

MEDIA STUDIES, B.A.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

This major is designed for students who wish to possess the analytic and critical skills needed to succeed in a professional world increasingly dominated by media. Students are exposed first to a breadth of approaches to understanding different forms of media (e.g. aesthetic, cultural, humanistic, psychological, economic, social, political) and then select specific areas of concentration to prepare them for different fields of research or professions involving media. All areas of concentration help students hone their analytic skills.

The following four options are offered:

Film and Television Studies Option

This option is designed for students interested in studying the art, history, and criticism of film and television. Electives offer students the opportunity to pursue a related field, such as art, art history, creative writing, speech communication, or theatre arts. This option merges aesthetics and social sciences and is appropriate for those seeking a more theoretical/critical approach to the study of film and video.

International Communications Option

This option is designed for students who want to study the mass media systems of the world and their role in international affairs. The option offers students an opportunity to enhance their occupational opportunities in international business, organizations, or government and to be better prepared to participate in the world community. Students must select either a University-approved minor in a foreign language, area studies, or international studies; a University-approved education abroad program; or other international-related courses or programs with prior departmental approval.

Media Effects Option

This option focuses on the social and psychological effects of media messages and technologies. Students progress through a general introduction to problems and issues, such as the effects of televised sex and violence, to courses that emphasize more theoretical approaches and advanced applications. A minor in a complementary area of study, such as Psychology or Sociology, is encouraged.

Society and Culture Option

In this option, a student and faculty adviser work together to tailor a program of courses to meet the student's individual interest in a coherent theme in media studies. These courses are usually selected in tandem with a minor or other supporting cluster of non-major courses in the area of specialization. Examples of themes include, but are not limited to, communication and the environment, communication and health campaigns, sports and the media, minorities and the media, and gender and the media. A minor in an area of specialization is encouraged.

What is Media Studies?

Students study the role and impact of the media on society in this theory-based, research-driven major. Students explore the relationships between media and the public, analyze media messages and technologies, and examine their effects on individuals and cultures. Course work covers

a wide range of topics, including message analysis, media psychology, public opinion, global media, film studies, game studies and human-computer communication. Students can customize their studies by specializing in film and television studies, media effects, international communications, or society and culture.

You Might Like This Program If...

You have an ability to think critically and logically, along with an attention to detail and an interest in research. Strong observational skills are important, as are high level of curiosity and an inquisitive nature. Excellent verbal and written communications skills are important. In addition, an appreciation and understanding of popular culture combine to help students interested in the major bring valuable perspectives to their studies.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT MEDIA STUDIES (<https://www.bellisario.psu.edu/departments/film-production-media-studies/>)