisions. Students study the recent concentration of media ownership. Other topics include: historical context, international trends, regulations, and issues of gender and diversity in ownership and management. Students will conduct primary research focusing on one of these topics.

### **MEDC 4620 Senior Overview (3-6)**

Provides an opportunity for seniors to demonstrate their proficiency in a selected area or media. The student assumes responsibility for the production of a project under the direction of a faculty member. Projects may include an exhibit or a thesis. Prerequisites: senior standing, acceptance into the major through portfolio review, and permission of the instructor.

### **MEDC 4850 Seminar in Media Studies (3)**

Advanced media literacy students consider issues related to media theory and criticism and learn how media literacy theories were developed and what these theories reveal about individual media. May include topics such as photographic theory and criticism or film theory and criticism. Prerequisite may vary with the topic. May be repeated for credit if content differs.

### **SPCM 3600 Rhetoric (3)**

Students learn the role language and argument play in message formation and communication strategies by tracing the development of rhetoric from the ancient Greeks to modern public address. The course also considers theoretical criticism, recurring problems in the grounding, status, and application of constructs in rhetorical theory, and the emerging functions of rhetorical theory and criticism. Students will analyze films, social movements, speeches, and other rhetorical films.