

# DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

as of 04/23/09

## UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS - FALL SEMESTER, 2009

(All courses carry 3-credits unless otherwise indicated)

\*Course Eligibilities are as of April 2009 and are subject to change.

### **118: Introduction to Interpersonal Communication**

**Cronen 304 Machmer**

Lecture. Our focus will be on acquiring a principled understanding of everyday, person-to-person interaction conceived as the process by which we create, maintain, and manage social experience. (Course capacity is LEC 1 (COMM)= 75, LEC 2 (Freshmen & Sophomores)=150/Total=225--Lecture 1 and Lecture 2 meet at the same time in the same room.

**Course Eligibility\*:** LEC 1=Students who are already COMM majors, LEC 2=Open to Sophomores & Freshmen or a Junior who is taking or has taken COMM 121.

**Course Notes:** COMM 118 is one of the 2 COMM courses that are prerequisites for applying to the COMM major. (The other prerequisite courses are COMM 121 and any "R2" course.)

### **121: Introduction to Media and Culture**

**Yousman**

Lecture. This course is an introduction to the social and cultural roles of mass media in advanced, industrial Western societies (primarily in the U.S.), focusing on how media and their surrounding economic framework affect cultural, political, and ideological processes. We will examine a range of media forms in social historical context (including print, telegraphy, cinema, broadcasting, cable, and computing), and will also consider different theoretical approaches to the study of media influence, the formation of meaning, and cultural power. (Course capacity is LEC 1 (COMM)= 100, LEC 2 (Freshmen & Sophomores) =200/ Total=300--Lecture 1 and Lecture 2 meet at the same time in the same room.

**Course Eligibility\*:** LEC 1=Students who are already COMM majors, LEC 2=Open to Sophomores & Freshmen or a Junior who is taking or has taken COMM 118.

**Course Notes:** COMM 121 is one of the 2 COMM courses that are prerequisites for applying to the COMM major. (The other prerequisite courses are COMM 118 and any "R2" course.)

### **212: Cultural Codes in Communication**

**(Global Ed or Gen Ed SBG)**

**Bailey 307A Machmer**

Lecture, discussion. Communication as it creates, maintains, and transforms cultural identities, and, in turn, culture as it creates, maintains, and transforms communication. Grounded in the substantive patterns of communication from areas such as Europe, the Middle East, Africa, the Caribbean, Polynesia, and the Far East. (Course capacity is 150 Total/6 discussions @25)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Sophomores & Freshmen

**Class Notes:** Formerly numbered 312. If you have taken COMM 312: Cultural Codes in Communication, you cannot take COMM 212.

### **222: Media Programming and Institutions**

**Morgan 317 Machmer**

Lecture. An introduction to the entire media programming process, with a special focus on the institutional structures and constraints that shape the content of the electronic media. We will consider a variety of historical, technological, cultural, legal, political, economic, ethical, and other factors that influence programming, especially in terms of how they are playing out on the currently unfolding media scene. We will explore dynamic interactions among communications institutions and industries, new technologies, and governmental and other regulatory bodies, all in terms of their impact on the production, distribution, and consumption of electronic media content. (Course capacity is 229)

**Course Eligibility\*:** COMM & Undeclared majors or students who have already taken COMM 118 or 121.

**226: Social Impact of Mass Media**

**Yousman**

Lecture, discussion. This course explores the influence of the mass media on the social world, particularly the media's impact on audiences. We will investigate various approaches utilized to determine if, when, and how media influence viewers, listeners, and readers. We will examine this issue from both scientific and cultural studies perspectives. Some of the questions we will consider include: How does television violence impact on society and individuals? Can watching sex on television and film lead to teenage promiscuity? Are political advertisements and news coverage creating a more or less informed voter? How do people make sense of the media in their lives? The focus of this course is to understand how these questions are studied and what, if any, conclusions can be drawn from such research. (Course capacity is 30)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Communication majors only

**231: Film & Television Production Concepts**

**Geisler 411 Machmer**

Lecture, discussion. This class provides an overview of film and television production principles and processes from script to screen and also prepares students for later hands-on production courses. We will explore both the art and craft of film and video production, including the roles and functions of the major creative and technical personnel in the scripting/pre-production, production and post-production phases. Technical aspects such as digital vs. analog media, lighting, lenses, types of film and videotape, crew organization and function, editing concepts, sound recording, etc. will be discussed, as well as creative functions such as dramatic and documentary structure, creating characters, acting for the screen, visualization and composition for the camera and more. (Course capacity is 150)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to COMM & Undeclared majors, or to students who have already taken COMM 118 or 121.

