

COMMUNICATION

Department of Communication

The Department of Communication at Worcester State University promotes the critical understanding of communication in a culturally diverse world. The program provides a praxis-based model of learning well suited for the digital age: theoretical and conceptual knowledge based instruction along with hands-on synthesis and application to yield creative content. Specifically, the program engages students in the theory and practice of mass communication, social and digital media, advertising, public relations, and media production, among others. The department's goal is to educate students to assess the role of communication in society, and to be proficient communicators and engaged citizens. Representing diverse areas of expertise, the faculty emphasizes contemporary issues and media ethics from a local-to-global perspective.

Courses focused on media literacy, criticism, production and special topics, prepare students for professional careers and for further study at the graduate level. Facilities include a television studio, editing suites, multimedia labs, video / photographic equipment and photographic dark rooms. In addition to course work, students in their junior and senior year are encouraged to apply for media internships and independent studies in their field of interest.

- Communication Education Minor
- Communication Major
- Communication Major, Concentration in Advertising and Public Relations
- Communication Major, Concentration in Digital Media Production
- Communication Minor
- Master's of Science in Communication (MSC) Program

Faculty

David Angell, Visiting Assistant Professor (2023), B.A., Rhode Island College; M.F.A., Vermont College of Fine Arts

Carlos Fontes, Professor (1996), B.A., Escola Superior de Meios de Comunicacao Social, Lisbon; M.A., Ph.D., University of Massachusetts

Julie D. Frechette, Professor (1999), B.A., University of New Hampshire; M.A., Ph.D., University of Massachusetts

Suzanne Gainer, Department Chair, Professor (2001), B.A., St. Vincent College; M.F.A., Rhode Island School of Design

Daniel S. Hunt, Professor (2013), B.A., University of Rhode Island; M.S., Boston University College of Communication; Ph.D., University of Connecticut

Emanuel E. Nneji, Professor (2005), B.A., University of Nigeria; M.S., University of Lagos; Ph.D., University of South Carolina

Brittany E. Severance, Assistant Professor (2021), B.A., University of Massachusetts; M.A., M.F.A., Emerson College

Eric Nichols, Assistant Professor (2019), B.A., Worcester State University; M.F.A. Maine College of Art

Courses

CM-100 Intro to Mass Communication

LASC Categories: TLC, HBS

An integrated examination of the history, theory, structure, process, and effects of each of the mass media.

Fall and Spring and every year. 3 Credits

CM-101 Library Skills for Research

The course covers the basics of library research: search strategies and how to use both print and automated research tools.

Other or on demand. 1 Credit

CM-103 Survey of Radio and Television

LASC Categories: HBS, TLC

Perspectives on the development of radio and television technologies, programming, regulation, and economic support, and their impact.

Fall and Spring and every year. 3 Credits

CM-105 Media Writing

Prerequisites: CM-100

An introduction to various types of mass media writing, from print and broadcast to public relations, advertising, and online media.

Every year. 3 Credits

CM-106 Communications and the Internet

LASC Categories: TLC

Focuses on the social and educational implications of the Internet and the application of its various search tools as a means of communication.

Spring only and other or on demand. 3 Credits

CM-107 Journalism and Democracy

This course introduces students to the history of American journalism and the role of journalism in democratic and non-democratic societies. 3 Credits

CM-108 Introduction to Animation

This hands-on introductory-level course covers the fundamentals of aesthetics of computer animation. Through a series of shorts projects, students will learn the principles of expression through movement in time, sequential composition, editing and integration of images sequences and sound.

3 Credits

CM-110 Public Speaking

LASC Categories: TLC

Essentials of speech production and speech writing for large and small groups. Classroom practice in delivering various types of speeches. [formerly ME 110 Speech]

Fall and Spring and every year. 3 Credits

CM-150 Photography I

LASC Categories: CA

Covers the basic theory and practice of thirty-five millimeter black and white photography, including camera handling, film processing, light meters, printing and picture content.

Fall and Spring and every year. 3 Credits

CM-151 Introduction to Digital Photography

LASC Categories: CA

Techniques and aesthetics of digital photography. Introduction to the operation of SLR digital cameras and the computer as digital darkroom.

Every year. 3 Credits

CM-160 Introduction to Digital Imaging**LASC Categories:** CA

This course introduces students to the procedures, techniques and concepts of basic digital imaging. In the course students learn to use the computer as a tool for visual image making.

Fall and Spring and every year. 3 Credits

CM-180 Introduction to Advertising**LASC Categories:** HBS

An overview of the advertising including the historical and current roles of advertising in our economy, basic advertising concepts and methods, and social and cultural effects.

