Culture, Communication and Media Studies (CCMS)

**SEMESTER ONE: HONOURS MODULES**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR MEDIA AND CULTURAL STUDIES (CCMS731) (Compulsory)**

Students are introduced to the process of choosing, formulating and planning a research project and proposal, including the ethical considerations embedded in their work. Students are taken through the various theoretical traditions and paradigms that have influenced the study of media, communication and culture; both globally and in the African context. Specific attention is paid to the indigenisation and appropriation of 'imported' theoretical frameworks to meet local, African needs, cosmologies and ethics. Students receive hands-on instruction and experiential exercises in the approach to compiling a literature review, and importantly, creating a bibliography. Two sections, one on 'qualitative research' and the other on 'quantitative research' cover the intricacies of collecting, organising and analysing data. The module closes with workshops on the structuring and finalisation, including copy-editing, styles and layouts, of the research report, dissertation or thesis.

**SOUTH AFRICAN MEDIASCAPES (CCMS 732)**

This module will familiarise students with the South African Mediascape across the platforms of print, broadcast and Internet. South African Mediascape traces the historical genesis of the South Africa media from its early beginnings. The contemporary ecology of the media is studied both in relation to print and broadcast media. Political-economic issues of ownership, control and regulation guide the theoretical approach to this module. In the print media, this allows for an exploration of the establishment and realignments of the major press houses; while in broadcasting, the radical changes of the introduced by the advent of full democracy in the early 1990s, liberalised the sector significantly. Particular attention is paid to community media, and the manner in which the introduction of the Internet has impacted the media scene. All these themes are drawn together with a consideration of the six major media conglomerates now dominating the South African Mediascape.

**MEDIA THEORY (CCMS733)**

Media Theory complements the other offerings within CCMS, providing an approach that is both theoretically rigorous and contextually relevant. The programme as a whole is conceptually and methodologically integrated with a view to educating graduates to work in the business of the cultural, communication and media industries, and with regard to the design and implementation of communication campaign strategy that addresses pressing social issues.

The module integrates an understanding of the primary theories regarding representation with methodological approaches for the application of these theories.

- Theory of representation,
- Encoding and decoding
- Semiotics: How ‘Signs’ make meaning
- Audience Studies
- Narrative Conventions and Story telling
- Genre and Story telling
- Film as Representation: Documentary, Ethnographic and Narrative

**CULTURAL STUDIES IN PRACTICE (CCMS736)**

Cultural studies in practice investigates the methodologies and approaches used in fieldwork research; specifically in terms of the way in which cultural and cultural practices are discerned through their representation in everyday cultural artefacts, sites, visual materials and social interaction. The module covers various research approaches to understanding, describing, contextualising and analysing the ways in which both the past and the present can be represented and imbued with meaning. The module includes fieldtrips to sites of cultural memory and memorialisation, as well as the imaging of history through media (photographs, films, print and artefacts). Funding permitting, an excursion to the KwaZulu-Natal Battlefields provides rich opportunities for students to interrogate the ways in which historical events and processes have been represented, opening debates on power, identity, memorialisation and memory within the ambit of visual representation.

**SEMESTER TWO: HONOURS MODULES**

**SOCIAL CHANGE AND HEALTH COMMUNICATION (CCMS734)**

Social change and health communication serves as the overarching framework drawing a link between Southern African development and social change through different media of interpersonal and mass communication. The aim of the module is to learn how to apply theoretical understandings in the creation of frameworks for health and development initiatives, and an ability to analyse strategic communication and ‘entertainment education’ interventions. The objective of the module is to build the capacity and research competence within the area of public health communication strategies. The module introduces appropriate macro development communication paradigm ‘modernisation’; ‘participatory’ approaches. The module indigenises theory and development paradigms in terms of local contexts, culture and knowledge. It reviews key theories of health promotion communication and introduces and analyses emerging theories and models for social and behavioural change communication. Entertainment education as an intervention approach is one example.

**MEDIA IN THE GLOBAL WORLD (CCMS735)**

Media in the Global World traces the movement of information and communication across the globe. It examines the technical, economic, cultural and political aspects of media globalisation, both historically and in the context of the changes wrought by the introduction of ‘new media’. The module covers the meaning of globalisation, with particular reference to the part played by media. The development of media concentration from the mid-19th century, the rise of the ‘Press Barons’ and the international cable and news agencies. Political-economic categories of ownership, control, regulation and diversity; as well as impact of new media and the ‘digital divide’ provide a theoretical basis for the module. The importance of diversity, language and accessibility in media and their relationship to global forms of cultural commodity
Students are required to produce a piece of independent research on a topic chosen from the broad range of areas studied in the ‘content’ modules. This module is considered a core module of the Honours programme. Competency in applying knowledge and skills gained from the ‘content’ courses of the programme, all of which include specific theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of media and cultural phenomenon. The aim of the research project, at the honours level, is for students to gain experience of research by focussing on a chosen area of specialist study, reviewing the available knowledge in the field, devising methods to describe and investigate issues of social and cultural interest, and evaluating their research by the criteria used in the field. Particular emphasis is placed on the consideration of ethical issues.

*Not all modules will be available every year. Students are encouraged to register for at least 16 credit points outside the programme.

**DEPARTMENTAL LINKS AND PUBLICATIONS**

The Centre for Communication and Media in Society has active collaborative links with institutions and academics globally, including:

- Department of Media and Communication Studies, University College of Gävle, Sweden
- Department of Mass Communication Uganda Christian University, Uganda
- Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies, University of Bayreuth, Germany
- Gimlekollien School of Journalism, NLA University, Norway
- Drama in AIDS Education (DramAidE),
- Art: A Resource for Reconciliation Over the World (ARROWSA).

Two academic journals are edited in the Centre, *Critical Arts: South-North Cultural and Media Studies* (UNISA Press, Routledge) and *Journal of African Cinemas* (Intelect), while *African Communication Research* (St, Augustin’s University, Tanzania) is hosted by our website.

The Centre produces a quarterly magazine called *SUBTEXT*. Students have the opportunity to popularize their research and writing skills in *SUBTEXT*.

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**School of Applied Human Sciences**

**Postgraduate Study in Culture, Communication and Media Studies**

**Honours, Masters and Doctoral Degrees**

For further information visit the departmental website:

http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/

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