**Course Notes:** Formerly numbered COMM 297D. If you have already taken COMM 297D you cannot take this course.

**240: Modes of Film Communication**

**Shimpach 410 Machmer**

Lecture, lab (screening). The nature and functions of film, including narrative and non-narrative approaches to film communication. Topics will include: the components of film expression (composition, movement, editing, sound, directing, and acting); designs in screen narrative; film's relationship to other arts and media; and the role of film as an instrument of social reflection and change. (Course capacity is 125)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Seniors, Juniors & Sophomores only.

**250: Interpersonal Communication (FOR NON-MAJORS ONLY!)**

**(SB) Staff**

Lecture, discussion. Focus on acquiring a principled understanding of person-to-person interaction conceived as the process by which we create, maintain, and manage social reality. Beginning from this perspective the course will provide the vocabulary and concepts that will enable the student to account for, analyze, and evaluate current interpersonal communication practice. (Course capacity is 50 Total/2 sections @ 25)

**Course Eligibility\*:** For Non-majors.

**Course Notes:** Students who are planning to apply to the COMM major should take COMM 118, not COMM 250.

**260: Public Speaking**

**Staff**

**Gencarella, Course Director-414 Machmer**

Lecture, lab. Theory of speech composition, presentation, and evaluation, and its relation to public discourse. Application of theory through the presentation of several speeches. Requirements include frequent in-class speaking assignments and related practices. (Course capacity is 150 Total/6 sections @ 25)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Communication majors & Senior Non-majors

**265: Democracy and Discourse**

**Moreira 313A Machmer**

Lecture. This course examines democracy as a lived experience and a communicative practice, not simply a system of government. Democracy is conceptualized as a performance and achievement of rhetoric, acts of artistry with social and political consequences. Draws from discourse on democracy from ancient Greece, contemporary America (including the media), and other societies throughout the world. We critically examine several sites of tension within democratic performances. Course formerly numbered COMM 297C. (Course capacity is 300)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to COMM & Undeclared majors and others by permission of instructor.

**287: Advertising as Social Communication**

**Jhally 302 Machmer**

ON-LINE. This course will be taught "On-Line" with IN-CLASS exams. This course looks at advertising from the viewpoint of SOCIAL THEORY, that is, of how we can understand advertising's broad political, economic, social, and cultural role in modern society. The course will broadly examine the social role of advertising in consumer societies with a central focus its relationship to: the construction of individual identity, the quest for happiness; the evolving environmental crisis based on depleting resources and climate change; the process of globalization; the commercial-ization of childhood; the definition of health and wellness; and the crisis of financial debt. This course is NOT a course in HOW to advertise. It does not approach advertising from a practitioner's viewpoint. (Course capacity is 800 Total/2 sections @ 400)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Any student

**Course Notes:** This course is being taught principally in an on-line format. All lectures will be available as streaming video on the internet. A high-speed connection is required. There will be two in-class exams and a final exam that students have to attend on the UMass-Amherst campus. **Please note that the two exams during the semester will take place on a Friday evening, and at least one of them will take place from 9-11pm.** Once the course shows up on your SPARK account at the start of the semester, all materials can be accessed on-line. Watch the introductory video and read the syllabus on the course home page on SPARK. All relevant information will be provided to students via their UMass email address (@student.umass.edu). Students have the responsibility of regularly checking mail at this address.

**296F: INDSTU-FilmFestival**

**Ciecko 306 Machmer**

**This is a 1-credit Mandatory Pass/Fail course**

Film screening. This semester's festival colloquium will be held in conjunction with the New Asia Cinema film festival. To earn 1 credit (pass/fail), students are required to attend at least 7 festival events and complete surveys at the end of the screening. (Course capacity is 50)

**Course Eligibility\*:** All majors; no prerequisites

**297P: Special Topic-Career Workshop**

**Joyner Career Services/Goodell Bldg.**

**This is a 1-credit Mandatory Pass/Fail course**

**Course Eligibility\*:** Seniors & Juniors in the College of Social & Behavioral Science

**297X: Special Topic-Gender, Sex and Representation**

**Jhally 302 Machmer**

Lecture. This course will examine the relationship between commercialized systems of representation and the way that gender and sexuality are thought of and organized in the culture. In particular, we will look at how commercial imagery impacts upon gender identity and the process of gender socialization. Central to this discussion will be the related issues of sexuality and sexual representation (and the key role played by advertising). Course capacity is 229).

