

DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION

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The Mass Communication Program at Sam Houston State University offers a unique educational experience. In daily, one-on-one contact with faculty from a variety of theoretical and practical backgrounds, students are exposed to a combination of hands-on production classes, professional development classes, and traditional theory/criticism classes. Our graduates develop:

1. general media literacy skills that are increasingly required in our media-saturated contemporary experience and
2. specific skill-sets especially applicable to the emerging technologically-driven marketplace.

There are five MCOM degree concentrations:

- Multi-Platform Journalism,
- Broadcast Production,
- Film, and
- Public Relations & Advertising.

Graduates can enter a variety of fields, including but not limited to video production, print and television news, broadcast and cable sales, media management, advertising, digital media production, promotions/public relations, and corporate media. In addition, students may supplement their degrees with educational requirements that allow them to become certified media-specialists in public school systems with a concentration in Mass Communication Teaching. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the MCOM Department's internship program.

Mission

The mission of the Department of Mass Communication is to acquire, synthesize, and disseminate knowledge related to print, broadcast, cable, online, and other forms of electronic communication for the purpose of producing media literate, socially aware, professionally competent graduates.

Program emphasis is on the preparation of ethical and technologically proficient communication professionals who are capable of making a positive impact on their environment and on society. Our graduates will acquire the skills for today's media marketplace and also develop the broader, theoretical background for:

- Negotiating convergence in the communication fields;
- Communicating with and servicing diverse populations;
- Understanding the economic and political pressures on professional integrity; and
- Intelligently assessing and interpreting unfolding events in a media saturated experience.

Highlights

The Department of Mass Communication offers a comprehensive blend of courses, including but not limited to global communication, film production and theory, media production and reporting, audience assessment, media sales, mass communication theory and history, and writing for print, broadcast, and digital media, and other professional development areas. The curriculum introduces students to each of the four emphasis areas during their first year in the mass communication program. During the remaining three years, students can register for classes in digital audio and video editing, film production and directing, feature writing, research techniques, communication law, media marketing, scriptwriting, global communication, and broadcast journalism. Students with a major or minor in the MCOM Department will have the opportunity to work with departmental media: 90.5 KSHU-FM, 90.5.2 El Gato, Cable Channel 7, *The Houstonian* newspaper, student news, and Priority One PR as part of their college experience.

Suggested Free Electives

Students in Mass Communication should select a specialized area of free elective classes compatible with their professional goals. In choosing an appropriate set of free electives, students should discuss their career plans with an advisor. For example, free electives in Management and Marketing are desirable for Public Relations & Advertising. History, English, foreign languages, Art, Theatre, Sociology, and other social sciences and fine arts are helpful to all emphases. Students with a Multi-Platform Journalism emphasis could benefit from free electives in Political Science or History.

Career Opportunities

There are a variety of career opportunities in the Mass Communication field. Some graduates pursue traditional positions in the mass media marketplace (reporting/editing/writing for newspapers, television stations, radio stations, or magazines). MCOM graduates may also pursue careers with public relations and advertising agencies, with corporate communication programs and within government, hospital, and other institutional

settings. Graduates can affiliate with nonprofit agencies or move into sales and other promotional positions. Increasingly, graduates have been teaching in high schools, pursuing advanced graduate studies, and working in interactive media.

Student Organizations and Activities

The Department supports student chapters of the American Advertising Federation (AAF), the National Broadcasting Association (NBS), the Texas Association of Broadcast Students (TABS), the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), and the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ).

Internships and Study Abroad

Junior and senior level students who meet requirements may enroll in semester-long professional internships. MCOM students have interned at national media outlets such as CBS News, *Entertainment Tonight*, ESPN, *David Letterman*, *The Jerry Springer Show*, MTV, The Cannes Film Festival, South by Southwest, and Disney World; regional media outlets including KTLA-TV in Los Angeles; KHOU-TV in Houston, *The Conroe Courier*, *The Victoria Advocate*, Pierpont Public Relations, the Houston Symphony; and at specialized institutional sites such as the Texas State Senate.

Scholarships

Scholarships are available for outstanding undergraduate students continuing in the program. Most scholarship deadlines are March 1 for the following academic year.

