Module Overview

This Summer School introduces students to key concepts for studying media, communications and cultural institutions and practices. Through a series of detailed case studies, the course explores the relationship between technological, social, economic and political factors in the evolution of mediated communication and culture. These developments will be mapped alongside major debates about the social and cultural impact of media and communication technologies, digitisation, and new media cultures. The summer school also explores the cultural systems of contemporary ‘media saturated’ societies looking closely at social media and personal/cultural identity, cultures of globalisation, gender and culture, and cultural value and judgement. You will have the opportunity to visit world-class exhibitions and sites that have made London what it is and show how it continues to evolve today. You will be able to explore the Tate Modern and go on a psychogeography walk around historic, haunted Royal Greenwich and through to the burgeoning multiculturalism that can be found in Deptford. At the beginning of the course you will learn how to create an engaging blog with images and video. Throughout the course you will add to this and it will form part a larger The London Project which will form part of your assessment. In addition the blog will be a great way for you to record share your experiences with friends and family.

Class hours: 75 hours
Non-class hours: 15 hours
Course level: Open
Entry requirements: You should have some prior undergraduate study in social sciences, but do not need to have studied media or cultural theory before. This course is perfect for you if you are thinking of further study or professional development in the media, cultural or communications industries.
Course Schedule

Week 1

The first week will have a focus on media communication. Your tutor will introduce you to the fundamental concepts of media, communications and culture and how these are manifested as processes and practices. Areas covered include audiences and effects, global media and social media. You will contribute your thoughts in small group discussion to debate about contemporary issues such as digital media and the rise of citizen journalism. By the end of this week you will have an understanding of the communications media as a cultural form and of how it shapes contemporary culture.

Week 2

In this week you will focus on identity, cultural geography and power. Your tutor will present a series of case-studies and ask you to contribute your opinions on issues connected to the city. Through tutor lead case-studies, walks and group work, this week will give you a detailed introduction to some concepts and debates in cultural studies and how these relate to media processes.

Week 3

In the final week you will complete an individual project about London. Drawing on the concepts and practical knowledge you learned during the first two weeks, you will have the opportunity to develop these skills in the area of journalism and storyboarding. Thus you will analyse cultural industries in London from your own point of view. You will be assessed on the presentations of your project, giving you the chance to demonstrate the communication skills have developed over the three week course.

Aims

• Enable you to develop a critical understanding of the major theoretical perspectives in the field of media, cultural and communications studies
• Explore the social, historical and economic context of the transformations in media and communications practices and industries and their impact on contemporary cultures and societies
• Develop your understanding of a range of contemporary media, cultural and communications practices
• Support you to be able to present your research and ideas confidently – in writing, face-to-face and online

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course you should be able to:
• Be aware of the economic forces which frame the media, cultural and creative industries, and the role of such industries in contemporary political and cultural life (Subject Knowledge)
• Critically analyse the theoretical issues that inform the media and cultural studies discipline (Research, Analysis)
• An ability to locate and evaluate information from a range of written and / or visual sources (Research, Analysis)
• An ability to communicate ideas and arguments in an academic form (Communication and Presentation)
Requirements for Assessment

- Contribution to online media presence
- Presentation of ideas and concept development

Materials Required

Please bring with you:
- DSLR camera or smartphone with a camera
- Sketchbook
- You should also have a Transport for London travel card for getting around London. You may want to wait for the induction session before buying this

Reading/Resources List

Please note this list is indicative and you won’t need to go out and buy any books until you have begun the course.


Tutors

Chris Sams is an Associate Lecturer for BA (Hons) Media and Cultural Studies. Chris studied fine art at Chelsea School of Art specialising in film-making, and completed an MSc in Human-Computer Interaction at South Bank University, specialising in interface design and technical authorship. He has used these skills to work in information management and marketing for software houses in London and also worked as a film researcher and film editor in a number of places including the BBC. Chris has taught a broad range of subjects including media and cultural studies, documentary film-making, fine art, animation, journalism and social sciences. His special areas of interest include: digital interactive media and, currently, aspects of psychogeography and film. Chris has exhibited in various venues including the ICA, the South Bank Gallery and the Milch, working mostly in the area of performance and fine art. His monograph on the artist James Hutchinson was published by the University of Sunderland, to accompany his show at the Baltic Gallery Gateshead. Chris is currently undertaking a number of film and walking projects centred on the East End of London with a collective called the Josef Konrad Group.

Dr Charlie Oughton is an Associate Lecturer in BA (Hons) Contemporary Media Cultures, BA (Hons) Media Communications and BA (Hons) Live Events and Television. Charlie teaches film, television, social media, social research, gaming and cultural analysis. Specialising in media depictions of taboo, Charlie has contributed to a number of books on gender in cinema as well as to several journals on cultural appreciations of true crime. He is also active in the media industry and has contributed commentary materials to home entertainment releases in addition to the co-organisation of arts events including London Horror Festival. A journalist, Charlie also contributes to publications including Real Crime Magazine, SciFi Now, Starburst and Ain’t It Cool News, as well as having served on the juries for the Melies d’Argent Film Award and the British Horror Film Festival. His broadcast credits include BBC News and The Voice of Russia. Charlie tours film studies cabaret lectures at film festivals, performs vaudeville-style spoken word events on local history and has recently returned to acting via appearances in film.