Introduction

Bienvenue!
Welcome to the MA program in Media Studies. Concordia offers a comprehensive MA program that ranks among the most interesting and challenging in North America. As you acquaint yourself with the program, we strongly encourage you to get to know your fellow students, since those accepted to our program come from a diversity of disciplines and locations. When you delve into your course work, you will likely discover that the term “Media Studies” means many things to many people. In fact, Media Studies is highly interdisciplinary: it incorporates theories and research from many academic fields, and can be approached from a variety of different perspectives. Through its structuring, the MA program represents these multi-faceted approaches. The range of course offerings and the requirement options (MA with Thesis, Project or Courses) are designed to provide you with flexibility and independence as you pursue your research interests.

In light of the vast expanse that the moniker “Media Studies” incorporates, we'd like to highlight the approaches, methodologies and specialities that are best represented by the full-time faculty in the department. Cultural Studies (which views media and media practices in terms of cultural value, cultural identity and broader relations of social power), media history, philosophy of communication, political economy of communication, organizational communication, documentary film, as well as feminism, sexuality and critical approaches to race and ethnicity are among the areas the program covers best. There are no full-time faculty currently specializing in media law or media management. However, these courses are taught by sessional professors or individuals outside the department.

Our advice: Take advantage of the fact that the program allows you to develop a focus of your own. You have the freedom to investigate numerous new interests in your academic work, to import your prior expertise toward current studies, and to pursue your interests independently. As well, you can use a Directed Study course, which allows you to create your own course with the professor of your choice, to further explore your academic interests.

A few other tips:
Some new students feel some anxiety about making the transition from undergraduate to graduate studies. The Department’s MA committee presents a number of workshops, throughout the year, intended to make this transition smoother and less daunting. These workshops cover such topics as thesis writing, designing a media thesis project, and applying for funding. The faculty have strong connections with the Montreal academic community and new students may find that faculty and students at other universities are also helpful. The faculty also have links with the local arts community, including Studio XX, Oboro Medialab, Groupe Intervention Video/GIV and Videographe.

Some students and faculty have felt that the support mechanisms are insufficient, particularly when it comes to funding. Expanding the pool of funding is a department priority, though it is no small task at a time of shrinking funds for public institutions. See the Money section of this handbook.

If you need information or support and don't know where to find it, ask. The first people to turn to are Sheelah O'Neill and Sharon Fitch in the Department office, and the MA Graduate Program Director (GPD), Monika Kin Gagnon — dedicated and knowledgeable people whom you will soon get to know. Your MA Student Representatives and the Learning Centre staff are also at your disposal. By all means, don't feel that you must rely upon institutional channels for your information. Speak to other students. Learn the ins and outs of the bureaucracy.
Some Crucial Information

Concordia has two campuses:

The first is Sir George Williams (SGW) at the corner of de Maisonneuve and MacKay. Take the green Metro line to the Guy-Concordia stop, head for the sortie rue Guy, and walk 1 block east. The School of Graduate Studies is located at SGW.

School of Graduate Studies and Graduate Awards Office
SGW: 2145 Mackay Street
848-2424, ext 3809, 9h to 17h, Mon-Fri
http://graduatestudies.concordia.ca/

The second campus is Loyola Campus (LOY), located at Montreal's most western extremity. Almost all MA Media Studies courses are held in the Hingston building on this campus. The easiest way to get there from downtown is to take the inter-campus shuttle bus that leaves from the Sir George Williams epicenter. For bus and Metro routes check with Montreal's Transit Corporation (STCUM). Campus maps are available from the Information desks at either campus.

The Department of Communication Studies' location:

LOY: Room HB-429, Hingston Pavilion
7141 Sherbrooke Street West, 848-2424 ext. 2555, fax: 848-4257
Montreal, Quebec Canada H4B 1R6

Office hours: 9h00-17h00, Mon.-Fri. (Summer hours vary)
Website:
http://artsandscience.concordia.ca/comm/main.html

If you come across any information that you believe should be included in next year's handbook, let your MA reps know. This edition of the MA in Media Studies Handbook is only one of many new and improved editions to come. Also, please note that the information found herein does not supercede that of the Graduate Calendar.
The MA in Media Studies Program

The MA in Media Studies Program is centered around the theory, history and critical analysis of the mass media and media practices. The aim of the program is to develop and encourage critical research expertise within a student population of young researchers and media professionals. We select students who have solid academic backgrounds plus relevant media, cultural or community experience.

