

# MEDIA STUDIES

The Department of Media Studies specializes in scholarly and industry-based research on media and technologies that underlie contemporary culture, economics, and politics. Students learn how media industries, practices and narratives shape the way we think about, relate to and engage with the world around us. Enter our tight-knit community and participate in innovative media production work and research projects that engage emerging technology practices, seek to understand new digital cultures and change society in meaningful ways.

Media studies students examine ways of thinking about and conducting research into the intersection of media, communication and cultural practices in both historical and contemporary perspectives. Encompassing humanistic, social scientific and multimodal approaches to the study of media and culture, and interdisciplinary in its theoretical and methodological approaches, the media studies degrees span traditional boundaries between theory and practice. The program fosters media "literacy" in the broadest sense by providing students with critical skills to analyze contemporary media and culture, along with technical, aesthetic and intellectual principles that facilitate strong media practices.

**Course code for this program is MDST.**

## Bachelor's Degree

- Media Studies - Bachelor of Arts (BA) (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/communication-media-design-information/programs-study/media-studies/media-studies-bachelor-arts-ba/>)

## Minor

- Media Studies - Minor (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/communication-media-design-information/programs-study/media-studies/media-studies-minor/>)

## Faculty

While many faculty teach both undergraduate and graduate students, some instruct students at the undergraduate level only. For more information, contact the faculty member's home department.

Ardizzoni, Michela ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_145152/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_145152/))  
Assistant Professor, Director; PhD, Indiana University Bloomington

Berggreen, Shu-Ling Chen ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_101636/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_101636/))  
Associate Professor; PhD, University of Tennessee-Knoxville

Calabrese, Andrew ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_101073/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_101073/))  
Professor; PhD, Ohio State University

Echchaibi, Nabil ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_145054/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_145054/))  
Associate Chair; PhD, Indiana University Bloomington

Fisher, Jolene ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_158335/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_158335/))  
Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Oregon

Frost, Steven ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_156502/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_156502/))  
Instructor, Associate Chair; MFA, School of Art Institute of Chicago

Goldstein, Donna M. ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_100448/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_100448/))  
Professor; PhD, University of California, Berkeley

Hall, Kira ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_123111/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_123111/))  
Professor; PhD, University of California, Berkeley

Hoover, Stewart ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_104549/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_104549/))  
Professor; PhD, University of Pennsylvania

McLean, Polly E. ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_100614/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_100614/))  
Associate Professor; PhD, University of Texas at Austin

Mody, Bella  
Professor Emeritus; PhD, Gujarat University, India; PhD, Gujarat University, India

Oakes, Tim ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_109269/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_109269/))  
Professor; PhD, University of Washington

Peck, Janice Anne ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_106765/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_106765/))  
Professor Emerita; PhD, Simon Fraser University (Canada)

Rajabi, Samira ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_165414/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_165414/))  
Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Colorado Boulder

Ristovska, Sandra ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_159835/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_159835/))  
Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Pennsylvania

Rowland, Willard D.  
Professor Emeritus

Schneider, Nathan Todd ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_156512/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_156512/))  
Director, Associate Faculty Director; MA, University of California, Santa Barbara

Shepperd, Josh ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_167233/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_167233/))  
Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Simonson, Peter D.  
Professor; PhD, University of Iowa

Stevens, John Richard ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_145848/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_145848/))  
Associate Professor, Chair; PhD, University of Texas at Austin

Striphas, Theodore G. ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_156205/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_156205/))  
Associate Professor; PhD, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

Tracey, Michael ([https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid\\_104259/](https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_104259/))  
Professor Emeritus; PhD, Univ of Leicester (England)

Trager, Robert  
Professor Emeritus

## Courses

### MDST 1001 (3) Foundations of Media Studies

Introduces students to key issues and debates and contemporary applications of critical media studies focusing on economic, social, political and cultural implications. Provides an understanding of the relationship between theory and practice and equips students with the tools to critically analyze various forms of textual transmission.

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 1002 (3) Introduction to Social Media**

Introduces students to network structures and principles, the technology and infrastructures that allow them to flourish, and the cultures that grow up through and around them. Explores how social media enables community, how it assembles and empowers agents of change and how design informs individual and group behavior.