Please contact the Department of Mass Communication or visit: http://www.shsu.edu/~sfa_www/scholarship.html#masscommunication.

Program Specific Requirements

All students in the Mass Communication program will complete a departmental four-course core that provides a foundation for success in a variety of media fields. To help students understand the contemporary media environment, the core includes an analysis of media and society. Because specific skills are required in the media marketplace, the applied Writing for Mass Media and T.V. & Film Production courses are part of the departmental core. A course in mass media law and ethics examines legal issues pertinent to the print, electronic, and emerging digital press.

All Mass Communication majors and minors must earn a grade of 'C' or better in each Mass Communication courses, and successfully pass the departmental required competency writing and production tests.

- Bachelor of Arts, Major in Mass Communication: Multi-Platform Journalism (catalog.shsu.edu/archives/2016-2017/undergraduate/colleges-academic-departments/fine-arts-mass-commmication/mass-communication/ba-mass-communication-multi-platform-journalism)
- Bachelor of Arts, Major in Mass Communications: Film (catalog.shsu.edu/archives/2016-2017/undergraduate/colleges-academic-departments/fine-arts-mass-commmication/mass-communication/ba-mass-communications-film)
- Bachelor of Arts, Major in Mass Communications: Public Relations & Advertising (catalog.shsu.edu/archives/2016-2017/undergraduate/colleges-academic-departments/fine-arts-mass-commmication/mass-communication/ba-mass-communication-public-relations-advertising)
- Bachelor of Arts, Major in Mass Communications: Broadcast Production (catalog.shsu.edu/archives/2016-2017/undergraduate/colleges-academic-departments/fine-arts-mass-commmication/mass-communication/ba-mass-communication-broadcast-production)

MCOM 1130. Media Literacy. 1 Hour.

This course requires students to critically examine and analyze media found in the world around them. Through in-class discussions, interactive media demonstrations and other experiences, this course helps students make sense of and control their media environments, as well as develop a critical approach to understanding and creating media.

Prerequisite: None.

MCOM 1300. Mass Communication. 3 Hours.

MCOM 1330. Analysis of Electronic Culture. 3 Hours.

This course will survey the history and theory of mass media in American society with an emphasis on issues in broadcast television, cable television, and print journalism. Topics addressed include the impact of the printing press; evolution of print media, telegraph, film camera, and wireless technologies; structure of contemporary media industries; influence of advertisers, regulatory agencies, and ratings services; production, distribution, and syndication systems; social influence and personal use of mass media content.

MCOM 1332. Writing For Mass Media. 3 Hours.

Designed to introduce writing for media across a wide spectrum of disciplines, this course will provide hands-on practice in basic writing skills for news, broadcast, the web, and public relations. Emphasis is placed on the enhancement of language and grammar skills.

Prerequisite: C in ENGL 1301 or equivalent.

MCOM 1371. Audio Production & Performance. 3 Hours.

This course surveys the mechanics of audio production and the operation of studio equipment. Students study and practice the use of microphone techniques, music, sound effects, and performance. They are introduced to digital audio production and appropriate audio software. Lecture and laboratory projects acquaint students with audio production requirements and responsibilities. Students receive practical hands-on experience with attention to mixing, recording, and editing. Students are expected to produce original content for broadcast on KSHU-FM.

MCOM 2351. Film History and Criticism. 3 Hours.

This course uses the film medium to integrate cinematic history and criticism. Production elements such as lighting, sound and character development, as well as genres, themes and narrative pattern will be analyzed. Emphasis is placed on writing critically about the film.

MCOM 2362. News Reporting and Editing. 3 Hours.

This course covers theory and practice in writing specialized stories for mass media outlets, including news assignments in public safety, legal issues, government, education, health care, and politics. Emphasis is placed on covering current events.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 1371.

MCOM 2371. TV & Film Production. 3 Hours.

This course introduces students to the basics of visual image production, focusing on graphic design, creative visualization, video editing, lighting, on-camera performance, and studio producing/directing. Students are expected to produce original content for broadcast on Cable Channel 7.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 1371.

MCOM 2381. Visual Communication for Media. 3 Hours.