3 Credits

CM-191 Special Topics in Communication

An introductory level course in communication on current or specialized topics.

3 Credits

CM-193 Special Topics in Communication for First Year Students**LASC Categories:** FYS

Introductory level course covering topics of special interest to first-year students. offered only as a First-Year Seminar.

Every year. 3 Credits

CM-199 Interpersonal Communication in Media

Study of the communications process as it relates to the production of material in various media, including video, audio, film.

Every year. 3 Credits

CM-200 Writing for Communication**LASC Categories:** WAC**Prerequisites:** EN-102

Development of writing, research, and critical thinking skills associated with the discipline of communication. Assignments focus on contemporary communication issues.

Every year. 3 Credits

CM-204 Analysis of News

This course introduces students to the conventions, ethical issues and the economics, political and socio-cultural forces that affect mainstream and alternative journalism today.

Every 2-3 years. 3 Credits

CM-205 Reporting for Media

This course refines interviewing skills and enables students to develop evidence from documentary sources to create stories for converging media.

Fall and Spring and every 2-3 years. 3 Credits

CM-206 Digital Storytelling**Prerequisites:** CM-100

Use of personal narrative to construct stories using audio, still and video images, and music tracks in digital format.

Every year. 3 Credits

CM-210 Special Topics in Communication

This is a mid-level communication course focused on current specialized topics not covered by the department's curriculum.

3 Credits

CM-213 Gender and the Media**LASC Categories:** HBS, TLC, DAC, WAC, DIV**Prerequisites:** CM-100 and EN-102

This course will explore how difference is socially constructed along gender lines and will explore the intersections of gender, identity, power and media representation.

Fall and Spring and every 2-3 years. 3 Credits

CM-231 Photography II**Prerequisites:** CM-150 or CM-151

Expands basic skills in camera craft, film and print processing and presentation. Instruction and practice in the zone system, theory and practice of advanced exposure and film development control. Emphasis on photographic composition and efficiency in designing purposeful photographic statements.

Fall and Spring and every year. 3 Credits

CM-240 Principles of Public Relations Practices**LASC Categories:** HBS**Prerequisites:** CM-100

An overview of public relations principles in business, politics, and society.

3 Credits

CM-241 Understanding Movies**LASC Categories:** CA, TLC

An introduction to the aesthetics and critical theories of film as an artistic medium of communication through critical observation of classic and contemporary movies.

Other or on demand. 3 Credits

CM-242 Understanding Video Games**LASC Categories:** CA, TLC

An introduction to the interdisciplinary study of video games as texts through an examination of their cultural, educational, and social functions in contemporary settings.

Every year. 3 Credits

CM-244 Graphic Design I**LASC Categories:** CA

Through hands on projects, students will learn formal elements of design, principles of typography, idea generation, and issues of responsible design as applied to print media.

Fall and Spring and every year. 3 Credits

CM-259 Television Production**LASC Categories:** CA

Basics of studio production including visualization and sequencing of short scripts, sound, graphics, lighting, and technical direction.

Every 2-3 years. 3 Credits

CM-260 Introduction to Video**LASC Categories:** CA

A beginning course in video program production, using lightweight and portable equipment.

Fall and Spring and every year. 3 Credits

CM-285 History of Photography**LASC Categories:** CA, TLC

The history of photography from 1839 to present, with attention to styles, aesthetics, technical processes, and leading practitioners. [Cross-listed with AR-285.]

Every 2-3 years. 3 Credits

CM-301 Communication Theory**Prerequisites:** CM-100

Examines the nature and origins of symbol systems, the make up of audiences, the effects of mass media, and concomitant research.

Other or on demand. 3 Credits

CM-315 Social Media**LASC Categories:** CA, TLC**Prerequisites:** CM-100

This course explores the historical and societal influences on the development of social media through conceptual and practical applications.

3 Credits

CM-325 Community Media Production**Prerequisites:** CM-259

This course focuses on the practice of creating media for the purpose of community engagement. Students will gain experience in television studio production, video editing, and audio recording by exploring topics and issues relevant to the people of Worcester. Program development, interviewing skills, and production techniques will be covered. Students will also work on using social media promotion for content dissemination.

Every year. 3 Credits

CM-340 Public Relations Strategy**Prerequisites:** CM-240

Case study approach to public relations practices, problems, opportunities, and application to practical situations.

Every 2-3 years. 3 Credits

CM-344 Graphic Design II**Prerequisites:** CM-244

The course builds upon the foundations of design covered in Graphic Design I, with emphasis on critical thinking, visual problem solving and the use of text and image.

