

## SPRING QUARTER 2025

## COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT COURSES

### LOWER DIVISION COURSES

#### COMM 10

##### Intro to Communication (Whitworth-Smith)

This course provides an introduction to the main areas of focus in this department and to several major areas in the field of communication including: the relation between communication, the self and society; the operation of language as a mechanism of power;

the emergence and significance of new communication technologies in different historical periods; the role of the news media in democratic societies; debates about the social and political influence of culture industries like film and music; the relationship between communication and globalization.

In examining these areas, the course also introduces students to a wide range of theories reflecting the department's interdisciplinary diversity including: political economy, poststructuralism, feminism, critical race studies and globalization. In the process, the course provides students with the tools for beginning to answer five key questions: What is communication? Where does it occur? How does it occur? Why does it matter? How do we study it?

#### COMM 20

##### Analysis of Media Forms and Cultures (Hill)

This course builds the critical skills to understand, analyze, and interpret audiovisual media (films, television series, short-form social media, video games) by introducing students to the basic "form" or vocabulary and grammar of moving image texts—how they create meaning through compositional visual and narrative style—and key methods for interpreting media and its cultural contexts.

Understanding form as an extension of content, we will look at the conventions of narrative, the employment of formal techniques like production design, composition, cinematography, editing and the use of sound as they function within particular media texts. Alongside these tools for describing films we will explore how movies and other media affect us personally, convey theme, ideology and message, and represent people and events.

NOTE: This class includes a weekly screening as part of its runtime. Registration and attendance are required for both lecture and section periods for this reason. Though screenings are a little different each quarter, some of the films/series screened in past versions of the course have included: Run Lola Run, Shaun of the Dead, Shadow of a Doubt, The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, Do the Right Thing, Fargo, The Player, Sorry to Bother You, Yojimbo, Bicycle Thieves, A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night, Inglorious Basterds, The Wizard of Oz, M, The Celebration, Rushmore, Pariah, Persepolis, On the Waterfront, Casablanca, The Graduate, Exit Through the Giftshop, The Thin Blue Line, Harlan County, USA, The Osbournes, The Larry Sanders Show, Parks and Recreation, Community, American Vandal, I Think You Should Leave and What We Do in the Shadows.

#### COMM 30

##### Digital Media Literacy: Analyzing Forms, Practices, and Infrastructures of Mediated Public Life (Metcalf)

From memes and misinformation to AI, bots, and "fake news," our informational lives are increasingly shaped by digital communication and online platforms—but not always for the better! In this course, we will ask questions like: what constitutes "truth" and "fact" in the digital age? How do media systems shape society, and how should we attempt to regulate them? And what would a just public sphere look like? In doing so, we will learn critical approaches to assessing media in our everyday lives, and examine the role of emerging technologies as they shape our communication practices.

#### COMM 50

##### Presentation & Public Speaking (Armenta)

This course covers the basics of communication in public and professional settings. Students will cultivate their own speaking style while developing skills in delivery, performance, and persuasion. They will learn how to create a slide deck as well as prepare for speeches, interviews, and Q&As.

#### COMM 80

##### Public Presentation & Persuasion - Speech and Debate (Campbell)

Throughout history, important advances in a democratic society have emerged most often from civil, rigorous discussion, debate, and persuasion. Students develop research, critical thinking, presentation, public speaking, and argumentation skills through in-class practice speeches and debates, along with participation in intercollegiate speech and debate tournaments. The COMM80 course grants credit towards graduation for members of UCSD's Speech & Debate Team.

### PRODUCTION COURSES

#### COMM 101

##### Introduction to Audiovisual Media Practices (Davis)

This upper-division course is required as the gateway to all future communication media production courses. Students will learn about contemporary media practices such as film, video, digital/online, and social media production, and how these practices are formed by technical and social constraints. In the studio portion of this course, students will work hands-on with video and new media equipment to apply what they have learned.

#### COMM 101D

##### Nonlinear/Digital Editing (Halm)

This hands-on post-production seminar introduces students to the art and practice of editing. Approaches to montage will be analyzed, discussed, and critically applied. This course is project-intensive, and will prepare students to edit using Adobe Premiere.

#### COMM 101K

##### Documentary Sketchbook (Martinico)

This class functions as both a production workshop and a critical examination of the documentary form. Through screenings, readings, lectures, and discussions, we will examine various creative and technical approaches to documentary filmmaking that will serve to inform your own documentary practices throughout the quarter. Students will work to complete a series of hands-on exercises and a final project, all intended to help develop their unique voices as documentary media makers.