**Course Eligibility\*:** Communication majors

**Class Notes:** If you have taken COMM 387: Advertising & Public Relations as Social Control before the Spring 2008 semester, you should not take COMM 297X.

**318: Comparative Communication Theory**

**Chang 310 Machmer**

Lecture, discussion. Current approaches to communication theory. Emphasis on a comparative approach to communication problems, and on a critical analysis of theoretical foundations. Theories considered include: systems theory, 20th-century rhetorics, reductionism, ethnographic studies, critical indicators, and critical cultural studies. (Course capacity is 25)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior & Junior Communication majors only.

**331: Program Process in Television**

**Staff**

**Course Director: David Maxcy, Herter TV Studio**

Lecture, studio. Introduction to concepts and techniques of television production, through lectures, lab exercises, and guided production projects. All 3 sections will meet together once a week for a 50-minute lecture with the course director. Each section (@12 students) will then meet once a week for a 3-hour lab session. (Course capacity is 36)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior, Junior & Sophomore Communication majors

**334: Media History and Communication Policy**

**Hanson 301 Machmer**

Lecture. The purpose of this course is to examine media development and communication policies that have influenced their use. Students will: (1) Explore the technical, political, economic, and cultural approaches that have influenced the emergence and growth of electronic media, (2) Broadly examine their social force, and (3) Historically situate different electronic forms from the telegraph and telephone, to broadcast technologies, satellites, cell phones, and the Internet. (Course capacity is 150).

**Course Prerequisite(s):** Open to Senior & Junior Communication majors and IT minors, other students by permission of Instructor

**340: Film History I**

**Norden 409 Machmer**

Lecture, lab (screening). A survey of key events and representative films that mark the history of motion pictures in the United States and other countries to 1950. In addition to identifying and providing access to major works, the course is designed to facilitate the study of the various influences (industrial, technological, aesthetic, social, cultural, and political) that have shaped the evolution of the medium to the advent of television. (Course capacity is 50)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior & Junior Communication majors, other students by permission of instructor

**375: Writing as Communication**

**Staff**

**Gencarella, Course Director – 414 Machmer**

Lecture, discussion, lab. Development and improvement of the student's writing, research, and critical-thinking skills. Frequent writing/editing assignments. Writing/discussion will focus on contemporary issues in communication and their larger cultural contexts. Fulfills COMM writing requirement. Double majors may fulfill their COMM writing requirement by fulfilling the requirement in their other major. (Course capacity is 100 Total/5 sections @ 20)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior & Junior Communication majors

**Course Notes:** Restricted to **Communication** Seniors and Juniors only.

**391C: Seminar-Media Audiences**

**West 303 Machmer**

Lecture, discussion. Audiences for mass media are notoriously difficult to define, find, and study because they are dispersed, shifting, and interact with media in complex ways. This course will look at how both the academy and media industries come to claim knowledge and understanding of audiences, in terms of their theoretical and methodological approaches. Topics will include debates about audience power and activity, audience segmentation, how audiences have changed over time, rhetorical uses of "the audience," and the distinction between audiences and markets. Students will carry out some form of audience research themselves during the semester. (Course capacity is 43)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Senior & Junior COMM majors

**Course Notes:** If you have already taken COMM 497BB-ST-Media Audiences you cannot take this course.

**393C: Seminar-Issues in World Cinema: World Music and Film**

**Ciecko 306 Machmer**

Lecture, discussion, screening. This course will focus of the use of music in relation to the moving image, with an emphasis on international and intercultural film and video. Topics to be considered include film music (scores and soundtracks); onscreen performances by musical artists; documentaries about musicians and music culture; musical film genres (musicals, music videos, etc.); interconnections between music and filmic elements such as narrative and editing; world/popular music and film industries; inter-artistic collaborations; live musical accompaniment for film screenings and multimedia events. This interdisciplinary film studies course will be grounded in theory and development of critical and analytical skills, and there will also be opportunities for hands-on practical and creative projects. There is no additional lab screening section; students will be required to attend a number of out-of-class screening/performance events throughout the semester from a list of choices. (Course capacity is 40)

