

Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication (CARIMAC)
Faculty of Humanities and Education
The University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, Kingston 7, Jamaica

COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE OUTLINE: Media Research and Production

COURSE CODE: COMM3399

LEVEL: III

SEMESTER: Year Long

PRE-REQUISITES: COMM2201 (formerly MC22A)

CREDITS: Six (6)

Note: This is a research-linked course which can be taken as a substitute for the Faculty's final year research project course – HUMN3099 (formerly AR3X0).

RATIONALE:

Media and communication technologies continue to evolve and today's media practitioner must be able to present research information in a variety of formats that go beyond the traditional research paper. Research can now be conducted and presented using formats ranging from digital video and audio documentaries to multimedia formats created for dissemination in various media channels.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course allows the student to conduct research and present the research using select media outputs. Students work with their supervisors during the course of the year to complete a research project that must be presented in a digital format. The emphasis in this course is on research and not on production; the student is therefore expected to be familiar with the production demands for the media format in which they choose to present their research.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Having completed this course, students should be able to:

1. Write a research proposal for a topic or issue which is to be presented as a media piece.
2. Conduct research activities which will contribute to the completion of a research-based media product.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of ethical issues – such as confidentiality, informed consent – by writing documents designed to obtain informed consent from human subjects who will participate in the media production.

4. Produce a media product which observes technical standards relating to the selected media format.

TEACHING METHODOLOGY:

Weekly 3-hour meetings with course lecturer and assigned production supervisor. Students are expected to complete research and production activities outside of the 3-hour sessions and be prepared to discuss the progress of their work during the sessions. Given the highly practical nature of this course, there is no final written examination.

COURSE ASSESSMENT:

Semester 1

- Research Proposal (10-15 pages or 2000 to 3000 words) including a production schedule and detailed reference list as well as list of potential human subjects in the case of a human interest piece 20%
- Production Proposal (10-15 pages): this can take the form of: 20%
 - o Draft of script in the case of a radio and television documentaries;
 - o Outline in the case of print investigative piece or web-based piece;
 - o Process Book (10-15 pages) in the case of digital media. This includes design references, research, documentation of design process, sketches, wireframes, comprehensives, mockups and prototypes.

Semester 2

- Unedited audio-visual footage up to one hour, audio recordings up to one hour or interview transcripts or detailed notes up to 20 pages or any other print material collected for inclusion in final production 20%
- Final edited media product in any of the following formats: 40%
 - o 30-minute television or video documentary
 - o 30-minute radio or audio documentary
 - o Print Investigative Piece presented on at least 8 pages of tabloid size paper
 - o Web site with at least 10 links

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Semester One

Topics to be covered include:

- Writing the research proposal for a research-based media product
- Finding appropriate sources: print sources, audio-visual sources, audio sources
- Ethics in media production (use of human subjects, confidentiality, informed consent and talent release, plagiarism and piracy)
- Writing the script or outline for a production piece

- Conducting research for content presented in media formats

Semester Two

Topics to be covered include:

- Collecting data from human subjects as well as collecting footage, video clips or sound clips from audio-visual archives
- Interviewing human subjects for presentation in various media channels
- Translating technical research findings into accessible jargon-free language
- Production Value
- Presenting research information creatively

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Chater, Kathy (2002). *Research for Media Production (2nd edition)*. Focal Press, Oxford

Emm, Adele (2001). *Researching for television and radio (Media Skills)*. Routledge, London

Vaughan, Tay (2008). *Multimedia: Making it work (7th edition)*. McGraw-Hill, New York

RECOMMENDED SOURCES:

Bernard, Sheila Curran (2007). *Documentary storytelling: Making stronger and more dramatic nonfiction films*. Focal Press, Oxford

De Burgh, Hugo (2008). *Investigative Journalism*. Routledge, London

Herbert, John (1999). *Journalism in the digital age: Theory and practice for broadcast, print and online media*. Focal Press, Oxford

Kochberg, Searle (ed) (2002). *Introduction to documentary production: A guide for media students*. Wallflower Press, Great Britain

McLeish, Robert (2005). *Radio production*. Focal Press, Oxford

INTERNET SOURCES:

<http://www.videomaker.com/article/12546/> How to make a documentary, Part 1

<http://www.yahanet.org/guides/howto/doing-radio-documentary> Doing Radio Documentary

<http://www.dvworkshops.com/dvtips.html> Digital Video Handbook

<http://www.streamingmedia.com/Articles/ReadArticle.aspx?ArticleID=65312> The Ultimate Guide to Creating Online Content That Works, Part 1