#### COMM 101N

##### Sound Production and Manipulation (Martinico)

This is a hands-on production course designed to serve as an introduction to basic audio production and post-production, with a focus on sound as a tool for creative storytelling in both fiction and documentary contexts. Through listening, readings, screenings, lecture and discussion we will examine various approaches to working with sound that will serve to inform your own practice throughout the quarter. This course is project-intensive, and will prepare students to work with the Media Center's Adobe Audition audio software.

#### COMM 101T

##### Topics in Production: Beginning 3D Animation (Halm)

An introduction to the history and practice of 3D computer-based animation beginning in the late 20th century to the present time. Using Autodesk Maya software platform (free for students), we will learn the basics of 3D model construction, texturing, lighting, and animation - NO previous drawing experience needed.

#### COMM 101T

##### Topics in Production: "Living Chronically" Podcast (Dewey)

This service-learning course focuses on producing a podcast from concept to pilot episodes with the goal of creating an ongoing podcast program. Students will gain real-world experience creating a podcast that will be distributed to the public on popular streaming platforms. The podcast will focus on stories, relationships, and other issues that surround those who suffer from chronic illness.

#### COMM 101T

##### Topics in Production: Podcast Studio (Dewey)

This course introduces students to the basics of studio podcast production. The course provides basic production skills as well as developing skills in storytelling styles, interviewing, voice, journalism and ethics, marketing, critical media literacy. The course will include both individual projects and a partnership with local media organizations and nonprofits to develop and produce organization-based podcasting formats and content.

## SPRING QUARTER 2025

## COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT COURSES

### COMM 102C

#### Practicum in New Media and Community Life (Campion)

Practicum in New Media & Community Life is uniquely designed to help you learn and apply theories of human development, narrative, and community engagement to real-life collaborative experiences with our community partner, Town & Country Learning Center (TCLC). You will be introduced to these theories and asked to draw on them as you engage in participatory research and design (media) projects to be co-produced and shared with youth and adults at TCLC. Throughout quarter, we will focus on studying stories, community engagement and co-production. A key objective of the course is to teach you how to critically examine interactions with others facilitated through design-based and experiential learning practices. You will visit the after-school center to work, play, produce media, teach, and learn with resident youth and adults. It is through your participation at the center that you will be socialized into the culture of the center. As you do this you will also learn to carefully observe and document your own and others' participation in the ongoing activities at the center. The aim of this course is not only to teach you how to conduct social science field research in a skillful and ethical way, but also to connect you with the local community in a way that helps you realize that this community and the communities to which you belong are interdependent.

### COMM 102M

#### Studio Television (Ahn)

This course offers students the opportunity to produce and engage in critical discussions around various television production formats. We will study and produce a variety of projects, including public service announcements, panel programs, scripted drama, and performance productions.

### UPPER DIVISION COURSES

### COMM 100B

#### Communication, Culture, and Representation (Serlin)

We will explore the ways in which culture can be understood as the interplay between what humans create and the social and political structures within which their creations are embedded. Using semiotics – “the science of signs” – as our critical framework, we will examine the origins of spoken and written language, media forms like photographs, advertising campaigns, and music videos, and the contemporary world of emojis and memes. We will try to make sense of these diverse forms of cultural expression as components of our daily lives that are constantly being made as well as un-made and re-made. The goal of this course is for students to develop a critical awareness (or “presence of mind”) about the forms and structures of meaning-making in which we live and within which we participate. We will learn how understandings (and misunderstandings) of race, class, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and nation rely upon – and are routinely exploited by – forms of representation that are sustained by tradition, repetition, and habit. Using semiotics, students will learn how to de-naturalize (to make unfamiliar or strange) what we take for granted. And along the way we will learn and use a variety of critical and interpretive tools drawn from the humanities and social sciences.

### COMM 106F

#### Film Industry (McKenna)

This course examines the social, political, and cultural organization of the American film industry from the 1890s to the present. The course explores the history of the U.S. film industry but also pays attention to contemporary issues in the American film and media industries. Topics to be covered include: the shifting parameters of film production, distribution and exhibition; the impact of new technologies (such as sound, technicolor, television, VCRs, and streaming); the cultural politics of representation and identity; stardom and film exhibition culture; and contemporary trends in popular entertainment. –(historical, political and aesthetic.)