The Program aims to:
- provide all students with a common, general background in media theory, research methods and history.
- allow flexibility and specialization in the development of students' individual research programs.

Students may fulfill their degree requirements through one of three options: Option I: MA with Thesis; Option II: MA with Courses; and Option III: MA with Project.

Courses

Most courses are offered in the evening, to facilitate part-time study and study by students with parenting responsibilities. Courses are offered on a rotational basis, and are usually taught at least once every two years. All students are required to take obligatory courses in Communication Theory, History of Media and Media Research Methods.

Course descriptions are kept flexible to allow a variety of approaches to each topic. Special topics courses allow faculty to formulate courses that reflect their current research projects. In the past these courses have included courses on cultural citizenship, media ethnography, “Culture, Nature and Liminality,” and “Voice, Identity & Agency.” Directed Studies courses allow students to research their own areas of interest, under the supervision of a full-time faculty member, as long as the topic is not covered by an already existing course.

In addition to your mandatory credits, you'll be rounding out your remaining course credits by selecting from the Communication Studies Department's elective courses. For a full listing of the courses, see Appendix III of this handbook.

Faculty

Methodologically, professors vary in their approaches to media and communications, and the majority of the research done in this department is qualitative rather than quantitative. Most faculty who teach at the MA level adopt a “critical” approach, placing the media within the broader context of social, philosophical and cultural issues. Please refer to the department website for faculty interests and fields of research. Included in this Handbook is the contact information for faculty members.

Some Recent MA Theses


Catherine Callary (2002), “Canadian Cultural Identity and Institutions: The Banff School, 1933” (sup.: C. Acland)


Joel McKim (2003), “Filling the Voids: Berlin’s ‘Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe’” (sup.: P. van Wyck)

Nanako Nishihira (2003), “By and For a Feminist Rhetorical Theory: Constituting Cultural Identity in Isocrates “Helen” (sup.: C. Nadeau)


See Appendix I for Dr. K. Sawchuck’s Thesis Recipe
Degree Requirements

Program Options

Master of/Magisteriate in Arts with Thesis (Option I)
Candidates are required to take the following:

- 9 credits: COMS 600: Communication Theory; COMS 605: Media Research Methods; COMS 608: History of Media.
- 15 credits, chosen in consultation with the student's faculty advisor and approved by the department's graduate studies committee. If approved by the department's graduate studies committee, and with the permission of the department concerned, up to 9 of these credits may be taken in cognate graduate courses offered by other departments of the university
- 21 credits, COMS 695: Thesis.

Master of/Magisteriate in Arts with Courses (Option II)
Candidates are required to take the following:

- 9 credits: COMS 600: Communication Theory; COMS 605: Media Research Methods; COMS 608: History of Media.
- 36 credits, chosen in consultation with the student's faculty advisor and approved by the department's graduate studies committee. If approved by the department's graduate studies committee, and with the permission of the department concerned, up to 9 of these credits may be taken in cognate graduate courses offered by other departments of the university
- 21 credits, COMS 697: Project.

Master of/Magisteriate in Arts with Project (Option III)
Candidates are required to take the following:

- 9 credits: COMS 600: Communication Theory; COMS 605: Media Research Methods; COMS 608: History of Media.
- 15 credits, chosen in consultation with the student's faculty advisor and approved by the department's graduate studies committee. If approved by the department's graduate studies committee, and with the permission of the department concerned, up to 9 of these credits may be taken in cognate graduate courses offered by other departments of the university
- 21 credits, COMS 697: Project.
Project Option Guidelines

The MA committee produced the following guidelines after several meetings and broad consultation with students and faculty. They are intended to help both students and faculty by clarifying the expectations and requirements for the project option. These guidelines are not a significant departure from existing procedures for the Thesis Option in terms of committee composition and the oral examinations, and they are meant to be read in conjunction with information already provided in the calendar.

I. Definition: The Project employs one or more media to explore creative and theoretical issues. Projects must incorporate a critical understanding of the work produced, demonstrating knowledge of related media works, and competency in an existing literature and in the standards of media practice. As such, successful projects will present their relation to critical practice and to creative practice as well as an integration of the two.

The Project consists of two interrelated components: the media work and a written text of approximately 6,000–8,000 words in length.

As a reflection of its status in an MA program, the written component of the project should exhibit a high degree of competency in relevant media discourses, current theoretical debates and also account for the production process.

II. Approval for the Project Option: The Project Option requires previous production experience demonstrated with the presentation of a portfolio, the student's own access to facilities, which Communication Studies is unable provide at this time. As with the Thesis Option, the Project Supervisory Committee is composed of the supervisor and a second faculty member.

