

DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION

Chair: Wojciech Lorenc, Ph.D. (wlorenc@shsu.edu), Chair

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Mission

The mission of the Mass Communication Department at Sam Houston State University is to prepare professionals to work in the fields of Mass Communication, including Journalism, Broadcasting, Advertising, Public Relations, and Film. The Department promotes clear and effective communication, intellectual curiosity, strategic thinking, and independent learning skills through a focus on critical thinking, writing, technology, and the ethical and legal aspects of mass communication.

The department strives to maintain a work, learning and social environment that is aware and supportive of diversity in human differences and beliefs.

Highlights

Digital Media Production, MFA

The MFA program in Digital Media Production is a terminal degree program that equips media practitioners and media-education professionals with sophisticated knowledge of emerging media technologies and digital media content. This program also empowers them to create professional digital media content across different platforms, media, and distribution methods.

The curriculum covers a variety of issues in Digital Media Production, including mobile application development, digital streaming techniques, mobile content creation and editing software, motion graphics and effects, and comprehensive analysis of social media. These skills are not only essential for employment in traditional media industries, but also of growing importance to educational institutions, government entities, global conglomerates, and local corporations.

Digital Media, MA

The MA program in Digital Media offers a choice between digital media production and digital media studies. The digital media production emphasis is designed for students who want to create and manage digital media projects, and the digital media studies emphasis is designed for students who want to research and understand digital media.

Digital Media Production

Students explore the digital combination of text, graphics, audio, and video into engaging stories and interactive environments. Students learn advanced production practices needed to work in executive management and upper-level reporter, producer, filmmaker, and creative manager media positions.

Digital Media Studies

Students apply mass communication research methods and theories to the study of digital media. Students learn how to critically reflect on digital media practices, audiences, law, policy, and products leading to continued studies at the PhD level or to teach at the college level.

Graduate Certificate in Health Communication and Public Relations

This interdisciplinary certificate program is aimed primarily at post-baccalaureate students interested in developing expertise in health-related communication as it applies in both academic and non-academic settings. Health communication specialists help individuals and communities understand topics, such as medical treatment, health lifestyle choices, disease prevention, new product development and government policies. They focus primarily on disseminating information that impacts health and well-being.

This certificate is offered as a collaboration of the departments of Mass Communication, Population Health, and Sociology.

- Master of Arts in Digital Media (<http://catalog.shsu.edu/archives/2021-2022/graduate-and-professional/college-departments/arts-and-media/mass-communication/digital-media-ma/>)
- Master of Fine Arts in Digital Media Production (<http://catalog.shsu.edu/archives/2021-2022/graduate-and-professional/college-departments/arts-and-media/mass-communication/digital-media-production-mfa/>)
- Graduate Certificate in Health Communication and Public Relations (<http://catalog.shsu.edu/archives/2021-2022/graduate-and-professional/college-departments/arts-and-media/mass-communication/health-communication-and-public-relations-certificate/>)

Graduate Assistantships

The Department of Mass Communication offers competitive graduate assistantships each year for students who are accepted into the program. Teaching assistantships are also available for students who have completed 18 credit hours of graduate course work. All students who have

demonstrated distinguished academic performance may apply for a graduate assistantship. All assistantships require students to work 20 hours per week. To apply, please, fill out the Application Form and submit the required materials described therein by March 23 for the Fall semester. For information about the stipend and the application process, contact Dr. Kiwon Seo, Graduate Studies Coordinator by email at Dr. Kiwon Seo (kws014@shsu.edu) or by phone at 936-294-4036.

MCOM 5050. Special Topic. 1-3 Hours.

This research course offers special topics based upon new concepts developing in digital media. The specific research topic title appears in the Class Schedule and on student transcripts.

Prerequisite: Department approval.

MCOM 5099. Independent Study. 1-3 Hours.

MCOM 5300. Digital Media History & Theory. 3 Hours.

This course outlines the history and theory of new media from aesthetic, reception, production, media effects, cultural, and political perspectives. Students will explore cross-disciplinary theoretical approaches and apply them to new media and their impact on cultural production.

Prerequisite: Admission to graduate program.

MCOM 5308. Digital Entrepreneurship. 3 Hours.

This course leverages digital technologies to teach students how to create commercial production opportunities, disseminate information, and collaborate with clients and partners. This emerging area of study includes the development of new business models comprised of information brokers, internet advertisers, licensing and legal issues, E-trailers and E-consumers.

Prerequisite: Departmental approval.

MCOM 5310. Critical Approaches to Media. 3 Hours.