### COMM 106I

#### Internet Industry (Irani)

Amazing possibilities, big bumps. Data leaks. TikTok rabbit holes. Fake news. Automation and deep fakes. Tech companies — Apple, Google, and Amazon, for example — transform how we get products, how we get the news, and how we relate to one another. This class examines how the internet and its data, as technology and as industry practices, transform work, politics, and everyday social life. We will understand this by looking at data, interfaces, and services. In this class you'll learn to sift through the hope, the hype, and the dystopia of the internet, making the connections between business models and user experience. Learn about different pathways to change the future of technology: design, policy and law, ethics work, and community and labor organizing. Non-STEM and STEM students with a curiosity about tech, ethics, democracy, and the future are welcome and have succeeded in this course.

### COMM 109P

#### Propaganda and Persuasion (Jack)

Terms like propaganda and persuasion evoke a variety of concerns about culture, technology, and knowledge. Propaganda is a term that, until recently, mostly summoned images of wartime mass mediated persuasion in 20th-century conflicts. While we will touch upon these issues, they will not be our sole focus; rather, we will build a set of concepts and frameworks to help us consider what persuasion and propaganda mean, and the roles they play, in the everyday lives of people today.

The first half of the course focuses on core concepts, and then considers histories of propaganda, persuasion, and attitude change in cultural context. The second half of the course explores how digital media technologies shape (and are shaped by) persuasive information, then survey contemporary approaches to understanding belief in social context. We will approach course topics with a goal of understanding and critiquing commonly held notions about propaganda and persuasion in a media-rich and highly technological society.

### COMM 110M

#### Communication and Community (Abuelhiga)

This course examines how different forms of communication affect people's everyday lives. More specifically, we will focus on how members of different communities acquire information from and interact with a variety of institutions through forms of communication, such as linguistic practices, (community) media, and other audiovisual and artistic modes of communication. We will use these cases to better understand how people use communicative resources to position themselves as individuals, as part of a community, and within society more broadly.

### COMM 113T

#### Intermediate Topics: Art as Communication (Dominguez Rubio)

In this course we will explore how art and communication interact with each other. This will entail two tasks. First exploring art as communication. Second exploring communication as art. Studying art as communication will involve exploring how art has been historically deployed to communicate and propagate political, religious, or philosophical ideas. In communication as art, we will explore how different modes of communication, like advertising, propaganda, or social media, have adopted art for its purposes.

### COMM 114A

#### Human Rights, Communication, and Contemporary Global Justice (Zilberg)

How should we as global citizens respond to images and narratives of horrifying human rights abuses in news and social media? How do communication practices, the right to information, and freedom of expression function within the contemporary international Human Rights Regime? The course examines the implications of these protections against genocide, torture, enslavement, political persecution, gender violence, climate displacement, and their violation, for understanding communication as a human right.

At the end of the course, students will be able to: Explain the general historical and philosophical underpinnings of our contemporary understandings of human rights in relation to civil and political rights; Critically examine the original 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and ancillary conventions; Articulate the limitations of, and multiple challenges to the original document; Engage with human rights advocates and activists to understand the application of human rights through specific case studies and various challenges to the Western Liberal foundations of the document; Derive a deeper understanding of the politics, ethics and landscape of contemporary human rights work; Understand the implications of human rights for the right to communicate, academic freedom, and freedom of expression; Critique the human-centric nature of these rights.

This course satisfies a requirement for the Human Rights and Migration Minor

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## COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT COURSES

### COMM 114F

#### Law, Communication, and Freedom of Expression (Rojo Solis)

Controversies over free speech are everywhere these days. Should hate-spewing provocateurs be allowed to speak on a college campus? Can a baker claim free speech protection in his refusal to make a wedding cake for a same-sex couple? Should corporations be able to invoke the First Amendment in order to influence political campaigns?

This course examines the legal framework of the freedom of expression in the United States. We analyze the First Amendment to the US Constitution by a case law approach, that is, through the study of key cases in historical context. Since this is a Communication course, we also pay particular attention to the ways in which the law addresses language and meaning. We cover the fundamentals of First Amendment law, including issues of prior restraint, incitement, obscenity, libel, and fighting words. We also examine complications regarding the method of expression, the type of forum and contextual factors, and the regulation of content. Along the way, you will become familiar with some of the basic analytic concepts in First Amendment jurisprudence, such as tiers of scrutiny, balancing tests, vagueness and overbreadth, and the assessment of content and viewpoint neutrality.

