

DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

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Mission

The mission of the Department of Media and Communication 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 students 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.

Emerging and Social Media, MA

The Master of Arts in Emerging and Social Media program at Sam Houston State University focuses on two interrelated, important areas of digital communication: emerging and social media. The current media landscape requires communication specialists to possess not only advanced skills for creative media content production, but also holistic understanding of strategic media planning, audience analysis, and critical assessment of communication processes. The MA in Emerging and Social Media program allows students to acquire both comprehensive skills and knowledge for effective media communication, helping students achieve their professional and/or academic goals. This fully online MA degree in Emerging and Social Media offers multiple admission dates throughout the year to support the 7-week course offering schedule. Applicants are accepted throughout the calendar year.

- Master of Arts in Emerging and Social Media (<https://catalog.shsu.edu/archives/2025-2026/graduate-and-professional/college-departments/arts-and-media/mass-communication/emerging-social-media-ma/>)
- Master of Fine Arts in Digital Media Production (<https://catalog.shsu.edu/archives/2025-2026/graduate-and-professional/college-departments/arts-and-media/mass-communication/digital-media-production-mfa/>)

Graduate Assistantships

The Department of Media and Communication offers competitive graduate assistantships each year for students who are accepted into both the MA in Emerging and Social Media and the MFA in Digital Media Production. Teaching assistantships are also available for students who have completed 18 credit hours of graduate coursework. Graduate 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. 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. Course Equivalents: MCOM 5350 .

MCOM 5099. Independent Study. 1-3 Hours.

This course is designed for independent study of selected topics under the supervision of a faculty member. Variable Credit (1-3).

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.

MCOM 5308. Entrepreneurship for Emerging and Social Media. 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.

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. .

MCOM 5311. Emerging Media Technologies. 3 Hours.

Students evaluate new and emerging technologies, including three-dimensional immersive video, virtual reality, augmented reality, game engines, mobile devices and artificial intelligence. Students incorporate the use of media technologies in the development of emerging media projects.

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.

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.

MCOM 5330. Advanced Writing for Emerging and Social Media. 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.

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 & Audiobooks. 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.

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.

MCOM 5341. Social Media Analytics. 3 Hours.

Students gain a comprehensive overview of social and digital media data analytics. Students learn key terminology for social and digital media data analytics, examine its role in integrated marketing communication, and learn various digital analytic methodologies. With this understanding as a foundation, students practice addressing key strategic communication questions related to return on investment, audience measurement, and brand management.

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.

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.

MCOM 5361. Emerging & Social Media Campaign Strategies. 3 Hours.

Students practice conceptualizing, designing, creating, and placing effective messages in the digital media while solving communication problems through appropriate communication strategies. Students learn key terminology for emerging and social media, incorporate knowledge about significant trends and issues in planning and evaluating strategic communication campaigns, and design a comprehensive campaign plan featuring emerging and social media.

MCOM 5364. Strategic Storytelling for Emerging & Social Media. 3 Hours.

Students learn the array of tools available and how to apply various creative storytelling techniques to influence and persuade a target audience. Students also explore the best applications for implementing and disseminating stories across communication channels and create original multimedia content that contributes to personal or professional goals.

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.

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.

Students are introduced to advanced sound production, lighting, and other pre-production techniques combined with narrative storytelling using digital media. Each student produces and formats high-quality media for digital distribution, including high-definition output, interactive application design and online streaming.

MCOM 6310. UX Design and Production. 3 Hours.

Students combine skills in UX design to conceive, plan, produce and edit multimedia projects. Each student will work on a multimedia design project, and the class will also be a test lab for larger and innovative multimedia projects. Students will learn how to develop their own UX design ideas, how to manage different multimedia parts of an overall multimedia strategy, and how to demonstrate advanced techniques in graphics, usability, user interface, and testing application. The course also examines how professionals run UX projects in the industry.

MCOM 6311. Advanced Production in Emerging and Social Media. 3 Hours.

Students conceptualize, plan, and execute advanced emerging and social media projects. In this hands-on course, students produce a variety of advanced projects of various types such as 360 videos, virtual reality stories, augmented reality stories, and social media campaigns. Particular attention is placed on execution, deployment, and measuring the effectiveness of each project.

MCOM 6315. Web and Mobile Development. 3 Hours.

Students learn theoretical structures behind informational design for the digital media industry via the internet and mobile devices. Students learn node-based programming in Unreal Engine 4/5, as well as how to creatively craft digital art and content. Students create their own online and mobile content.

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.

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.

MCOM 6335. Motion Graphics and Effects. 3 Hours.

Students 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: None.

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.

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.

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.

MCOM 6360. Mass Communication 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.

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. Video for Emerging and Social Media. 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.

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.

MCOM 6390. Audio for Emerging and Social Media. 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.

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: **Nam Young Kim**

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