**Course Eligibility\*:** All majors; no prerequisites.

**397AB: Special Topic- Convergent Media for Social & Political Mobilization**

**Fuentes-Bautista 308 Machmer**

Lecture, discussion. An increasing number of activist organizations around the world are using convergent media to communicate, collaborate, and demonstrate. This course focuses on the use of traditional and emerging media technologies for social and political organizing and mobilization, from cell-phone coordinated protest to the use of social networking spaces for campaigns. Drawing on technology studies, social movement research, and alternative media literature, we will examine national and international cases that illustrate how activist groups combine second generation, Internet-based applications (social networking, peer-to-peer networks, social tagging, vlogging) with traditional media to build their communication repertoires. We interrogate the concept, historical roots and participatory potential of convergent media, reflecting on their relation to larger social forces. As a part of the overall course, we will assess and discuss how activist organizations in the Pioneer Valley use new and old media in their advocacy efforts. The course can be taken for Honors credit or as a Community Service Learning component. This course offers a combination of theory, reflection, and experiences for students who are engaged in projects or are considering careers in non-profit, communal and public interest organizations. (Course capacity is 43)

**Course Prerequisite(s):** COMM 222

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior and Junior Communication majors and others by permission of instructor.

**397AE: Special Topic-Media and the Global City**

**Chakravartty 305 Machmer**

Lecture, discussion. This course introduces students to think about the relationship between the media, politics and culture in contemporary global cities. We will first identify what we mean historically by the rise of the global city from Lagos to London and Dubai to Los Angeles. Throughout the course, we will consider the role of film, television, and mobile media in both shaping and representing common themes including: economic inequality, spatial dislocations, migration, transnational consumer culture, violence and fear, and social movements and social justice. This course will require reading and attending classes regularly. Students with a background and interest in international and global studies are encouraged to enroll. Open to Senior and Junior Communication majors and majors from other Social Sciences and Humanities departments, with permission of instructor. (Course capacity is 43)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Senior and Junior Communication majors and others by permission of instructor

**397AF: Special Topic-History of American Film**

**Anderson**

Lecture, discussion. In this course we will study motion picture production in the United States since the early 1880s on up to contemporary forms of digital cinema. Our approach will be both aesthetic as well as social, considering artistic and technical developments that advanced the medium, as well as cultural and financial trends that influenced films' production and reception. We will thus consult a variety of research methods, questioning their authors' interests and conclusions, as we evaluate broader notions of recording history, appreciating art, and understanding society through motion pictures. (Course capacity is 25)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Senior and Junior Communication majors and others by permission of instructor

**397B: Special Topic-Introduction to Studio Directing**

**Maxcy Herter TV Studio**

Lecture, studio. Students will learn basic concepts and techniques of studio television production, with a focus on directing live programs in a full-scale studio facility on the UMASS campus. The course includes lecture presentations, production exercises, script-writing projects, and studio production projects. Each student will write, produce, and direct two live studio productions. (Course capacity is 10)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior, Junior & Sophomore Communication majors only.

**Course Notes:** *If have taken COMM 433 you CANNOT take this course.*

**397CC: Introduction to Video Art Production: Adaptation**

**Bernadine Mellis/5-College Faculty**

Lecture, Lab. This course provides a foundation in the principles, techniques, and equipment involved in making short video adaptations. Working with already existing texts (short stories, plays, poems, novel excerpts, films, songs, news stories, etc.), students will develop their own projects. The course will introduce students to the following: developing a viable story idea and script from another author's text; working with actors; dramatic structure and its relationship to cinematography; aesthetics and mechanics of shooting; the role of sound; and the conceptual and technical underpinnings of digital editing. We will do several very short exercises early in the semester, working towards a longer final piece. The larger objective of the course is to gain proficiency in the language of moving images by looking at other media through the prism of film. In this way, we will develop our ability to tell stories in cinematic terms. Registration by permission of instructor. See the Comm 397CC course listing at [www.umass.edu/film](http://www.umass.edu/film) for an application.