### COMM 114P

#### Public History and Museum Studies (Abuelhiga)

This course will explore the role that “public history”—history as created for general audiences—plays in communicating cultural and national identities by examining museum exhibitions, their controversies, and how material objects mediate interpretations of the past.

### COMM 114W

#### Global Health Communication (Walkover)

Public health campaigns - from gentle reminders to official orders to cover a part of the body, change environmental conditions, or seek medical care - attempt to change behavior, slow the spread of disease and improve the health of a population. This course takes a critical social science perspective on the production, dissemination, and impacts (intended and otherwise) of public health communication, including questions of coercion, autonomy, and perceptions of collective health and wellbeing.

### COMM 115

#### Communication and the Senses (Alač)

While we often assume that communication is something that happens only with our eyes and/or ears, every act of communication is multisensory, often involving sight and sound but also smell, touch, and taste. In this course, students will learn how to pay attention to and engage with the “other” senses beyond the visual and auditory. Interdisciplinary scholarship and empirical activities help students build a vocabulary for understanding the complexities of multisensory communication.

### COMM 132

#### Advanced Topics: Southern California Cinema (McKenna)

Los Angeles has served as the setting and the subject for some of the most intriguing films ever produced – Sunset Boulevard, Blade Runner and Chinatown, to name a few. In this class, we will examine the history and representation of Southern California on film. We will consider the emergence of Hollywood as a defining moment in the history of Los Angeles and how film is central to the popular imagination of life in Southern California. We will also examine the cinematic representation of different communities and neighborhoods and discuss topics such as car culture and regional sprawl, the beach as imagined lifestyle, and noir as regional critique.

### COMM 139

#### Examining Marvel's Black Panther (Davis)

This course will look at the politics of the cinema industry and the development and reception of Marvel's blockbuster films, Black Panther and Wakanda Forever. We will read articles, books & graphic novels connected to the character and the film and examine its reception, impact, and worldwide response. We will dive deeper into the issues around cinematic representations of Black people, focusing on depictions of African cultures in cinema. Special emphasis will be placed on women and the role of gender in the film & its production. We will also consider the history and contributions of the original Black Panthers of the 1960s to American and worldwide cultures. The course will require you to read, write, and contribute to class conversations and complete a creative project and/or paper related to Black Panther.

### COMM 143

#### Science Fiction (Rojo Solis)

What does it mean to take a science fiction course under science fiction conditions? How to understand fictional settings that seem to have colonized everyday life as fact? Is science fiction a genre, a mode or a device? How does it work? The specific conditions under which these course will be offered —after a global pandemic, through electronic devices and during racial and social unrest throughout the world— will also offer us a very particular atmosphere through which to question how science fiction works and its relationship to time, space and intersectional realities. Through the exploration and discussion of theoretical, narrative and aesthetic examples of the genre, we will try to understand science fiction as a “mode of awareness” (Csicsery-Ronay Jr.) particularly well-suited for dealing with a mode of life which relies on science and technology to carry on with everyday existence, at the same time it provides tools to question what reality really is, and that firmly believes technology changes us in strange and radical ways.

### COMM 146

#### Adv Topics in Cultural Production: Global Cultures of K-Pop (Ahn)

This course examines the sprawling, often contradictory cultural terrain of South Korea's multi-billion dollar pop music export industry known as K-Pop. Over the course of the ten-week quarter, we unpack the historical, political-economic, and social forces that have transformed K-Pop into one of the most powerful culture industries and global media ecologies in the post-millennium. We ask how K-Pop is driving a new image of Korea overseas, especially within the U.S., but also shifting long-held perceptions of Europe, North America, and, to some extent, Japan, as the centers of cultural power. Along the way, we ask what K-Pop might teach us about how notions of identity, belonging, connection, and resistance might be changing with our global communication landscape. Each week, we explore a different set of issues and case studies, anchoring our discussions in critical concepts drawn from assigned readings, lectures, and experiential exercises. As the study of K-Pop remains a relatively new field of research, we will have to rely a great deal on our own observations, instincts, and class discussions to help situate our analyses.

### COMM 155

#### Latinx Space, Place, and Culture (Pavón Aramburú)

This advanced elective course explores the intersections of Latinx symbolic geographies shaped by art, media, and activism. Students will engage with cultural narratives and spatial representations through film, journalism, and creative research, focusing on key sites such as the borderlands with Mexico, Cuba or Puerto Rico. We will critically examine the construction of nations, border spaces, cities, and map-making, with attention to Latin American diasporas, gendered latinidades, and the decolonial frameworks of epistemologies from the South. Through a multimedia approach, students will investigate how Latinx imaginaries reshape global bodies of knowledge.