III. Proposal: The Project proposal is typically submitted to a prospective supervisor after the first year of course work. In addition to the major components of the proposed research and production, the proposal should include information designating the media involved and the rationale for the selection, an updated CV and portfolio, a statement demonstrating the student's experience having already produced equivalent work and/or explaining how the student will acquire the necessary skills to produce the proposed work, and a statement of access to the necessary equipment, technology and production facilities, independent of departmental support.

IV. Supervision: It is strongly recommended that production faculty act as supervisor, or be included as a second committee member.

V. Evaluation: The project is defended in an oral examination.

Some Recent Projects

Michelle Casey (2003), “Electrifying Oral History: Remembering Dad’s Big Band Days in Rawalpindi” website and CD Rom (sup.: M. Gagnon)


Marc Tuters (2003) “Geographiti: a Mobile Locative Media Application for Annotating Space” (sup.: H. Thwaites)
Advisors, committees and proposals

Regardless of your chosen Option, you are encouraged to have a faculty member advise you in your course selections. If you are enrolled in either Option I or Option III, you will need to assemble your Supervisory Committee at the proposal stage of your thesis or project. This will include a principal supervisor, as well as a second committee member. Your supervisor will usually be a full-time faculty member in the Communications Department, the second member must also be tenured or tenure-track from within the university. A third committee member will join the Thesis or Project Examining Committee for the oral exam/defense. The third member may be from outside the dept or university, and does not have be tenured or tenure-track (but must have requisite qualifications of at least an MA and a related research profile); Limited Term Appointment faculty may thus serve as thesis or project examiners.

Your supervisor is your capital-A Advisor: keep in touch with him/her regularly, submit chapters to them for review, etc. Use your other committee members as additional resource people as you engage in various areas of research. You are not expected to choose a supervisor right away — get to know the faculty a little bit before you choose. In the interim, the GPD is there to advise you and to refer you to potential advisors based on your interests.

You must submit a Thesis/Project proposal prior to beginning your research-in-earnest. Your proposal is not written in stone: your research will inevitably lead you in many different directions, including some you may wish to pursue in-depth, and that’s fine. The proposal is there to help you narrow your field of study, to give you a sense of focus at the outset from which you are free to explore.

Overall Academic Regulations

- Credits. Fully-qualified candidates are required to complete a minimum of 45 credits.
- Residence. The minimum residence requirement is one year (3 terms) of full-time study, or the equivalent in part-time study.
- Courses. Students may enter one of the three options I, II or III outlined above.
- GPA Requirements. The academic progress of students is monitored on a periodic basis. To be permitted to continue in the program, students must obtain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 based on a minimum of 12 credits. Students whose GPA falls below 3.00 are considered to be on academic probation during the following period. Students whose GPA falls below 3.00 for two consecutive review periods are withdrawn from the program.
- C Rule. Normally a student receiving a grade of C in two courses will be required to withdraw from the program. Students withdrawing for this reason may petition the MA (Media Studies) Committee for special consideration. In cases of extenuating circumstances probationary continuation in the program will be considered.
- F Rule. Students who receive a failing grade in the course of their studies will be withdrawn from the program. Students may apply for readmission. Students who receive another failing grade after re-admission will be withdrawn from the program.
- Time Limit. The time limit to complete the master's program is four years of full time study or five years of part time study from the time of original registration in the program.
- Graduation Requirement. In order to graduate, students must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.00.
Other Rules and Regulations

Computing and Other Equipment Access
The department is currently unable to provide equipment access to department facilities for MA students. As stated in the acceptance letter, those students wishing to undertake the Option III/Project Option, must have independent access to any equipment necessary for the completion of the MA project. The university is able to provide access to some computer and video equipment through IITS facilities on the Loyola campus. Computer and video equipment rentals may also be available at a modest cost through the independent artist-run centres in the local arts community, including PRIM Video, Videographe and the Oboro Media Lab, as well as the women’s artist-run media production centres, Groupe Intervention Video/GIV and Studio XX.

Courses outside the Program
All students (regardless of Option) may take up to nine credits via graduate courses offered through other departments. You may want to consider courses through other universities as well, as there are many within commuting distance offering MA programs in Communications: McGill, Montréal, UQAM, and, if you have a car, Carleton (Ottawa) and Laval (Quebec City). Do some calendar-scouring, and check with your advisor or the GPD before enrolling.