### **397F: Special Topic-Media Ethics**

**Yousman**

Lecture, discussion. In this course we will look at the ethical dilemmas those of us who are involved with mass media communication face on a regular basis. Students will learn various ways to evaluate ethical options, and various perspectives and factors to consider when making a decision. Students will also learn how to debunk myths and stereotypes, and how to detect various types of bias that influence news coverage. We will examine current events as they pertain to ethics, and explore such important issues as checkbook journalism, conflict of interest, media consolidation, and the right to privacy versus the public's right to know. (Course capacity is 25).

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior & Junior Communication majors only

### **397LL: Special Topic-Health Communication**

**Suopis**

Lecture, discussion. This course addresses health issues from interpersonal, mass media and critical communication perspectives. Communication theories will be applied to a variety of health issues including the physician-patient relationship, the design of health media campaigns, the pharmaceutical industry, and the influence of health promotion on human behavior. Intercultural and organizational health communication will also be discussed. (Course capacity is 30)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior & Junior Communication majors only

### **397MM: Special Topic-Culture and the News**

Lecture, discussion. Culture and the News examines the social, political, economic, legal, ethical, moral, and cultural elements that comprise what is routinely called "news" in the U.S. The course asks questions about the news-gathering process, historical ideas and attitudes about news, and whether news maintains or questions the status quo, forwards specific agendas, or functions as a neutral arbiter of "facts," truth," and "information." (Course capacity is 43)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior & Junior Communication majors only

### **397SS: Special Topic-Youth, Democracy and the Entertainment Industries**

**Saxe**

Lecture, discussion. The entertainment industries are inordinately focused on young people as they represent a tremendous market force. Yet how do the imperatives of this market-driven media culture correspond with principles of democracy? As an action research course, the mapping of key features of this terrain --- youth socialization, advertising and consumption; media oligopoly and cross-marketing; cultural appropriation and hip hop; cable, the internet and government regulation -- will guide applied research around particular sites of power we've identified. This may include an assessment of youth aggregate purchasing power in Massachusetts, Comcast costs and profits, university investments in the entertainment industries, and a survey of political initiatives for media democracy. (Course capacity is 30)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior & Junior Communication majors only

### **441: Principles and Techniques of Film Style Production**

**Geisler 411 Machmer**

Lecture, studio. A hands-on introduction to single-camera filmmaking using digital video camcorders (electronic field production) or 16mm cameras and non-linear (computer-based) editing. Students will learn concepts of pre-production, shot composition, lighting, visual storytelling, continuity editing, and production & post production audio as they plan, shoot and edit exercises and complete projects. A "real world" editing project (scenes from an episode of "Highlander") will also be included. (Course capacity is 12)

**Course Prerequisites:** COMM 231 or COMM 331 or permission of instructor.

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior & Junior Communication majors

**Course Notes:** Junior and Senior COMM majors who have completed either COMM 231 or COMM 331 may add this course through Spire. Others may add only by permission of the instructor.

#### **491C: Seminar-Media & Children's Culture**

**Phillips**

Seminar. In this seminar, we will consider how children make meaning of and navigate through their complex relationships with media and consumer culture, as well as the implications of those relationships for children's individual and collective well-being. We will draw on social and cultural theory and research to examine a wide range of topics, including: the nature and politics of children's programming; gendered toys and games; the sexualization and commodification of children in advertising; psychological, social, and familial impacts of marketing strategies aimed at children; media portrayals of childhood disorders; depictions of race, class, gender, and sexuality in ads, programming, fairy tales, and classroom materials; cultural, environmental, and health consequences of childhood consumerism; the roles of various media in the construction of adolescent identity; the possibilities of early media literacy; and the lived realities of children around the world whose labor creates the products promoted to children in Western cultures. Throughout the course, we will ask ourselves: What is child culture? How have our cultural constructions of childhood shaped our sense of who children are, what they need, and what type of developmental environments we, as a society, should provide for them?

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior and Junior Communication majors and others by permission of instructor.

#### **491S: Seminar-Introduction to Semiotics**

**Chang 310 Machmer**

Lecture, Discussion. Semiotics is the study of meaning within society. It deepens our understanding of culture, communication and philosophy, and provides us with a theoretical and practical framework for analyzing the world. The course will introduce and develop the semiotic approach, using literature, politics, film, TV, music, and our everyday surroundings and conversations. (Course capacity is 20)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Senior Communication majors

#### **493E/1: Seminar-Screenwriting**

**Norden 409 Machmer**

Lecture, discussion. An examination of the art, craft, and business of screenwriting from theoretical and practical perspectives. Topics include screenplay format and structure, story, plot and character development, dialog and scene description, visual storytelling, pace and rhythm, analysis of professional and student scripts and films, and more. Written work includes three screenwriting projects. The focus is on writing for narrative films and, to a limited extent, TV programs. (Course capacity is 20)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior & Junior Communication majors only.