This course explores the growing body of critical and theoretical discourse defining the field of digital media studies. Students examine the major historical, cultural, sociopolitical, economic, structural, and philosophical trends in this field. .

Prerequisite: Admission to graduate program .

MCOM 5314. Strategic PR&Advert-Healthcare. 3 Hours.

This course focuses on strategic communication concepts and tactics specifically for healthcare organizations. Students learn to identify effective strategies and tactics to reach and persuade specific audiences, using social media, direct marketing, sales and promotion, and advertising.

Prerequisite: Graduate admission.

MCOM 5320. Digital Media Ethics and Law. 3 Hours.

This course examines ethical and legal concepts as they apply to various forms of electronic media expression, with special focus on digital media and Internet-based expression. Free speech, open records, privacy, libel, copyright and obscenity laws are reviewed in the context of the digital environment.

Prerequisite: Admission to graduate program.

MCOM 5324. Social Marketing. 3 Hours.

This course explores the principles of social marketing, which uses commercial marketing techniques to motivate behavioral and social change. Students critically examine social change initiatives that target deeply held beliefs and personal behaviors resistant to change. They learn techniques for using social marketing to improve a social good, such as individual health, the environment, or the community.

Prerequisite: Graduate Admission.

MCOM 5330. Advanced Digital Writing. 3 Hours.

This course enables students to develop competency in narrative techniques and information delivery for different genres, distribution platforms, and audiences. Emphasis is placed on digital media technologies and the demands of writing for video, social media, multimedia production, digital sound and live performance.

Prerequisite: Admission to graduate program.

MCOM 5334. Digital Advertising. 3 Hours.

Students learn how advertising is planned, developed, and executed; and have an opportunity to develop a strategic advertising campaign plan to solve specific communication problems for a client through effective message strategies. Students focus on a comprehensive understanding of the role of advertising in the digital media era. Topics may also include current industry development, such as social media, the increased focus on storytelling and branding in today's digital advertising strategies, and the impact of globalization.

MCOM 5335. Podcasting. 3 Hours.

Students in this class design, launch, and maintain regularly updated podcasts on non-fiction topics of their choice. These professional podcasts are accessible through popular platforms. Students develop audio editing techniques on free, multi-platform software; they also learn to balance personal sharing and professional standards on a growing and pertinent audio medium.

Prerequisite: Admission to the graduate program.

MCOM 5340. Social Media. 3 Hours.

This course is both theoretical and practical, drawing from the literature of social networks and community to explore online social media. Students learn how to develop strategies to effectively communicate and collaborate with their audience through current social media platforms. Emphasis is placed on the media professional's use and understanding of social media.

Prerequisite: Admission to graduate program.

MCOM 5355. Digital Media Management. 3 Hours.

Students in this course learn management in entertainment, public relations, emerging media, and related fields, including the supervision of creative digital media projects. The course examines media production decisions and decision-makers adapting to digital media trends. It also develops leadership training and skills designed to manage media organizations and projects.

Prerequisite: Department approval.

MCOM 5360. Mass Communication Theory. 3 Hours.

This course addresses the history and development of mass communication theory. Theoretical approaches, models and application of theories are examined.

Prerequisite: Admission to graduate program.

MCOM 5390. Professional Internship. 3 Hours.

Students in this course engage in professional work to obtain experience in the television/film, radio, internet/social media, journalism, advertising, or public relations industries. Students are evaluated by their employer, maintain a journal or portfolio of activities, and present their internship experiences to the graduate faculty.

Prerequisite: Department approval.

MCOM 6098. Thesis. 1-3 Hours.

Students work under faculty supervision to produce a scholarly thesis of original work about digital media approved by all members of the student's thesis committee.

Prerequisite: Approval of committee chair.

MCOM 6099. Thesis Project. 1-3 Hours.

Students work under faculty supervision to produce a thesis project of original work in digital media approved by all members of the student's thesis committee.

Prerequisite: Approval of committee chair.

MCOM 6300. Advanced Preproduction. 3 Hours.

This course introduces students to advanced sound production, lighting, and other preproduction techniques combined with narrative storytelling using digital videography. Each student produces and formats high-quality videos for digital distribution, including high definition output and online streaming.

Prerequisite: MCOM 5320.

MCOM 6310. Advanced Multimedia Production. 3 Hours.

This course focuses on interactive multimedia production and narrative development for the web and other interactive media, using current authoring software. Students learn to create narratives using interactive design, content creation, authoring, scripting and publishing for the web. Special emphasis is placed on the development of long-form interactive stories.

Prerequisite: MCOM 5330 or departmental approval.