Every year. 3 Credits

CM-350 Intercultural Communication**Prerequisites:** CM-100

Introductory communication theory and practice across cultural groups defined by race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, nationality, politics and economics.

3 Credits

CM-359 Documentary Production**Prerequisites:** CM-260

This course engages students in a semester-long production of documentary and introduces key concepts of documentary theory.

Every 2-3 years. 3 Credits

CM-360 Television Production II**LASC Categories:** CA**Prerequisites:** CM-259 or CM-260

The student will gain experience in the areas of electronic videotape editing, technology of television engineering, creative video, remote production, and other advanced techniques. Primary emphasis is on the production of programs utilizing advanced techniques.

Every year. 3 Credits

CM-363 Visual Media Literacy**Prerequisites:** CM-100

An introduction to principles of visual media literacy and their application in media production and perception.

3 Credits

CM-366 Scriptwriting**Prerequisites:** CM-100

Creating scripted material for the electronic media. All types, styles, and formats will be covered.

Every 2-3 years. 3 Credits

CM-370 Advertising Production**Prerequisites:** CM-100 and CM-180

Applied skills in advertising including the creation of advertisements in different media, advertising strategies, media schedules and campaign plans.

Other or on demand. 3 Credits

CM-384 Media Criticism**LASC Categories:** HBS, TLC, DAC, WAC, DIV**Prerequisites:** CM-100 and EN-102

Evaluation and analysis of film, television, theatre, and radio performances, development of intelligent, ethical standards of judgment.

Fall and Spring and every year. 3 Credits

CM-390 Independent Media and Society**LASC Categories:** TLC, DAC**Prerequisites:** CM-100

This course introduces students to the theory and practice of wide range of media economically and politically independent of both corporation and the state. The course focuses on the relationship between independent media and corporate media as well as the role of independent media within social movements, cultures of resistance, and processes of social change.

Other or on demand and other or on demand. 3 Credits

CM-396 Video Editing**LASC Categories:** CA**Prerequisites:** CM-259 or CM-260

The principles and procedures of editing video using computer-based, non-linear editing techniques and equipment. Students will produce short edited programs.

Fall and Spring and other or on demand. 3 Credits

CM-400 Advertising and Public Relations Research**LASC Categories:** HBS**Prerequisites:** CM-100, CM-180 and CM-240.

The course concentrates on the uses and applications of research in advertising and public relations situations.

Every 2-3 years. 3 Credits

CM-404 Independent Study: Media**Prerequisites:** CM-100

Permits advanced students to investigate topic of special interest through research or production of a project. Periodic consultations with advisor.

Fall and Spring and every year. 1-6 Credits

CM-405 Mass Communication Research**LASC Categories:** HBS, WAC**Prerequisites:** EN-102.

Survey of methods and applications of research in media fields, including advertising, public relations, journalism, new media and political communication.

Every year. 3 Credits

CM-408 Directed Study: Communication

Directed study offers students, who because of unusual circumstances may be unable to register for a course when offered, the opportunity to complete an existing course with an established syllabus under the direction and with agreement from a faculty member.

1-3 Credits

CM-410 Seminar: Topics in Communication

This course engages students in advanced examination of emerging communication topics and of topics in a faculty's area of expertise.

Spring only and other or on demand. 3 Credits

CM-416 Media Law and Ethics

LASC Categories: ICW, HBS

Prerequisites: CM-100 or JO-101.

An overview of the US legal and justice systems and an examination of ethical issues in mass media. [Cross-listed with EN-416.]

Alternating and every 2-3 years. 3 Credits

CM-435 Communication Internship

Prerequisite: Two relevant communication courses and consent of department provides opportunity for advanced students to increase experience through internship with sponsoring community organization, institution, or business under appropriate supervision.

Fall and Spring and every year. 3-12 Credits

CM-450 Senior Communication Capstone

LASC Categories: CAP

Prerequisites: CM-100, CM-110 CM-363, CM-384 and either CM-105 or CM-200.

Course allows students to reflect upon and document culminating experiences while nearing the end of their major coursework.

Every year. 3 Credits

Program Learning Outcomes

- Teach students a broad range of concepts and skill sets which entail gathering, processing, editing, presenting and evaluating information.
- Teach students to effectively gauge the effects of communication and mass media.
- Educate students about mass media and its role in local, national, and global society.
- Vest students with the intellectual tools necessary to be informed and critical consumers of mass media.
- Teach and encourage responsible/ethical media production.
- Prepare students for careers in the industries of communication and mass media.
- Contribute to the body of knowledge about mass media, society, and where the two intersect.
- Disseminate the aforementioned knowledge to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and beyond.