Pro tanto credits
Credits allowed for previous graduate work must be determined by the Department and the University upon entry to the Program. At present, the university only accepts a maximum of 15 pro tanto credits.

Language rules
While the language of instruction at Concordia is normally English, students have the right to write their assignments and examinations in French. Consult with your professor to ensure they are able to read French or, if not, to find someone who can.

School of Graduate Studies Grading Policy

If you receive a failing grade in any course, you will be required to withdraw from the Program. Normally, a student receiving a grade of C in two courses will be required to withdraw from the Program. If so, you may petition the MA Media Studies Committee for special consideration; probationary continuation in the program will be considered in cases of extenuating circumstances.

Policy on deadline extensions
Course work can get rather stressful when the end of semester rolls around, and you may decide to ask for a deadline extension. If so, heed these guidelines:

- All deadlines appearing on course outlines are considered final. All students’ course work should be completed according to those deadlines.
- A professor may grant a deadline extension (“Course-In-Progress”, or “IP”) upon a student's request and based on unusual circumstances. Students requiring an extension must approach their professor in advance and negotiate a new deadline for their work. Note that professors are not obliged to grant extensions, and failure to advise your professor may result in a failing grade for unsubmitted work.
- The maximum extension available for an IP is 3 months. The Department follows the School of Graduate Studies guidelines on this issue.
- If work is not submitted by the IP deadline, an F grade will appear on the student's transcript. Note that an F grade on your transcript is grounds for dismissal from the School of Graduate Studies. Anyone with an F on their transcript will not be allowed to register for further courses unless (and until) the grade is changed.
- Students must fill out all forms requesting extensions and must follow through on all the approval steps. See downloadable forms at:
  http://graduatestudies.concordia.ca/students/forms.shtml
Money

There isn’t a simple, direct and automatic method of funding for MA students at Concordia. Although “easy money” is hard to come by, there is some money to be had at Concordia. However, it's up to you to go get it.

Living on borrowed money: loans

Your first recourse would be your Canada/provincial student loan program (contact the government of your home province). Of course, loans don't really count as “funding” because the lending institutions tend to want their money back in the future. However, if you need a loan, contact the Concordia Financial Aid office. You can also contact Financial Aid for emergency or temporary loans, and for tuition deferrals (e.g. while you wait for your loan to be processed).

Concordia Financial Aid
SGW: Room LB-085, McConnell (Library) Building
1400 de Maisonneuve West,
848-2424 ext. 3507, 9h to 17h, Mon-Fri
http://web2.concordia./financialaid

Scholarships and bursaries

The people at the Graduate Awards office can help you with funding in three different ways.

The first is the Quebec provincial FQRSC scholarships. These are available to you if you've been a resident of Quebec for at least a year (you must have a Quebec medical card). If you want to apply for an FQRSC for the next year of study, your deadline is usually early October of the preceding year, so if you want to get one and you're not a Quebec resident, you have to decide on a change of residency pretty fast. Also, as an MA student, you can only apply for an FQRSC once. See: http://www.fqrsc.gouv.qc.ca. In 2003, SSHRC introduced MA Graduate Scholarships for the first time. Please see www.sshrc.ca for details, or contact Graduate Awards. Deadlines usually fall in late October.

Second, the Graduate Awards people can provide you with a list of specific research area awards. It is crucial to find out what they have to offer — you may just be eligible for an obscure scholarship / fellowship / bursary. A full listing of available awards is listed at: http://graduatestudies.concordia.ca/awards/index/

Third, you can apply for the university-wide Fellowship competition. These fellowships vary in value from $2,700 per term to $15,000 per year. There are five different types that MA students are eligible for, but you only have to apply once. The application deadline is December 15. You should note that the process for applying for these is almost the same as applying to the program, as transcripts, references, etc., are required. Francophone students might want to consider applying for a second official language bursary. You are eligible if you are a full-time student taking at least 75% of your courses in your second language, and if you are living at least 140 km from your permanent residence.

Last, it is important to keep your eyes peeled on the notices that paper the bulletin boards in our lovely building. On these you can often find information related to Graduate Awards and fellowship/scholarship competitions. As well, there is usually tons of information on local projects, internships and work placements; although officially the MA program is non-practical, and many of the placements are geared toward the undergrads, getting involved in things around the city is a great way to get connected, not to mention get some skills.

