

Department Student Learning Statement

Mission:

The Department of Media and Cultural Studies analyzes the poetics, politics, and production of media texts in alignment with the College's commitment to internationalism, multiculturalism, and community service. The department offers an innovative major that includes opportunities for students to combine critical analysis, theory and production.

Learning Goals:

1. To teach students to break media texts into their component parts and analyze them as recombinant forms that are produced, distributed, and consumed within specific structures of power and difference. This includes texts ranging from feature, documentary and/or avant-garde film; to news and/or documentary and/or commercial photography; documentary and/or experimental video; to print and/or broadcast news; to web page and/or social networks and/or other new media forms.
2. To teach students to make media texts that use and/or go beyond the standard compositional elements.
3. To teach students the histories of media representations, both in terms of their specific histories and the larger local and global historical formations of which they are a part.
4. To train students to consider the connection between critical media theory and practice and goals and movements for democratic participation, sustainability and social justice as they analyze or make media texts.
5. To train students to write and speak clearly about the media texts they analyze and/or make.
6. To help students learn the foundational texts in media theory and criticism.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students should be able to define the meaning of basic terms in the composition of feature of documentary film or video; journalistic photographs; digital installations; or interactive digital media. These terms include (but are not limited to) diegesis, mise-en-scene, continuity editing.
2. Students should be able to work in and across specific genres of film and video.
3. Students should be able to discuss the discourses and genealogies of media representations by or about marginalized communities.
4. Students should be able to write essays about media texts in historical, generic, or formal terms.
5. Students should be able to organize and conduct small-scale media productions.
6. Students should be able to subject their productions to criticism and edit them for improvement.
7. Students should be able to synthesize their understanding of composition and social justice issues in their capstone and/or production work.

Department Assessment Strategies

1. Composition quizzes in introductory courses, especially MCST 128, Film Analysis and Visual Culture.
2. Archives of work completed in film, video and journalism classes, along with instructor critiques
3. Archives of work completed in courses on marginalized cultures, along with open ended questions about their work in this area on senior exit interviews.
4. Archives of work completed in the capstone course, along with instructor critiques.
5. Archives of student media productions.

6. Archives of capstone work at two or more stages of the editing process, along with instructor critiques.
7. Exit interviews with seniors about their capstone and/or production projects.

Four Year Timeline:

2014: Exit Interviews.

2015: Exit Interviews and capstone archives.

2016: Exit Interviews, capstone archives, and production archives.

2017: Exist Interviews, capstone archives, and production archives.