This course is designed to provide skills needed for visual production, developing skills in graphic design for visual imaging, creative visualization, video editing, lighting and studio production and directing. Students may not receive credit for both MCOM 2381 and MCOM 2371.

Prerequisite: Public Relations/Advertising majors only.

MCOM 2382. Design for PR & Advertising. 3 Hours.

This course introduces students to the principles of design applicable to publications created using desktop publishing software and computer technology. Special attention is given to design principles, typography, layout, and production techniques.

MCOM 3026. Media Practicum. 1-4 Hours.

Advanced instruction in practice and projects. Students perform assigned work with co-curricular activities (KSHU-FM, Cable Channel 7, The Houstonian, student news, and Priority One PR) in a laboratory environment. Variable Credit (1-3).

Prerequisite: Faculty Approval.

MCOM 3351. Moving Image Aesthetics. 3 Hours.

This course is an in-depth look into pre-production process as it directly pertains to storyboard creation, character development and design, pre-visualization techniques and principles of concept design.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 1371, MCOM 2371.

MCOM 3352. Cinematography. 3 Hours.

This course is designed to study emotional and visual qualities of light, and the application of varying strategies in lighting for characters, film composition, lenses, filtration, and manipulation of images in mood creation, and practical techniques, product and narrative style of lighting. Students will utilize their critical thinking skills in producing various original images.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 1371, MCOM 2371.

MCOM 3353. Advanced Editing for Film & TV. 3 Hours.

This course is a continuation of film editing with concentration on editing applications such as Avid, After Effects, Apple Motion, Soundtrack, DVD Studio, LiveType, and techniques of fine-tuning.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 1371, MCOM 2371.

MCOM 3360. Specialized Writing. 3 Hours.

This course will cover study and practice in writing for mass media in specialized areas. Emphasis is on developing a level of writing suitable for publication. Course may be repeated as topics vary.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, 6 hours of ENGL.

MCOM 3361. Broadcast Journalism Writing. 3 Hours.

This class emphasizes the theory, techniques, and practice of television journalism. Emphasis is on writing and editing news copy and honing style and content skills appropriate for effective broadcast news writing. MCOM 3361 also requires production of broadcast news content and involves discussion of current issues facing broadcast journalists. Students are expected to produce original content for broadcast on Cable Channel 7.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 2362, MCOM 2371.

MCOM 3362. Media Criticism. 3 Hours.

This course explores mass communication theory, focusing on social-behavioral and critical-cultural approaches. It emphasizes how the same issues (e.g. media violence) recur over time and how ideas about media have changed as new media technologies have emerged.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, 2362, 6 hrs MCOM.

MCOM 3364. News Editing. 3 Hours.

This course focuses on the editor's functions in handling news copy from writing to the printed page or script with emphasis on writing quality and new technologies of production. Content includes copy editing and headline writing, computers as tools of the trade, picture cropping, caption writing, working with wire service copy, typography, and graphics.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 2362, 6 hrs MCOM.

MCOM 3365. Announcing for Broadcast News. 3 Hours.

This course will prepare students for positions in announcing broadcast journalism for television, radio, and online. Students will examine techniques of voice and movement on television news, broadcast news announcing styles, interviewing techniques, and specialized announcing of events such as sports or cultural events.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 2362, and 3 hrs MCOM.

MCOM 3366. Photojournalism. 3 Hours.

This course will focus on reporting through the photo. The student will study the applications of news, feature, sports, weather, environmental portraiture and the photo essay. Fundamental principles of photojournalism such as history, freedom of press, ethics and the power of the image to convey the message.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, 9 hrs of MCOM.

MCOM 3371. Advanced Audio Production. 3 Hours.

This course presents advanced concepts in audio and radio recording and editing. Students are expected to produce original content for broadcast on KSHU-FM.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 1371, and 6 hrs of MCOM.

MCOM 3372. Single Cam & Non-Linear Edit I. 3 Hours.

This course teaches pre-production, field production, and post-production techniques. Elements include field camera setup and operation, remote lighting, remote sound, and basic continuity editing with an emphasis on underlying principles of video technology. Students are expected to produce original content for broadcast on Cable Channel 7.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 1371, MCOM 2371, and 3 hrs MCOM.