Finding a job

If you are a full-time graduate student, the Financial Aid office can get you a job at the university. Their work-study program provides jobs of 15 hours a week paying between minimum wage and $8.71. One has to apply to the program, and if you are accepted, you will be offered a job based on their assessment of your need.
As far as other job services are concerned, there’s Concordia’s Career and Placement Office. Turn here for career-related job opportunities, both full-time and part-time. Note that, as virtually all MA Media Studies courses are offered in the evening, you can take on a day job. The Career and Placement office posts job opportunities received from employers specifying either a specific discipline or a certain level of university education. Jobs are posted at the beginning in September, they will also be posted on the internet. Check Concordia news for daily updates. Career and Placement offers free workshops on resume writing, interview techniques, accessing the hidden job market, and other topics. You can also make an individual appointment to discuss these issues. They can help you with employer searches and networking techniques as well.

Career and Placement Office
SGW: 2070 Mackay, Ground Floor
848-2424 ext. 7345, 9h to 17h, Mon-Fri

If the career job market is unfriendly, or if you prefer not to use your skills while working, the Students’ Union operates a Job Bank of non-career-oriented jobs. You can check here for jobs in restaurants, hotels, recreation, childcare, and office work.

Students' Union Job Bank
SGW: Room H-260, Mezzanine of Hall Building
1455 de Maisonneuve West, 848-2424 ext. 7425
10h to 17h, Mon, We, Th; 10h to 18h, Tu; 10h to 16h, Fr

**TAships, RAships, Part-time teaching**

What about Teaching Assistantships? There are a few TAships offered each year, but you must compete for them, and some require production experience, as the undergraduate program in Communications at Concordia includes production courses. If you are interested in TAs please contact the GPD to see whether your existing skills match with any TAs being offered while you are in the program.

For Research Assistantships, you should contact professors individually. RAships are funded by individual professors' research grants, so Concordia has no official procedure for posting this sort of work. If you are looking for work, and if a particular professor's specialty interests you or if you get to know them through class, try this strategy: Ask for paying work. Together, you might be able to create a position that is eligible for work-study funding through Financial Aid (remind your prof of this little-known fact). A little bit of brazen behaviour might go a long way.

There are also a few jobs that come up over the year, such as working in the Learning Centre on the ground floor, handling the resources, handing out readings, making sure keys are signed out—that sort of thing. Come the New Year, there is also usually a couple of positions helping out Sheelah and Sharon with the onslaught of applications that flood the office the middle of February. In general, it is a good idea to introduce yourself to the office, and give your resume to Sheelah to keep on file. This will help them keep you in mind when various jobs come up throughout the year, as they invariably do.
Appendix I

The MA Thesis/Project: A Basic Recipe for a Successful Graduation
by Kim Sawchuk, former Graduate Program Director

Step 1: Have an idea
• Begin thinking about thesis/project after the end of year 1 or 18 credits.
• Finish outstanding course work.
• Find supervisor and committee members (2 in total).

Step 2: Proposal
The proposal is not a hurdle, but a means to initiate the process
• Write your proposal (10-15 pp, or as recommended by your supervisor).
• Submit finished proposal to supervisor and committee.
• Committee meets to discuss proposal with student. Submit requisite form to GPD with the proposal (to student's file).

Step 3: Write thesis / produce a project
This is an MA thesis. You are not expected to make an original contribution to the field, but rather to demonstrate your critical knowledge of a body of theory and your research capabilities through their application. Different criteria apply to the Project Option; be sure to consult your advisor.
• Research and write thesis/project (approximately 6 months; 100-125 pages. Sometimes it's helpful to think of the thesis as three 25-page, interrelated essays accompanied by a short introduction, conclusion and bibliography.)
• Submit chapters or sections to supervisor on regular basis for feedback; your committee may play some role in the process. Determine this at the initial meeting to discuss the proposal.
• Give your final draft to your supervisor.
• Check appropriate deadlines (see academic calendar).
• Inform GPD thesis has been deposited. S/he will set a date for defense and find a Chair. The defense must happen within 2-5 weeks of the deposit.
• Thesis format is checked by Thesis Office and returned to entire committee for final substantive evaluation.
• Committee submits evaluations to the Examination Chair, 1 week before defense.

Step 4: Defend
Don't worry! We never let a thesis/project go to defense if it won't pass.
• Prepare a 15-20 minute presentation to thesis/project.
• Round of questions from committee members.
• In camera discussion to determine final evaluation.
• Congratulate successful defendant and celebrate.
• Make modifications as per instructions of committee and send final draft to Thesis Office for binding.