### COMM 158

#### Representations of the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict (Fields)

The conflict between the state of Israel and the people in and outside of Israel known as Palestinians is arguably the most intractable conflict in the world today. At the core of this conflict lie contrasting visions about the identity of the territory in the region, and competing ideas about who rightfully belongs to the land. Such differences about territorial belonging have created divergent narratives about the causes of the conflict, and intense debates regarding its perpetrators and victims. At issue in these debates are different interpretations of both past and present, and different understandings of responsibility for the conflict. This course is a critical engagement with these debates, and how these competing discourses reflect different representations of the conflict. At the same time, this course seeks to provide students with a rigorous immersion into the nature of argument and issues of “objectivity” and “point of view.” It is intended to give voice to a range of perspectives on this conflict, many of which are unpopular or too often silenced, while challenging students to understand the structure of the arguments at the core of one of the most impassioned issues of our time.

**COMM 171****Environmental Communication (Zilberg)**

Survey of the communication practices found in environment controversies. The sociological aspects of environmental issues will provide background for the investigation of environmental disputes in particular contested areas, such as scientific institutions, communities, workplaces, governments, popular culture, and the media.

**COMM 172****Adv Topics in Mediation: Reimagining Soft Skills (Ravi)**

What does it mean to build skills that are soft? There is a poem by Tao Te Ching that goes "Water is the softest substance. Yet nothing is better than water, for dissolving the hard and inflexible. Everyone seems to know that the soft and yielding overcomes the rigid and hard, but few can put this knowledge into practice." In this course, we will begin to practice this kind of softness in our social and personal lives, because how we act with one another is how we enact a (kinder, softer, freer) world. We will read literature on apologies, boundaries, crises, conflict, integrity, and responsibility. We will practice what we learn with one another and hold space for us to slip up, fall, and try again. We will try (when necessary) to stay tender, to keep trembling, and move softly in a world that makes it hard to do so.

**COMM 173****Interaction with Technology (Alač)**

In this class we will look closely at the everyday ways in which we interact with technology to discuss sociocultural character of objects, built environments; situated, distributed, and embodied character of knowledges; use of multimodal semiotic resources, talk, gesture, body orientation, and gaze in interaction with technology.

**COMM 180****Advanced Studies in Communication Theory (Leuning)**

How are messages created, transmitted, and received? What is the relationship between thinking and communicating? How are linguistic processes embedded in sociocultural practices? Course discusses classic texts in the field of communication theory stemming from linguistics, semiotics, philosophy of language, literary theory.

**JUNIOR SEMINARS****COMM 190****Junior Seminar: Behind the Internet (Domínguez Rubio)**

Description coming soon.

**COMM 190****Junior Seminar: Latines Languageing Toward Justice (Harb)**

This junior seminar explores the historical and contemporary social justice movements led by U.S. Latine communities through the lens of language. We will discuss topics ranging from Spanish-language community radio in the 1930s and 40s, the movement for bilingual education during the Civil Rights Movement, the struggle for Latine recognition in the Census, the emergence of gender-inclusive linguistic practices in Spanish, among others. Our goals will be to understand the ways in which discourses about Spanish, English, and Spanglish shape how Latine communities construct and assert their immigrant-origin identities in the U.S. In addition, students will explore the rich history of Latine activism in San Diego through class visits from local Latine community organizations.

**COMM 190****Junior Seminar: Critical Media Theories (Rojo Solis)**

Although we live in an age where we can all see the wonders of contemporary media, we also know (and sometimes suffer) their most somber effects. Throughout this course, we will discuss an alternate history of media theory, one that seriously takes into consideration that media are not neutral, but major players in the molding of social life and processes of subjectivation, and that content is only part of their influence. This history will take into account art, activism, critical and radical thinking as part of that history.

**COMM 190****Junior Seminar: Knives and Gendered Bodies (Boateng)**

This course examines ideas around gender that result in physical alteration of the human body. The course will examine social and cultural norms and practices around different kinds of voluntary and involuntary procedures, including cosmetic and gender affirmation surgeries. It will also examine examples of resistance to those norms and practices. The course will draw on theories of race, gender, sexuality and power. Each student will have the opportunity to use such theories to examine one practice or set of practices and consider why they occur, the issues they raise such as individual agency, and how they reveal the relation between discourses and practices of race, gender and sexuality.