MCOM 3373. Studio Production. 3 Hours.

This course covers fundamentals of video production in a studio environment, including pre-production, in-studio production, and in-studio direction. Students will become familiar with the functions and responsibilities of the production crew, studio environment, and studio equipment. Emphasis is given to multiple camera techniques in studio production. Students are expected to produce original content for broadcast on Cable Channel 7.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1371 and MCOM 2371.

MCOM 3375. Scriptwriting. 3 Hours.

This course emphasizes the study of style, format, principles, and techniques of writing for radio, TV, and feature film. The process of writing fiction and non-fiction will examine the development of the script from research to marketing. Students will learn techniques for writing promotional scripts, public service announcements, documentary scripts, film scripts, and television scripts.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 1371, MCOM 2371, and 6 hrs MCOM.

MCOM 3377. Multi-Camera Studio Production. 3 Hours.

This course covers fundamentals of video production in a studio environment, including pre-production, in-studio production, and in-studio direction. Students will become familiar with the functions and responsibilities of the production crew, studio environment, and studio equipment. Emphasis is given to multiple camera techniques in studio production. Students are expected to produce original content for broadcast on Cable Channel 7.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 1371, MCOM 2371, MCOM 3372.

MCOM 3378. Production Management. 3 Hours.

This course emphasizes the study of legal clearances, budgeting, funding, resource management, and scheduling as these activities relate to radio and television production.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 1371, MCOM 2371, and 3 hrs of MCOM.

MCOM 3379. Multi-Camera Field Production. 3 Hours.

This course emphasizes the techniques and approaches to multi-camera directing and production. MCOM 3379 will train students in various remote production contexts, including sports, dance, music, and special events coverage. Students are expected to produce original content for broadcast on Cable Channel 7.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 1371, MCOM 2371, MCOM 3372.

MCOM 3381. Principles Of Public Relations. 3 Hours.

This course examines principles of public relations, sales promotions, direct marketing, and online communication with emphasis on the way organizations promote their products and images to their publics. The traits of leadership, crisis management, and ethics will be explored.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332 and 6 hrs of MCOM.

MCOM 3382. Principles of Advertising. 3 Hours.

This course explores the changes in today's world of advertising communication and the implications of these changes to traditional practice. Industry developments such as social media and the impact of globalization are included, as well as the increased focus on consumers and branding in today's advertising strategies.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332 and 6 hrs of MCOM.

MCOM 3383. Writing for PR & Advertising. 3 Hours.

This course examines the process of communicating to persuade and inform. Students learn the techniques of strategic thinking and practice writing for advertising and promotions, news media, and special audience materials, such as newsletters, brochures, and catalogues. Online communications for internal and external audiences will also be explored.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332 and 6 hrs of MCOM.

MCOM 3385. Advanced Writing for PR & Adv. 3 Hours.

This course emphasizes the strategic, goal-oriented mission of high-quality media writing. Using a multidisciplinary and multimedia approach, students will learn to write successful and strategically for public relations, advertising, sales, marketing, and business communications formats.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 3383, and 3 hrs of MCOM.

MCOM 3388. Sales and Marketing. 3 Hours.

This course provides students with an overview of marketing strategies used by mass media companies. MCOM 3388 examines media marketing, market surveys, advertising, content promotion, and public relations as efforts to create and support customer bases and maintain goodwill. Students have the opportunity to create model marketing strategies. Special attention is paid to industry changes and professional ethics.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332 and 6 hrs MCOM.

MCOM 4022. Special Topic. 1-3 Hours.

This course uses a case study approach to explore managerial goal setting, strategic thinking, budgeting, and working with clients. Successful problem solving, critical thinking, and leadership styles will be examined in depth.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, 9 hours of MCOM, and Senior standing.

MCOM 4099. Independent Study. 1-3 Hours.

This course provides an opportunity to conduct supervised investigation in an area of special interest. This course is designed specifically for advanced students who are capable of independent research and/or creative activity. This course may not be used to replace a required course.

Prerequisite: 12 advanced hrs of MCOM and permission of department chair.

MCOM 4361. TV News Producing. 3 Hours.