Step 5: Graduate and enjoy!
All modifications must be finished and submitted by the appropriate deadline to the School of Graduate Studies Thesis Office. For the Spring, the deadline is usually mid-April; in the Fall, it's usually mid-September. Please refer to the graduate calendar for the exact deadlines. All defended theses must be submitted to the by September 15. Don’t forget that you must submit an “Application to Graduate” to the Office of the Registrar. Forms are available for download at: http://registrar.concordia.ca/convo/gradapp.html
Appendix II

Communication Studies
Department Faculty

Charles Acland
Office: HB-423, 848-2424 ext. 2558
E-mail: craclan@alcor.concordia.ca
Research Interests: Media Theory, Film and Television Studies, Canadian Cultural History

Martin Allor, Acting Chair Fall 2003
Office: HB-427, 848-2424 ext. 2535
E-mail: allor@vax2.concordia.ca
Research Interests: Cultural Studies, Media Theory and Social Discourse Analysis, Cultural Policy, and Documentary.

William Joseph Buxton
Office: HB-402, 848-2424 ext. 2547
E-mail: buxton@vax2.concordia.ca
Research Interests: History of Media, History of Communication Thought & Organizational Communication

Maurice Charland
Office: HB-424, 848-2424 ext. 2546
E-mail: charlan@vax2.concordia.ca
Research Interests: Rhetoric, philosophy of communication, social-rational communication and judgment within technological society.

Monika Kin Gagnon, MA Program Director
Office: HB-403, 848-2424 ext. 2563
E-mail: mkgagnon@vax2.concordia.ca
Research Interests: Race Theory, Cultural Race Politics, Art + Alternative Media.

William Lambert (Scot) Gardiner
Office: HB-417, 848-2424 ext. 2549
E-mail: siliclone@sympatico.ca
Research Interests: Psychology of Education; The Interface Between Humans and Machines; CD ROM Technology

Rick Hancox
Office: HB-407, 848-2538
E-mail: rhancox@alcor.concordia.ca
Research Interests: Film Studies, Canadian Studies, Film & Video Production

Yasmin Jiwani
Office: HB-411, 848-2424 ext. 2583
E-mail: y.jiwani@sympatico.ca
Research Interests: Participatory Action Research, Race and Ethnicity, Colonialism

Andra McCartney
Office: HB-404, 848-2424 ext. 2551
E-mail: andra@vax2.concordia.ca
Research Interests: Sound artist, producing sound for CD, radio, performance, Sound in Media, sound ecology

Nikos Metallinos
Office: HB-419, 848-2424 ext. 2536
E-mail: nikos@vax2.concordia.ca
Research Interests: Television Production, Visual Media Aesthetics and Criticism, Visual Media Research Methods
Dennis J. Murphy  
Office: BC 128, 848-2424 ext. 4811  
E-mail: murphyd@vax2.concordia.ca  
Research Interests: Definitions of Media and Technology, Propaganda, Communication and Media Ethics

Chantal Nadeau  
Office: HB-414, 848-2424 ext. 2560  
E-mail: nadch@alcor.concordia.ca  
Research Interests: Queer Studies, Postcolonial Theory, Feminist Film Theory

Lorna Roth, Department Chair  
Office: HB-425, 848-2424 ext. 2545  
E-mail: l.roth@sympatico.ca  
Research Interests: Media and Minorities Race, Representation & Technologies, International Communication

Kim Sawchuk  
Office: HB-405, 848-2424 ext. 2557  
E-mail: askkim@aol.com  
Research Interests: Feminist Studies; Technology & the Arts; Communication Theory

Leslie Regan Shade  
Office: HB-421, 848-2424 ext. 2550  
E-mail: lshade@alcor.concordia.ca  
Research Interests: Political economy of communications; Social, policy and ethical dimensions of information and communication technologies

Matthew Soar  
Office: HB-416, 848-2424 ext. 2542  
E-mail: soar@sympatico.ca  
Research Interests: Graphic design, advertising and representation; Graphic dissent and emergent media

Rae Staseson  
Office: HB-408, 848-2424 ext. 2574  
E-mail: rae@cam.org  
Research Interests: Performance and Video Art, Mixed Media Installation, Television Production

Hal Thwaites  
Office: HB-409, 848-2424 ext. 2539  
E-mail: hal@vax2.concordia.ca  
Research Interests: New Technology and Virtual Reality; Information Design; Bio-cybernetic Research

Peter Van Wyck  
Office: HB-426, 848-2424 ext. 2561  
E-mail: pvanwyck@vax2.concordia.ca  
Research Interests: Cultural and Communications Theory, Discourse, Semiotics, Psychoanalysis
Appendix III

M.A. in Media Studies Courses

All courses are worth 3 credits.