MCOM 6315. Web and Mobile Development. 3 Hours.

Students in this course learn theoretical structures behind informational design for mass communication via the internet and mobile devices. Students learn HTML and Java-based programming, as well as how to creatively craft digital art and content. Students create their own online and mobile-based content.

Prerequisite: MCOM 6310.

MCOM 6320. Documentary Storytelling. 3 Hours.

This course takes a creative and systematic approach to transforming ideas into effective scripts for corporate, medical, religious, educational and governmental videos. Students learn and apply techniques for communicating visually, writing for the ear, using drama and humor, and applying documentary genre structures in various disciplines and for media platforms.

Prerequisite: MCOM 5330.

MCOM 6330. Digital Editing. 3 Hours.

Students study the creative and aesthetic qualities of editing film and video. Students learn to edit for both narrative and documentary styles including computer-generated imagery, sound design, color correction, mood and rhythm.

Prerequisite: Department approval.

MCOM 6335. Motion Graphics and Effects. 3 Hours.

Students in this course create motion graphics and visual effects using animation, green screen technology, and compositing programs. Students learn enhanced techniques on professional software platforms to achieve a variety of dramatic and artistic motion effects.

Prerequisite: MCOM 6330.

MCOM 6340. Digital Entrepreneurship. 3 Hours.

This course examines how new media tools are used to create commercial opportunities and assist in the dissemination of information in both digital and traditional media outlets. Students will explore and apply entrepreneurial principles to create new media business ventures.

Prerequisite: Admission to graduate program.

MCOM 6350. Narrative Scriptwriting. 3 Hours.

This course addresses the art and craft of narrative scriptwriting for digital media. Students develop narratives through the creation and building of characters and using dramatic principles such as scene setting, plotting, sequencing.

Prerequisite: Admission to the graduate program.

MCOM 6354. Virtual Internship. 3 Hours.

This internship takes place in an Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)-supported environment, where students carry out identifiable and meaningful work-based tasks that fit within the student's educational curriculum. Interns contribute to projects while working remotely, meaning the majority of their interactions with co-workers, clients and supervisors are carried out online.

Prerequisite: Permission of Instructor.

MCOM 6360. Mass Comm Research Methods. 3 Hours.

This course integrates an understanding and application of research methods to develop the ability to produce research in an academic environment and in the profession associated with mass communication fields. Students use and understand the processes and interpret the statistics that bring rigorous data to the research process. Students design, administer and critically evaluate a personal behavioral research project.

Prerequisite: Graduate standing.

MCOM 6370. Remote Digital Streaming. 3 Hours.

Students in this course manage digital content streaming workflows from multiple cameras to numerous devices for diverse audiences. Students learn end-to-end audio/video workflow processes, including media acquisition, encoding and live editing, advertising insertion, content delivery, the client-side player technology and audience analytics.

MCOM 6373. Digital Video Production. 3 Hours.

This course emphasizes advanced applications of digital editing and visual storytelling. Through the creation and production of programming for Cable Channel 7, experienced student digital filmmakers increase aesthetic and technical proficiency in advanced video camera operation, lighting, and video editing methods.

Prerequisite: Department approval.

MCOM 6380. Studio Production. 3 Hours.

Students in this course conduct original production planning and master studio skills, including director, technical director, audio engineer, teleprompter operator, floor manager, and camera operator. Teamwork and professionalism are emphasized in the creation of original, creative digital media content in a variety of televisual and online media.

Prerequisite: MCOM 6373.

MCOM 6390. Sound Design and Editing. 3 Hours.

Students in this course learn how sound design and editing is developed in diverse ways for digital video and multimedia productions. It focuses on how sound design conveys meaning and how sound functions along with visual elements. Students explore how to capture sound using a variety of audio devices in multiple locations and how sound is used in editing to strengthen visual language, focus attention on visual elements and actions, and provide compositional structure or create ambience.

Prerequisite: Departmental approval.

MCOM 6398. Capstone Portfolio Project I. 3 Hours.

Students in this course propose a capstone portfolio project of original digital media production works. Students work under faculty supervision from an adviser and members of a capstone portfolio project committee. This course precedes MCOM 6399.

Prerequisite: Departmental approval.

MCOM 6399. Capstone Portfolio Project II. 3 Hours.

Students in this course produce a capstone portfolio project of original work in digital media production. Work is conducted under faculty supervision by members of the student's capstone portfolio project committee; upon completion, it is presented to faculty, fellow students and the public. This course follows MCOM 6398.

Prerequisite: Department approval, MCOM 6398.

Director/Chair: **Wojciech Lorenc**

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