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 1003 (3) Critical Media Literacies**

Learn to strategically access, analyze, evaluate, and produce communication in a variety of forms. This course explores the expanding nature of literacy in a digital world. Students will use applied research practices and communication tools to expand their existing media literacy skills and to design innovative presentations and projects that take advantage of new media. Meets Practice Course Requirement.

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 1009 (3) Truth, Beauty, and Conspiracy**

With conspiracy at the forefront of social and political discourse, this course illuminates these problems of knowledge and representation by approaching conspiracy culture from the perspective of media theory. Explores conspiracy theories as narratives, analyzing their specific narrative features and the ways that different media platforms represent conspiracy. Students also consider how conspiracy narratives complicate the relationship between knowledge and aesthetic form. Offered in Fall or Spring.

**MDST 2001 (3) Introduction to Global Media**

Explores a world in which new media have enabled humans to be joined in a global system of socio-cultural and economic relations. Underscores the political dimensions of global media, the convergence of global culture, and the ways in which values are produced. Prepares students to become critical of media practices and empowered as active civic participants.

**MDST 2002 (3) Media and Communication History**

Examines the historical development of communication forms, tools, technologies and institutions (orality, writing, printing, photography, film, radio, television, computers, internet); their influence on culture (forms of expression and social relationships); and their impact on social and individual experience. Applies knowledge of communication history to contemporary social issues and problems in media and society, domestically and internationally.

**MDST 2010 (3) Media and Social Movements**

Surveys the history and contemporary efforts of social activists to bring about democratic media reform and examines how media are used as tools for connecting and advancing social movements. Emphasis is given to media activism and social movements in the United States, as well as to similar and related transnational activism and movements. Meets Practice Course Requirement.

**Requisites:** Requires a prerequisite course of MDST 1001 (minimum grade C-).

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 2011 (3) Disruptive Entrepreneurship in the Internet's New Economies**

Grapples with the disruptive business models that drive the online economy: both the dominant ones and the alternatives vying to transform it. In addition to the Silicon Valley model, this course explores lesser known internet economies around the world and proposals for a more equitable online future. Meets Practice Course Requirement.

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 2012 (3) Hacker Culture**

Chronicles the evolution of hacker culture from its origins as a geeky subculture to a criminal underground to its adaptation by CEOs. Considers how hacker formations sometimes represent a new kind of politics, sometimes a rejection of politics. Explores the contested figure of the hacker in the past, present and science-fiction of the internet. Meets Practice Course Requirement.

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 2031 (3) Documentary and Social Change**

Explores how local, national and international filmmakers use documentaries to provide cultural observation, education, entertainment and memories to making sense of and transform the realities of contemporary societies. Emphasizes contemporary issues and practices in the production of documentaries, including the participatory means such as the crowdsourcing of documentary footage and the use of newer, non-theatrical means of distribution. Meets Practice Course Requirement.

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 2032 (3) Visual Literacies & Design**

Examines cultural visual experiences from critical perspectives and social effects. The course acquaints students with visual design in ways that include image-making as a cognitive and perceptual practice, the production of visual significance and meaning, and the role of technology in creating and understanding mediated images. Students will use a variety of means to produce visual narratives. Meets Practice Course Requirement.

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 2046 (3) Future Histories of Technology**

This class explores both literature about future technologies and literary technologies that move across periods, regions, and disciplines. Our cultural and historical approach to future histories of technology will illuminate how race, gender and sexuality, class, and nationality structure seemingly neutral research and development, usage, and innovation. Ultimately, our goal is to see how we're not passive consumers but active participants in reimagining the present and future of technology.

**Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted:** ENGL 2046

**MDST 3001 (3) Media Research**

Introduces theoretical approaches and practices used to analyze the content, structure, influence and contexts of media. Explores factors shaping media, including: politics, economics, technology, cultural traditions. Studies concepts, theoretical approaches and research methods of media criticism, and adopts and adapts these frameworks in analyses of mediated communication.

**MDST 3002 (3) Digital Culture and Politics**

Examines issues at the intersection of digital media, culture and politics, such as regulation and network architecture, piracy and hacking, and grassroots activism. Engage with a range of theories about cultural politics, democracy, liberalism and neo-liberalism in relation to digital information and communication technologies.