This course offers advanced instruction and practice in student-produced TV newscasts. Students are assigned duties for producing a newscast once a week, as well as gathering, shooting, writing, and editing TV news. Students are expected to produce original content for broadcast on Cable Channel 7.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 2362, MCOM 3361.

MCOM 4364. Investigative Reporting. 3 Hours.

This capstone course examines strategies for gathering, analyzing and developing background information necessary for in-depth news writing and reporting. Students will be expected to use the research and analysis techniques to produce investigative journalism.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332 and 12 hrs MCOM.

MCOM 4365. On-Line Journalism. 3 Hours.

Students use techniques drawn from various media and forms of writing to produce well-designed, effective communication packages for online distribution. Students integrate written material, video, sound, and graphics into a multimedia online publication.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332 and 9 hrs MCOM.

MCOM 4366. Social Implications of Media. 3 Hours.

This course offers assessments of professional and industry trends, regulatory practices, socio-economic developments, and technological innovations that influence the institutions and traditions of the American mass media. Emphasis is placed on the changing roles of media and the impact of new communications technologies.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332 and 9 hrs MCOM.

MCOM 4371. Mass Media Law And Ethics. 3 Hours.

This course will examine legal and ethical concepts as they apply to broadcast and cable television, radio, print media, and Internet-based publishing. It will focus on the evolution of the American legal system with specific attention to state statutes, regulatory agencies, ethical issues, and precedent-setting cases as they relate to free speech, open records, privacy, libel, copyright, and obscenity laws.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332 and 12 hrs of MCOM.

MCOM 4373. Advanced Production. 3 Hours.

This course requires students to assume the primary responsibility, under faculty supervision, of creating and producing programming for Cable Channel 7. This course will also develop portfolio material for graduating students.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 3372, and 6 hrs MCOM.

MCOM 4378. Multi-Camera Remotes. 3 Hours.

In this course students learn to explore multi-camera coverage of specific events, organizations, activities or people to be used as part of a live or recorded media presentation.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332, MCOM 3372, MCOM 3373 and 6 hrs MCOM.

MCOM 4383. Audience Research & Analysis. 3 Hours.

This course introduces students to the history and application of research methods, both quantitative and qualitative, that are employed in commercial media markets and academic environments to assess media audiences, media content, and media use. Topics addressed include survey methods, content analysis, experimental research, ethnographic and critical research, research ethics, and statistical analysis. Special attention will be devoted to research in print and electronic media.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332 and 12 hrs MCOM.

MCOM 4384. Advanced Design for Public Relations & Advertising. 3 Hours.

This course focuses on higher-level publishing formats and media used in today's persuasive communication environment. This course builds on basic print design and production skills introduced in MCOM 2382.

Prerequisite: MCOM 2382 or department approval.

MCOM 4390. Campaigns for PR & Advertising. 3 Hours.

This course emphasizes integration of theory, research, and communication techniques for implementing and evaluating public relations campaigns. Focus on creative strategies and media planning, target analysis and buying tactics. Students research, develop, and present an integrated communication plan.

Prerequisite: MCOM 3381, MCOM 3383, MCOM 4383.

MCOM 4393. Global Media Communication. 3 Hours.

This course studies world media systems in a variety of countries. Emphasis is placed on how history, politics, government, culture, and other social relations influence international media systems, international development projects, and the global flow of information.

Prerequisite: MCOM 1332 and 12 hrs MCOM.

MCOM 4398. Professional Internship. 3 Hours.

On-the-job application of skills and knowledge learned in the classroom for students who have completed their sophomore year, completed appropriate courses, and achieved an acceptable GPA. Internships may be with print media, electronic media, agencies, institutions, businesses, non-profit groups, or government agencies. MCOM and AGRC majors only.

Prerequisite: Permission of the Internship Coordinator.

Chair: **Jean-Richard R. Bodon**

Jean-Richard R. Bodon, Ph.D. (jxb034@shsu.edu), *Professor of Mass Communication and Chair, Department of Mass Communication*, Ph.D., Florida State University; M.A., The University of Alabama; B.A., Birmingham-Southern College (Birmingham, Alabama)

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