

SUMMER QUARTER 2024 SESSION I

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT COURSES

LOWER DIVISION CORE COURSE

COMM 10

Intro to Communication

This course seeks 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? In answering these questions, the course provides an introduction to major issues in the field of communication, and also to the main areas of focus in this department.

UPPER DIVISION CORE COURSE

Prerequisite: COMM 10

COMM 100A

Communication, the Person, and Everyday Life

This course focuses on methods and methodology for doing communication research focused on the interpersonal and everyday. Reading classic texts from the field, we will learn how our understanding of the world around us is mediated by our social environment, by built spaces and environmental places, and by our technologies. In the process, we will practice writing field notes and analytic memos in order to hone our social scientific observational skills.

INTERMEDIATE ELECTIVE COURSES

Prerequisite: COMM 10

COMM 106T

TV, Culture & the Public

Television is both a cultural form and a social practice. In the 1950s, the political community in the US feared the influence of TV might proliferate Communism and destabilize American society. In the 1970s, artists, activists, and religious groups tenuously aligned to push policy makers to counter TV's cultural dominance, and streaming TV has changed our understanding and role within the time and space of global culture. So, what then is TV? This course will try to answer this question by surveying critical moments in the evolution of TV, from broadcast, cable, YouTube and Hulu, and our ever-changing relationship to it.

COMM 107

Visual Culture

Although many have called our era of phone cameras, social networking sites, and cloud storage for trillions of images a "revolution" in communication, the invention of photography in the 1830s was no less revolutionary. This course will examine the distinct history of photography as a pivot point between the worlds of analog media and digital media—what some scholars have called the transition between the pre-photographic era and the post-photographic era. The photograph changed how people understood the concept of "the real," while the camera, as a technology, changed how people understood the concept of representation by declaring the photograph an "objective" mirror of reality. In this course, we will assess what came before photography and what came (and continues to emerge) after photography in order to put photography's unprecedented effect on communication into perspective. It will also help us understand how and why so-called "dead" media continue to exert such a strong influence on the contemporary technological and cultural practices that dominate our lives.

COMM 109P

Propaganda and Persuasion

This course explores media practices and their problematic relationship with truth: Is there such a thing as truth? Is there a way to understand what's "really" happening in the world without being influenced to think a certain way? How do we judge what is true? Why and how do we believe what we believe? How do propagandistic and persuasive efforts play out in our everyday lives today? And what can we do to retaliate thwart those efforts in hope to understand the world around us better?

ADVANCED ELECTIVE COURSES

Prerequisites: COMM 10, one of 100ABC

COMM 132

Advanced Topics in Communication, Politics, and Society: Action Cinema

Action films are a dominant force in contemporary Hollywood. This course traces the history of the genre with particular attention to its historical contexts, its social meanings, and its longstanding popularity with audiences. Topics to be covered will include: early cinema and serial queens; genre and the action film as hybrid; the aesthetics of action; the 1980s and the blockbuster; action cinema and gender; the rise of the franchise and transnational cinema.

COMM 146

Topics in Production: CGI and Special Effects

From the spectacular visual effects in blockbuster films and video games, to the filters we use everyday on Instagram and TikTok, to the future of Augmented Reality overlays and Virtual Reality avatars, we will explore the history and communicative styles of various "special effects" to trace the common formal and intellectual threads shared between classical special effects, and those available through newer media platforms.

JUNIOR SEMINAR

Prerequisites: COMM 10, one of 100ABC

COMM 190

Junior Seminar: Gender-Based Violence in Global Cinema

The junior seminar enables a detailed examination of a specific topic from the field of communication selected by the instructor, exploring in greater depth theories and methods introduced in the core communication curriculum. Seminars are limited to thirty students with a heavy focus on class participation. Students complete a research project with a significant final product (typically a research paper).

SUMMER QUARTER 2024 SESSION II

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT COURSES

LOWER DIVISION CORE COURSE

COMM 10

Intro to Communication

This course seeks 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? In answering these questions, the course provides an introduction to major issues in the field of communication, and also to the main areas of focus in this department.

UPPER DIVISION CORE COURSE

Prerequisite: COMM 10

COMM 100B

Communication, Culture, and Representation

In this course – one of the four “pillars” of the undergraduate curriculum in the Department of Communication at UC San Diego, along with COMM 10, COMM 100A, and COMM 100C – we will explore the ways in which culture can be understood as the interplay between what humans create and the structures within which those creations are embedded. Using semiotics – “the science of signs” – as our critical framework, we will examine many forms of representation: from the origins of spoken and written language, to media forms like advertising, to the contemporary world of emojis and memes. Students will 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 also examine how understandings (and misunderstandings) of race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and nation rely upon – and are routinely exploited by – these forms and structures of meaning-making and how they sustain normative practices through tradition and habit.

COMM 100C

Communication, Institutions, and Power

This course will introduce you to the political economy of communication, an approach that studies communication systems in their interaction with social, political, economic, technological, and cultural institutions and infrastructures. We will examine communication systems as media content as well as general processes by which goods, subjects, and meanings are conveyed from one point to another in the contemporary world. By examining these processes in their historical context, we will understand some of the complex ways in which systems of communication shape and are shaped by different institutions and infrastructures, and how these relationships impact us as part of the social whole. This focus will allow us to identify some of the main actors in the power struggle over the control of meanings and resources, as well as the possibilities and menaces that the technologies of communication and information entail for society today.

