

Proposed Bachelor of Arts (Media and Communications)

Reason for the proposal

Advice received from the Undergraduate Admissions Office and the International Office indicates a high level of demand among both local and overseas students for a UNSW degree in Media and Communications studies. Development of such a course has been identified as a priority in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Corporate Plan (Goal 16) and is supportive of strategies 3, 5 and 14 in the University's Corporate Plan. An intake of 60 to 80 DEET-funded students per year is anticipated.

Unlike many existing media courses in Universities and the TAFE system, the proposed course will emphasise the development of students' critical and analytical skills rather than training in media production techniques. Potential employers have expressed dissatisfaction with the graduates of some existing media courses because they lack an adequate intellectual grounding. Students in the proposed BA (Media and Communications) will complete a full major in a mainstream humanities or social science discipline as well as a three year core program in Media and Communications studies. Students who satisfy the requirements for progression may undertake a fourth year Honours program.

The Media and Communications core program will aim to give students a sophisticated understanding of the history, scope and socio-cultural impact of new media technologies, and of the debates that have accompanied their development and use. An important feature of this core program will be its inclusion of material with an Asia-Pacific regional focus.

Although the degree is non-vocational in its orientation, students will be given a practical introduction to recent computer-based multimedia and communication technologies. To this end a number of units will be included in the three year pass degree program which combine a theoretical and a practical approach. The program's emphasis on analytic skills will combine with this practical experience to equip students with a thorough knowledge of the media and communications area as it is currently evolving. This grounding will enable them to interpret, apply and adapt the products of new media not only in connection with the information and entertainment industries, but also in a variety of other contexts such as the development of education and training programs in the public and private sectors.

Students who proceed to the fourth year of the course will take two Honours seminars in their first session, one with a theoretical focus and the other involving a practical exercise and written analysis. In the second session two alternative pathways will be available, with some students completing a research thesis and others undertaking a major practical project using computer-based multimedia technologies.

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Conditions governing the award

The basic requirements for the degree are:

1. a total of 360 credit points. Each subject offered within the degree has a credit point rating, depending on the number of hours taught and the type of subject.
2. 135 credit points in the Media and Communications (MACS) core program, comprised of the following subjects carrying 15 credit points each:
 - First Year
 - MACS1000
 - MACS1001
 - Second Year
 - MACS2000
 - 2 subjects from list A
 - Third Year
 - MACS3000
 - 3 subjects from list A and list B combined
3. a major sequence in one of the following:

CHIN	Chinese
ENGL	English
FREN	French
GERS	German Studies
GREK	Greek, Modern
HIST*	History*
INDO	Indonesian
JAPN**	Japanese**
KORE**	Korean**
LING	Linguistics
MUSI	Music
PHIL	Philosophy
POLS	Political Science
RUSS	Russian Studies
SCTS/HPST*	Science and Technology Studies*
SLSP	Policy Studies
SOCC/SOCI	Sociology
SPAN	Spanish and Latin American Studies
THFI/THST/FILM	Theatre and Film Studies
- * A combined program in HIST/HPST also satisfies the major requirement.
- ** Students who complete a major sequence in Japanese or Korean must also complete at least 90 credit points in other subjects from the above list, excluding both Japanese and Korean.
4. 120 credit points obtained in Level 1 (first year) subjects, including MACS1000 and MACS1001, and any first year subjects in your major sequence. No more than 30 credit points can be obtained in first year subjects from any one school or department.
5. 30 credit points obtained in the University's General Education Program.

BA (Media and Communications) Degree
with major sequence in school/department A
and provision for entry to MACS Honours

FIRST YEAR

S1	15 cp elective A1	15 cp elective B1	15 cp elective C1	15 cp MACS core 1
S2	15 cp elective A2	15 cp elective B2	15 cp elective C2	15 cp MACS core 2

SECOND YEAR

S1	15 cp elective A3	15 cp GE electives 1/2	15 cp elective C3	15 cp MACS core 3
S2	15 cp elective A4	15 cp elective B3	15 cp MACS elective 1	15 cp MACS elective 2

THIRD YEAR

S1	15 cp elective A5	15 cp elective B4	15 cp MACS elective 3	15 cp MACS elective 4
S2	15 cp elective A6	15 cp GE electives 3/4	15 cp MACS elective 5	15 cp MACS core 4

FOURTH YEAR

S1	MACS theory seminar	MACS practical seminar		
S2	Thesis or practical project or two additional coursework subjects			

MACS1000 New Media Technologies

CP15 S1 HPW3

Prerequisite: Enrolment in course 34XX

This subject introduces students to the field of media and communications through a consideration of the terms of its title, addressing notions of 'the new', 'media', and 'technology' in specific contexts. The history and technology of particular media forms, their spatiality and domestication, and issues of governmentality and textuality will be examined in case studies of books, cinema, TV and radio, music, newspapers and magazines, and new computer-based media.

MACS1001 Media Issues

CP15 S2 HPW3

Prerequisite: MACS1000

This subject continues students' introduction to media and communications with an examination of some of the key issues raised in the study of media in Australia, Asia and the South Pacific. The uses of media and their social and cultural contexts will be discussed in relation to the following topics: information and politics; mass media, citizenship and democracy; meaning, reading and audiences; markets, globalisation and media flows; cultural differences; and ownership, authorship and creativity.

MACS2000 Media, Technology and Creativity

CP15 S1 HPW3

Prerequisite: MACS1001

This subject has both critical and practical elements. It surveys some of the corporations and producers centrally involved in the emerging field of multimedia and electronic art, and examines the nature of the works produced. It will focus on the relationship between commerce and creative practice by considering the way in which commercial interests have packaged, promoted and sold computer games, CD-ROMs and other media services, and how artists, programmers and creative producers have conceived of their own products. Video, CD-ROM and Internet materials will be introduced, analysed and used in the development of student projects.

MACS3000 'World' Media and Cultural Diversity

CP15 S2 HPW3

Prerequisite: MACS2000

[description not yet finalised]