#### **493E/2: Seminar-Screenwriting**

**Geisler 411 Machmer**

Lecture, discussion. An examination of the art, craft, and business of screenwriting from theoretical and practical perspectives. Topics include screenplay format and structure, story, plot and character development, dialog and scene description, visual storytelling, pace and rhythm, analysis of professional and student scripts and films, and more. Written work includes three screenwriting projects. The focus is on writing for narrative films and, to a limited extent, TV programs. (Course capacity is 20)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior & Junior Communication majors only.

#### **493F: Seminar-Film Documentary**

**Geisler 411 Machmer**

Lecture, discussion. This course combines critical analysis with a hands-on introduction to producing a documentary. Students will view, analyze, and critique all or part of fifteen works by filmmakers from Robert Flaherty ("Nanook of the North") to Morgan Spurlock ("Supersize Me"), to further their understanding of the documentarian's craft and art. Students will also do pre-production (research and scripting) on their own short documentary, along with shorter hands-on exercises in writing narration, interview techniques, use of archival sources, etc. (Course capacity is 20)

**Course Prerequisite:** COMM 240 or COMM 297D or COMM 340 or COMM 342 or COMM 493E or consent of instructor.

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior & Junior Communication majors

\*Course Eligibility subject to change, check SPIRE

**497AB: Special Topic-Hollywood Film, Diversity and Adaptation**

**Shabazz 408 Machmer**

Lecture, discussion. This course aims to inspire the development of a critical vocabulary for analysis of the formal conventions of film, especially as they bear on literary discourse. In addition, this course will focus on cinematic and literary works that articulate or express specific notions of American identity in terms of race, class, and gender. This class will look specifically at how the film industry negotiates specific literary narratives about identity within American society as a means of adapting the texts to the big screen. (Course capacity is 25)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Senior and Junior Communication majors or by permission of instructor

**497AD: Special Topic-Cinematic Bodies in Cross-Cultural Perspective**

**Anderson**

Lecture, discussion. This course addresses how culture affects body imagery in cinema. By examining feature, avant-garde, and documentary forms of cinema – from countries around the world - we will examine the relationship between specific socio-cultural definitions for a variety of bodies (the masculine, the feminine, the erotic, the divine, the diseased, the social, the reproductive, the cyborg, etc.) and how these vary in different national cinemas. The course adopts an interdisciplinary approach, drawing from writings in cinema studies, communication, anthropology, art history, media studies, and science. (Course capacity is 25)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Senior and Junior Communication majors or by permission of instructor

**497BH: Special Topic-Media Literacy and Community Media**

**Cooks 315 Machmer**

Lecture, discussion. In this course you will learn how to help build civic engagement using non-mainstream community media by teaching media literacy and production skills to youth in local middle schools in Holyoke. The course is intended for students who are interested in connecting critical ideas about race and identity to issues of civic engagement through the creation of a more literate and critically minded young viewer. We will take what we learn beyond the classroom by teaching and learning from kids about representations of race, ethnicity, and nationality within the media and how it impacts society. In addition we will help guide and prepare the middle-school students to create their own short programs for broadcast on Amherst Community Television. Permission and admission to enroll will be granted on the basis of instructor consent. Students should speak with instructors prior to the end of Fall registration. (Course capacity is 25)

**Course Prerequisite(s):** Consent of Instructor

**Course Eligibility\*:** Consent of instructor

**Course Notes:** The course will be taught by Professors Leda Cooks and Demetria Shabazz and can be taken for Honors and as a Community Service Learning course. You can apply for the course by contacting Dr. Cooks at [leda@comm.umass.edu](mailto:leda@comm.umass.edu) or Dr. Shabazz at [dshabazz@comm.umass.edu](mailto:dshabazz@comm.umass.edu)

**497C: Special Topic-Field Research in Everyday Talk**

**Bailey 307A Machmer**

Lecture, discussion. This course combines reading and discussion with hands-on application of theoretically informed methods for studying social interaction. We will practice ethnographic observation, audio-visual recording, transcription of interaction, interviewing, and presentation of analyses of socially situated interaction. Students will be trained in the use of a computer to organize, analyze, and present videotaped data on social interaction. (Course capacity if 25)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior and Junior Communication majors and others by permission of instructor.