INTERMEDIATE ELECTIVE COURSES

Prerequisite: COMM 10

COMM 110G

Communication in Organizations

Whether or not you give it much thought, you are surrounded by organizations. Your daily life involves encounters with schools, businesses, churches, social clubs (for instance, sports or debate teams, fraternities & sororities, gaming communities), health care systems and governments. What's more, these same organizations are created, maintained, transformed and in some cases, destroyed by communication. Whatever your career goals, this course will help you make sense of the importance of communication to the organizational experience. The course is intended to increase your awareness of communication processes central to organizing, and to develop new vocabularies and skills for working within modern organizations. Your participation in the course should help you better understand how organizational communication contributes to the overall quality of work life and the role of communication in creating and working well with the challenges of organizational communication. A focus is placed on evaluating your own organizational experiences and applying organizational communication theories to real-world organizations. Some of the themes covered include: the function of organizations within complex technological, market and sociopolitical environments; the communicative challenges of organizing; social responsibility and responsiveness; conflict mediation between organizational groups and actors; corporate wrongdoing; issues management; corporate political activity; institutional ethics; and whistle blowing.

COMM 111B

Global Borders: Communication and Conflict

This course focuses on geopolitical borders as charged sites of cross-cultural communication and conflict. By exploring the border between the U.S. and Mexico within a historical and global perspective, students will become mindful of how borders come into being and serve as much more than just fixed physical demarcations between nation-states. Students will learn to interrogate borders as dynamic multi-dimensional spaces where complex forces --political, economic, socio-cultural, technological, and ecological -- converge and diverge. We will examine how the policies and practices of enforcing borders impinge on those seeking to cross borders, and in the everyday lives of people living on either side of borders. We will then consider the impact of these anthropocentric (human-centered) borders on non-human and more than human ecosystems of land, water, and animal and plant life. While the U.S.-Mexico border will serve as our primary site of investigation, we will expand our geographic and conceptual maps to examine other borders between the “global north” and “global south,” and to consider how borders extend into the territory of the nation-state itself. Students will emerge from the course with a new critical awareness of their own position within the geography of Southern California and of the multiple borders crossed by its diverse residents from across the globe. Sadly, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the course will not include fieldtrips to the border between San Diego and Tijuana. We will, however, hear directly from community-based groups, activists and artists working in this and other border regions.

COMM 113T

Intermediate Topics in Communication: Sign Languages of the World

There are an estimated 6000-7000 distinct human languages distributed across every habitable part of the world. Included in this diversity are sign languages of different sizes, some very small, having less than a dozen users, and some quite large, with millions of users as found in American Sign Language, Nigerian Sign Language and Brazilian Sign Language, to name just a few. As knowledge about sign language increases, we are discovering many more sign languages around the world that were previously unidentified. The existence of spoken and sign languages in many human populations, from families, villages to towns and large urban centers, has led us to broaden our understanding of the evolutionary basis of human language, gesture and communication. This course is communication-based and focuses on how languages span different modalities - speech, gesture and sign, as well as the relationship of cultural diversity to language diversity.

ADVANCED ELECTIVE COURSES

Prerequisites: COMM 10, one of 100ABC

COMM 120I

Social Issues in Media Production

This course explores the relationship between media-making and social change. Who creates, for whom, and in what conditions? We will analyze cultural work directly speaking to social issues (in San Diego, the U.S., and around the world), including photography, zines, crafts, social media, audio production (podcasts, community radio), short-form documentaries, and other multi-media forms. Students will work with different mediums and a project in their chosen format.

COMM 146

Advanced Topics in Cultural Production: Making Space

Do people make space? Are spaces made for people? How can we understand the politics of space? Are geographies fixed or fluid? This class will be a foray into these questions by emphasizing the connections between spatial thinking and social relations. We will learn mapping and counter mapping practices by looking to film, poetry, digital media, and more. This course has two primary learning objectives: 1) question space as a given configuration, and identify both dominant and subversive productions of space, and 2) make space through a creative final project in service of crafting, and participating in, the world you wish to be in. We will utilize spatial thinking to emphasize sites of struggle against systems of power and oppression. The readings have been chosen because they offer modes of doing cartography and geography in creative ways. The class forefronts that new ways of knowing are germinated from working, crafting, and creating.

**SUMMER QUARTER 2024
SESSION II**

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT COURSES

JUNIOR SEMINAR

Prerequisites: COMM 10, one of 100ABC

COMM 190

Junior Seminar: Queer/Transgender Media, Culture & Identities

This seminar examines the production of queer identities, communities and culture through the labor of media making and the circulation of media objects. Central to the course is the different ways identities are given, claimed and utilized politically and personally to navigate normative social worlds and express queer life. This course is designed to survey topics within queer and transgender media practices and theory. Through avoiding a canonical approach we will be free to follow our shared curiosity, current events and discourses and remain steadfast in our critical approach to the materials and texts we engage with and how we express our thoughts and emotions through the course assignments. Students will develop critical research skills utilizing historical archives and contemporary queer media leading toward a final project about queer/trans representation in recent entertainment media. Students are allowed to combine a media practice along with writing to express their research question and outcomes.