COMS 600 Communication Theory
This seminar studies and evaluates the major historical and contemporary approaches to communication theory. The following approaches are covered: Processes and Effects, Functionalism; Symbolism and Cultural Studies; Institutional Studies and Political Economy.

COMS 605 Media Research Methods I
This seminar prepares students to critique literature from any of the major research traditions; to make basic connections between epistemology and problems of basic communication research; to be able to identify the research method most appropriate to personal areas of interest; to design a basic research project.

COMS 606 Media Research Practicum
This course is an individual research practicum offered on a tutorial basis under faculty supervision. It may be used to develop advanced skills in a particular media research methodology. For students enrolled in the thesis or project options, this course is used to develop the analytic or creative research program necessary to accomplish the thesis or project. Prerequisite: COMS 605 and permission of the Graduate Program Director.

COMS 608 History of Media
This seminar examines the development of communications technology and the media in a comparative and historical perspective. Topics include the transition from orality to literacy, the print revolution, the rise of new image technologies and the mass press in the nineteenth century, electronic media and the modern nation-state, global information, and the emergence of a world media system.

COMS 614 News and Public Affairs
This seminar examines the principles and discourses of news and public affairs media. The truth-value of news and public affairs programming is considered in the light of selectivity of reporting, changes in news formats, and the emergence of “infotainment.” Topics may include institutional structures, organizational routines, ideologies, and norms of representation that influence the construction of the news. Note: Students who have received credit for COMS 611, 612 or 655 may not take this course for credit.

COMS 622 Media Law
This seminar examines legislation relevant to the creation and distribution of media products. Topics may include copyright, libel, freedom of expression and censorship, privacy and contracts.

COMS 624 Media Management
The course is designed to provide participants with a practical and theoretical understanding of such aspects of management in the media enterprise as: leadership styles; goal setting; strategic planning; labour relations; ethics; budget control; communications consulting; and effectiveness evaluation. During the course participants will examine various practices and problems in media management. The course begins with an analysis of management theory an relates to media institutions organizations. In addition, the program provides for advanced study of the social and cultural implications of communications and informations media, and of the analysis of the theory and professional practices of mass media institutions.

COMS 627 Political Economy of Communication
This seminar focuses on issues and problems related to media and cultural industries. Special attention is given to the production and distribution of cultural commodities. Topics for examination include the question of media ownership, the role of state agencies in media systems, and the economics of media institutions. Students who have received credit for COMS 626 may not take this course for credit.
COMS 628 Organizational Communication
This seminar considers major approaches to organizational communication, particularly as they relate to media enterprises. Various paradigms are considered both as theoretical frames and as forms of social practice that have emerged in relation to shifting patterns of power, inequality, and technological change. Topics may include communication networks, organizational culture, the nature of bureaucracy, systematically distorted communication, gendered communication, the impact of new communication technologies, and patterns of organizational domination and resistance.

COMS 630 Communication, Development, and Colonialism
This seminar focuses on theoretical, and political issues related to interpersonal and mediated communication in developing areas. Topics may include: the forms of colonialism (neo- and post-) cultural domination, participatory development, women and minority constituency groups, sustainable development, and globalization.

COMS 632 Media and Contemporary Culture
This seminar investigates the influence of contemporary media systems on cultural values. Special attention is given to the question of consumption of popular culture and to recent developments in cultural theory. Topics may include: media constructions of nation and identity, media consumption patterns, political culture, popular and entertainment culture.

COMS 634 International Communication
This course explores the manner in which culture, ethnicity and other factors interact and are transformed through the international flow of information, images, and technologies. The international relationship between media, communication institutions, and constituency groups is considered. Topics may include: the analysis of genres and images, issues of cultural and media imperialism, the global information infrastructure; national sovereignty perspectives, and international broadcasting.

COMS 635 Feminist Theory and Media
This seminar examines concepts and principles from feminist theory in relation to the study of media and communication. Topics may include: theories of gender, sex and sexuality, psychoanalytic theory, materialist cultures, bodies and geographies, technologies, and visual cultures. Note: Students who have received credit for COMS 642A may not take this course for credit.

COMS 636 Ethics and Media
This seminar examines concepts and principles from ethical theory in relation to the study of media and communication. Possible topics include the ethical implications of media practices, the responsibility of media producers and audiences, the relationship of ethics to the pragmatics of communication, ethics and ethos, and the ethical implications of technology. Note: Students who have received credit for COMS 620 may not take this course for credit.

