

MEDIA STUDIES, B.A.

Seven Penn State campuses are scheduled for closure after Spring 2027: DuBois, Fayette, New Kensington, Mont Alto, Shenango, Wilkes-Barre, and York. New students are not being admitted at these campuses.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

This major is designed for students who wish to possess the analytic and critical skills needed to succeed in a professional world increasingly dominated by media. Students are exposed first to a breadth of approaches to understanding different forms of media (e.g. aesthetic, cultural, humanistic, psychological, economic, social, political) and then select specific areas of concentration to prepare them for different fields of research or professions involving media. All areas of concentration help students hone their analytic skills.

The following three options are offered:

Film and Television Studies Option

This option is designed for students interested in studying the art, history, and criticism of film and television. Electives offer students the opportunity to pursue a related field, such as art, art history, creative writing, speech communication, or theatre arts. This option merges aesthetics and social sciences and is appropriate for those seeking a more theoretical/critical approach to the study of film and video.

Media Effects Option

This option focuses on the social and psychological effects of media messages and technologies. Students progress through a general introduction to problems and issues, such as the effects of televised sex and violence, to courses that emphasize more theoretical approaches and advanced applications. A minor in a complementary area of study, such as Psychology or Sociology, is encouraged.

Society and Culture Option

In this option, a student and faculty adviser work together to tailor a program of courses to meet the student's individual interest in a coherent theme in media studies. These courses are usually selected in tandem with a minor or other supporting cluster of non-major courses in the area of specialization. Examples of themes include, but are not limited to, communication and the environment, communication and health campaigns, sports and the media, minorities and the media, and gender and the media. A minor in an area of specialization is encouraged.

What is Media Studies?

Students study the role and impact of the media on society in this theory-based, research-driven major. Students explore the relationships between media and the public, analyze media messages and technologies, and examine their effects on individuals and cultures. Coursework covers a wide range of topics, including message analysis, media psychology, public opinion, global media, film studies, game studies and human-computer communication. Students can customize their studies by specializing in film and television studies, media effects, or society and culture.

You Might Like This Program If...

You have an ability to think critically and logically, along with attention to detail and an interest in research. You are interested in popular culture. Strong observational skills are important, as are a high level of curiosity and an inquisitive nature. Excellent verbal and written communications skills are critical.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT MEDIA STUDIES (<https://bellisario.psu.edu/academics/film-production-media-studies>)