**497F: Special Topic-Spanish Language Media**

**Castaneda 311 Machmer**

Seminar. This advanced course examines the historical development and current transformation of the Spanish-language media industry, particularly in the United States but also across the Americas and the Caribbean. We will examine how political, economic, and cultural constructions of Latinidad are implicated in the production, distribution, and consumption of Spanish-language and Latina/o media, broadly defined. This course will also have a Community Service Learning component that will require outside classroom work. An Honors Colloquium will be offered through special arrangement. In the colloquium, students will work on an oral history project involving local Latina/o media producers. Although Spanish fluency is not required, some knowledge of the language would be extremely helpful since we will be analyzing a large portion of Spanish-language media texts. (Course capacity is 25)

**Course Eligibility\*:** Senior & Junior Communication majors and with instructor's permission Spanish/Portuguese majors, and Center for Latin American/Caribbean/Latino Studies certificate students.

**497K: Special Topic-Communication & Nature**

**Carbaugh 314 Machmer**

Lecture, discussion. This course explores the relationship between communication practices and environments, both man-made and natural. How does one's communication about place influence how one lives in that place? In turn, do places themselves dictate what we say about them? The course will provide a series of readings that address these questions, while also sensitizing us to various cultural ways of communicating about place. (Course capacity is 25)

**Prerequisite:** COMM 212 or COMM 297I or COMM 312 or permission of instructor.

**Course Eligibility\*:** Open to Senior & Junior Communication majors only

**Course Notes:** If you have already taken COMM 497M: Communication & Nature you cannot take this course.

**497N: Special Topic-Asian Popular Cinema**

**Ciecko 306 Machmer**

Lecture, discussion, screening. This film studies course focuses on Asian cinema, with a special emphasis on questions of genre and gender in films from East, Southeast, and South Asia. Focusing primarily on specific contextual issues of production, exhibition, distribution, and reception, our study of Asian films will be comparative, cross-cultural, and interdisciplinary. Potential film genres to be considered include the following: musicals (including Bollywood "masala" movies), comedy, melodrama, romance, historical epic/biopic; martial arts/ swordplay/samurai films, horror and thriller, animation, sci-fi and fantasy, urban gangster/action films, and "exploitation" genres, as well as "art films." In addition to active participation in class discussion, students will be expected to write several short papers and to produce and present a customized final research project. (Course capacity is 25).

**Course Notes:** There are no specific prerequisites but some background in film studies and/or cultural theory is recommended.

**499C: CAPSTONE COURSE-Part I/Topic-Video Games: Theory & Research**

**Scharrer 309 Machmer**

Seminar. This is the first semester of a two-semester, six-credit Communication Honors Capstone course on Video Games: Theory and Research. In this semester (Fall 2009), we will cover a broad range of theories and methods for studying video and computer games, and each student will develop a proposal to conduct an original research project on some relevant topic. Video games are big business, drawing millions of fans from around the world. With people young and old spending increasing amounts of time playing video and computer games, a number of critical social, cultural, and political questions arise. In this course, the concerns, controversies, theoretical perspectives, and bodies of data about video and computer games will be examined critically. In the first half of the year, we will primarily use the research literature—namely the content analyses, textual analyses, experiments, focus groups, and surveys—to examine contemporary issues about video and computer games. Among the questions we will explore: what types of content are prominent in video and computer games? Who plays these games and what explains the games' appeal? How do advancements in technology and graphics enhance responses to the games? How much time do children, teenagers, and adults devote to playing video and computer games? How do parents or other members of the general public feel about video and computer games? How and under what circumstances are people influenced by video and computer games? What regulations are in place to label and control access to particular video and computer games? We will also complete the first stages in the students' own original research projects on some aspect of our topic, which will become sections of their Honors theses. The second semester (Spring 2010) will be devoted to the implementation of your individual research projects; each will culminate in an archivable Honors Thesis. (Course capacity is 12)

**Course Prerequisite(s):** Consent of Instructor

**Course Eligibility\*:** Senior Honors students, Communication Senior Honor's students will have preference.