COMS 640 Directed Study
Students may enroll in a directed study under faculty supervision in order to undertake a specialized study of theoretical or research-related topics. Permission of the Graduate Program Director is required.

COMS 642 Special Topics in Media Studies
This seminar permits the in-depth examination of particular special topics in media and communication. Topics will vary from year to year.

COMS 644 Media Policy
This seminar studies particular sectors of media policy and regulation in Canada. The policy sector under discussion may change from year to year and both historical and contemporary issues will be examined. Topics may include: broadcasting, film, satellite and cable distribution, multiculturalism, northern and remote access, telecommunications, and the internet.
COMS 646 Alternative Media
This seminar explores various alternative and resistant practices to mainstream media, including community radio and television, artists and community video, independent film, underground/pirate media, the internet, and other emergent cultural forms. Topics may include: practices and theories of the alternative, methods of critical analysis, media monopolies, democracy and resistance, cultural imperialism, culture jamming, and the possibilities of new technology-based forms.

COMS 652 The Canadian Documentary
This course examines non-fiction film, television and other media in Canada. Materials considered may include the documentary work of the National Film Board, independent film and video, and television docu-drama. These are examined from a variety of perspectives such as history, form and textuality, institutional analysis, and culture.

COMS 656 Forms and Genres in Communication
This seminar examines specific patterns in cultural forms and texts. Attention is paid to the production, consumption, and textual attributes of genres. Topics vary from year to year, and may include a focus on advertising, public advocacy, documentary, popular music, situation comedy, or feminist feature film.

COMS 660 Definitions and Futures of Media and Technology
This seminar explores the social, cultural, and psychological aspects of media and technology. Media are considered as both containers and expressions of culture. In addition, this seminar focuses on the impacts of new technologies and media. Topics may include the interaction of media and culture, the role of technology in the development of human consciousness and values, and the future of media in the light of emergent technologies and practices. Note: Students who have received credit for COMS 643 or COMS 658 may not take this course for credit.

COMS 662 Theories of Representation and Interpretation in Communication
This course examines discourse and media texts as forms of representation. Representation is considered in terms of both figure and argument. The course also presents theoretically informed approaches to the interpretation and criticism of discourses and media texts. Possible theoretical approaches include rhetoric, semiotics, hermeneutics, and speech-act theory.

COMS 670 Directed Study
Students may enroll in a directed study under faculty supervision in order to undertake a specialized study of theoretical or research-related topics. Permission of the Graduate Program Director is required.

COMS 680 Aesthetics and Media
This seminar examines concepts and principles from aesthetic theory in relation to the study of media and communication. In addition to considering general aesthetic principles, the course may focus on particular aural or visual media. Topics may include the relationship of medium to aesthetic form, aesthetics and reception theory, aesthetics and ideology, the mass reproduction and distribution of aesthetic objects, and the aesthetics of new media.

COMS 684 Media Research Laboratory
This production-based seminar explores the intersections of analog, electronic and digital media with a special emphasis on their convergence. Topics may include digital imaging, multimedia information design and programming, three dimensional media, virtual reality, world-wide-web, hypertext and hypermedia publishing.

COMS 695 Thesis (21 credits)
Near the end of course work completion, a thesis director is selected by the student or appointed by the Graduate Program Director. The thesis topic and research plan are put into a formal proposal and submitted to a Thesis committee and the Graduate Program Director for approval. The thesis is
submitted in written form and is between 20,000 and 30,000 words in length. The thesis format must be commensurate with Graduate Studies regulations and in a format stipulated by the rules of the Thesis Office. The thesis is defended in an oral examination.

**COMS 697 Project (21 credits)**

Students choosing Option III may prefer to do a special project that employs one or more media. Normally this would have a creative and/or documentary intent. Near the end of course work completion, a Project supervisor is selected by the student or appointed by the Graduate Program Director. The Project topic and research plan are put into a formal proposal and submitted to a Project Committee and the Graduate Program Director for approval. Upon completion, the Project is submitted in whatever media form/s are appropriate to the Project's goals. The Project is supported by a written report, approximately 6000-8000 words, which is a reflective and critical commentary on the process of bringing the project to completion. This may include the methods, theories, history of the project, literatures or media reviewed, or other areas deemed necessary by the student and the student's Project Committee. The project is defended in an oral examination. Note: Students who have received credit for COMS 696 may not take this course for credit.