**MDST 3021 (3) Comic Books: Culture and Industry**

Explores practices of comic culture across a broad range of graphic stories. Using culture studies approaches to industry analysis and fan community discourses, students examine culture created through and around graphic texts, particularly representations of race, gender, sexuality, institutions and ideology. Considers the political economy of the comic industry, the struggles of independent producers and active fan practices.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 27-180 credits (Sophomores, Juniors or Seniors) only.

**MDST 3022 (3) Social Media Cultures**

Expands students' understanding of network cultures, including how social media tools influence conversation strategies, how interfaces interact with perceived communication values, and how network boundaries reinforce distinct cultural identities. Students engage in projects to measure network behavior, create strategic messages to achieve communication and information goals, and to engage in social listening.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 55 or more hours.

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 3101 (3) History of Computing and Information**

Focusing on two topics: the changing role of information in everyday life over time and the increasing role of information in disciplinary studies such as social science, engineering, computer science, mathematics, digital humanities. Examines information related academic disciplines, businesses, industries and technologies from multiple perspectives from the 17th century to the present.

**Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted:** INFO 3101

**MDST 3201 (3) Media, Culture and Globalization**

Surveys the political and economic structures of media system in developed and developing countries and discusses the impact of privatization, ownership consolidation, and globalization on the flow of information across national borders. Also looks at how global media flows and counter-flows affect conceptions of nationhood and cultural identity.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Junior or Senior) College of Communication, Media, Design and Information (CMDI) or International Affairs (IAFS) majors only.

**MDST 3321 (3) Media Industries and Economics**

Focuses on the institutions and practices of the media industries. Surveys the histories, structures, and activities of these organizations and the contemporary issues surrounding them.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Junior or Senior) in College of Communication, Media, Design and Information (CMCIU).

**Additional Information:** Departmental Category: Core Curriculum and General Electives

**MDST 3331 (3) Sports-Media Complex**

Explores the rich connections between the sports industry, spectating, the media complex and social life. Using theories of cultural studies and drawing on specific examples from the sports world, students focus on how sport shapes and reinforces understandings of gender, race, class and sexuality. Addresses major questions about the political economy, commodification, mediation and reception of the spectacle of the sports complex, as well as politics and cultural consequences of its transnational reach.

**Requisites:** Restricted to College of Communication, Media, Design and Information (CMDI) students with a minimum of 45 credit hours completed, or non-CMDI students who have completed CMDI 2001 (minimum grade D-).

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 3341 (3) Designing Alternative Media Platforms**

Explores alternative forms of media to exhibit student research and build connections with community leaders. Surveys alternative exhibition traditions such as Social Practice, Relational Aesthetics and Craftivism to expand the impact of student work, culminating in the design of a unique cultural event focusing on each individual's research. Software/digital presentation skills. Meets Practice Course Requirement.

**MDST 3401 (3) Media, Food and Culture**

Explores the topic of food as a subject of popular culture: essential to life and the enter of local, national and transnational conflict and social movements. Students will examine media representations of food, what our food choices say about us and what the mediated politics of food mean for our collective future.

**Requisites:** Requires a prerequisite course of MDST 2002 (minimum grade C-).

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 3711 (3) Media and Popular Culture**

Examines culture in the form of discourse, symbols, and texts transmitted through the media. Explores the relationship between such mediated culture and social myth and ideology.

**Additional Information:** Departmental Category: Core Curriculum and General Electives

**MDST 3791 (3) Media and the Public**

Provides an overview of how publishing in print and electronic forms has been tied closely to democratic ideals for centuries. Explores how the idea of the public is central to the theory and practice of media politics, and how the contested concepts of "the public sphere" and "public opinion" have long been linked to debates about the proper relationship between media and democratic citizenship.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Junior or Senior) in College of Communication, Media, Design and Information (CMCIU), and MDST minors.

**Additional Information:** Departmental Category: Core Curriculum and General Electives

**MDST 4000 (3) Media Genre Studies**

Introduces students to the critical study of genres in media cultures. Genre exists as a form of organizing and packaging mediated content, but also as formulaic patterns for analysis that work for and against audience expectations to produce culture. Topics will vary by genre, medium, and transmedia strategies.

**Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted:** MDST 5000

**Repeatable:** Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.

**MDST 4003 (3) Digital Media Production and Design**

Introduces techniques, technologies of online development and online media presentation. Contextualizes the technical and social implications of the Internet through historical and critical perspectives. Students engage in online media projects designed to emphasize the affordances, conventions and usability considerations of effective online communication. Meets Practice Course Requirement.

**Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted:** MDST 5003

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 55 or more hours.

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 4071 (3) Screenwriting**

Students will be taught the fundamentals of screenwriting, but will also learn from peers. Students will workshop scenes, share, and discuss. Students will work scenes through description, dialogue, and action, combine those scenes into sequences, and those sequences into scripts. Students will learn how to create dramatic tension, how to write compelling dialogue, how to deal with character development.

**Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted:** MDST 5071

**Requisites:** Requires prerequisite course of MDST 2002 or MDST 3021 (minimum grade B).

**MDST 4111 (3) Crime, Media and Contemporary Culture**

Addressed in the course are a range of issues from within a variety of literatures that consider the ways in which the media cover crime. Those literatures are particularly drawn from sociology and the emergent, and increasingly dominant, field of cultural criminology. The focus of the class is to get students to think of "crime" as a constructed and mediated concept and set of narratives that often create problematic public "understandings".

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 4121 (3) Deconstructing Disney: Mediated American Mythology**

Explores various Disney cultural products & some with which students will be very familiar, some students may have never seen & in order to discuss the cultural messaging The Walt Disney Company has presented over its long and illustrious history. Students will conduct analysis research in popular culture studies.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).

**MDST 4211 (3) Asian Media and Culture**

Offers an understanding of the various people, cultures and nations of East Asia through their media systems. Provides a critical overview of the historical, cultural, social, political and economic dimensions of East Asian communication systems in today's digitally connected/disconnected world.

**Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted:** MDST 5211

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).

**Additional Information:** Departmental Category: Asia Content

**MDST 4220 (3) Viral Video & Media**

Students will examine how viral videos are produced and shared on social media platforms by developing an understanding of the components that make a viral video as well as by engaging in a critical analysis of those viral videos. Students will engage in critical analysis, consider strategies for virality, and learn about production and publishing. Students will analyze their own and their peers' work in terms of genre, convention, format, structure, and audience.

**Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted:** MDST 5220

**Requisites:** Requires prerequisite course of MDST 2002 OR MDST 3021 (minimum grade B).

**MDST 4221 (3) Media Technology and Cultural Change**

Explores how media technologies affect social orders and shape cultural practices across the globe. Compares and critically evaluates different theories of technology, emphasizes the social construction of technology, asks how media technologies inform conceptions of social reality and individual identity and considers how media technologies can be understood across a range of academic disciplines.

**Requisites:** Requires prerequisite courses of MDST 2002 and MDST 3001 and MDST 3002 (minimum grade C-). Restricted to students with 87-180 credits (Senior, Fifth Year Senior).

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 4231 (3) Youth Media: Culture and Politics**

Emphasizes the sociological understandings of youth cultures, identities and practices in relation to media and politics. Topics include the influences of consumer branding, participatory culture, youth media production and representation, use of social media, mobile phones, gaming, and other digital media, and integrating them around themes of youth styles, gender, ethic, political identities, consumer culture, social behavior and other trends.

**Requisites:** Requires prerequisite course of MDST 3711 (minimum grade C-). Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 4241 (3) Visual Culture and Human Rights**

Provides the critical tools needed to understand images and their impact on the recognition and restitution of human rights claims. The course examines both visual practices (e.g. documentation, archiving, witnessing, advocacy and surveillance) and visual media (e.g. photography, film, video, drone and satellite images), unpacking the growing entanglement between visual culture and human rights.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 4311 (3) Mass Communication Criticism**

Introduces the critical perspectives most often employed in qualitative media analysis: semiology, structuralism, Marxism, psychoanalytical criticism, sociological criticism. Texts from contemporary print and broadcast media. Meets Practice Course Requirement.

**Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted:** MDST 5311

**MDST 4331 (3) Gender, Race, Class, and Sexuality in Popular Culture**

Studies the construction, interconnections, and replications of gender, race, class, and sexuality in popular culture and how these constructs become cultural norms and mores. Uses critical methods with a focus on producing responsible viewers and readers.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).

**MDST 4341 (3) International Media and Global Crises**

Examines strengths and limits on media's role in globalized crises (e.g. financial, climate change, health) in light of changing distribution of global power. Introduction to current crises; context-analytical approach to media technologies, financing and uses; application to national cases.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Junior or Senior) Media Studies (MDST) majors and minors, Journalism (JRNL) majors or International Affairs (IAFS) majors only.

**Additional Information:** Departmental Category: Asia Content

**MDST 4361 (3) TV and the Family in American Culture and Society**

Examines the history and character of two central institutions in American society—the family and television—to gain deeper understanding of their formative and enduring roles. Topics include: intersecting histories of the family and television; economic logic of the TV industry and programming; representations of the family in television programming; how families use and interact with television.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 27-180 credits (Sophomores, Juniors or Seniors) only.

**MDST 4371 (3) Media and Religion**

Examines the way religion uses media as a social and political force. Introduces the major themes and trends in the mediation of religion and the religious inflection of the media in professional, popular, and emerging media contexts.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).

**MDST 4372 (3) Islam, Pop Culture and Media**

Explores the shifting boundaries of cultural and religious Muslim identities through media representation and production in Muslim-majority countries and in the West. Using popular culture as a complex site of struggle, this course examines how Muslims address questions of gender, ethnicity, class, democracy, sexuality, religion, and modernity in a variety of media forms and practices.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 4401 (3) Fan and Audience Studies**

Considers how audiences and fans are conceptualized, how they are constructed by media enterprises and how they operate within their cultural ecosystems. While media shape the sociocultural, political and economic dimensions of the social world, fan studies suggest a more active set of practices form sites of resistance and enable a greater degree of influence over cultural production.

**Requisites:** Requires prerequisite courses of MDST 2002 and MDST 3001 and MDST 3002 (all minimum grade C-).

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 4402 (3) Transmedia Worldbuilding**

Guides students to develop entertainment concepts for transmedia delivery. Students will develop concepts and characters built around storytelling themes capable of producing serial and multimedia storylines. This course considers essential elements of storytelling; how to design and actively participate across media platforms; essential elements of meta-narratives; and how to create an immersive and interactive experience for audiences.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).

**MDST 4405 (3) Queer and Trans Identities in Popular Culture**

Gives students the theory, media history, and cultural frameworks to advocate for better queer & trans presentation in popular media. Uses queer studies, critical theory, media surveys, and trans theory as a tool for discussing and addressing gaps in media representation. Explores the emergence, codification, and rejection of queer and trans identities to deconstruct the documentaries, television shows, advertisements, print media, music, and digital media that contributed to the formation of these identities.

**Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted:** MDST 5405

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).

**MDST 4601 (3) Media Law, Policy and Ethics**

Explores ethical and legal complexities of information and communication technology. Combines real-world inquiry with creative speculation to probe everyday ethical dilemmas faced by digital consumers, creators and coders, as well as policy-makers. Explore themes such as privacy, intellectual property, social justice, free speech, artificial intelligence, social media and ethical lessons from science fiction.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).

**Grading Basis:** Letter Grade

**MDST 4841 (1-6) Undergraduate Independent Study**

Involves in-depth independent research and/or project work completed under the direction of a faculty member that demonstrates learning at the upper-division level within the discipline. Department consent required.

**Repeatable:** Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.

**Additional Information:** Departmental Category: Core Curriculum and General Electives

**MDST 4871 (1-3) Special Topics**

Special Topics.

**Repeatable:** Repeatable for up to 15.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.

**Requisites:** Restricted to students with a minimum of 27 hours taken.

**Additional Information:** Departmental Category: Core Curriculum and General Electives

**MDST 4931 (1-6) Internship**

**Repeatable:** Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.

**Requisites:** Prerequisite of MDST 2002 and MDST 3001 and MDST 3002. (All require minimum grade of C-). Restricted to MDST majors

**Additional Information:** Departmental Category: Core Curriculum and General Electives