Media and Screen Studies

Website (http://www.northeastern.edu/mscr)

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Media and screen studies (MSCR) educates students in the analysis and production of media. Taught from a liberal arts perspective, a media and screen studies degree seeks to give students the ability to think critically about the continually changing media industry and the complex world in which it exists and to apply that knowledge to media production. MSCR is a challenging degree that is not limited to what is traditionally offered at a film school or in a visual and performing arts degree. It gives students the tools to become engaged citizens equipped to meet the challenges of living in a global culture defined by technological and social change.

The BA in media and screen studies offers courses in analysis and practice. Required courses offer students an opportunity to obtain the critical thinking skills necessary to better understand media content, media technology, and media production. Students then decide how many production and analysis courses they want to take. Choosing from a broad range of electives, students can take more than half their major in media and film production courses, can take a majority of courses that critically examine media content and technology, or can combine courses in other ways.

Students may also enroll in one of the preexistent MSCR combined majors. Media and screen studies has combined majors with communication studies, English, journalism, political science, sociology, and theatre. Students may also petition for new combinations, making use of the half-major template in media and screen studies.

Academic Progression Standards
For media and screen studies, majors must maintain at least a 2.500 grade-point average (GPA) in their overall program of studies and a minimum of 3.000 in the following two required courses:

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Preapproved Template Program in Media and Screen Studies
Media and screen studies offers a preapproved template program that may be paired with another preapproved template program to create a combined major; to see a list of current preapproved template programs, visit the combined majors webpage (http://www.northeastern.edu/registrar/major-2.html).

Students may request admission to such a combined major via the Combined Major Approval form (http://www.northeastern.edu/registrar/form-maj-comb.pdf), which requires approval by both disciplines/colleges together with an approved curriculum. For additional information on preapproved template programs, see “Student-Requested Combined Major (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/degrees-majors-minors/#stu-req).” For template program requirements, visit the myNEU web portal (http://www.myneu.neu.edu), click on the “Self-Service” tab, then on “My Degree Audit.”

Programs

Bachelor of Arts (BA)

- Media and Screen Studies (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/arts-media-design/media-screen-studies/media-screen-studies-ba)
- Communication Studies and Media and Screen Studies (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/arts-media-design/communication-studies/communication-studies-media-screen-studies-ba)
- Media and Screen Studies and English (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/arts-media-design/media-screen-studies/media-screen-studies-english-ba)
- Media and Screen Studies and History (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/arts-media-design/media-screen-studies/media-screen-studies-history-ba)
- Media and Screen Studies and Journalism (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/arts-media-design/media-screen-studies/media-screen-studies-journalism-ba)
- Media and Screen Studies and Media Art (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/arts-media-design/media-studies/media-screen-studies-media-art-ba)
- Media and Screen Studies and Philosophy (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/arts-media-design/media-screen-studies/media-screen-studies-philosophy-ba)
- Media and Screen Studies and Political Science (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/arts-media-design/media-screen-studies/media-screen-studies-political-science-ba)
- Media and Screen Studies and Sociology (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/arts-media-design/media-studies/media-screen-studies-media-screen-studies-sociology-ba)
- Media and Screen Studies and Theatre (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/arts-media-design/media-screen-studies/media-screen-studies-theatre-ba)

Bachelor of Science (BS)

- Media and Screen Studies and Theatre (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/arts-media-design/media-screen-studies/media-screen-studies-theatre-bs)

Minors

- Cinema Studies (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/arts-media-design/media-screen-studies/cinema-studies-minor)
- Film Production (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/arts-media-design/media-screen-studies/film-production-minor)
- Media and Screen Studies (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/arts-media-design/media-screen-studies/media-screen-studies-minor)
Courses

Media and Screen Studies Courses

MSCR 1000. Media and Screen Studies at Northeastern. 1 Hour.
Intended for freshmen media and screen studies majors and combined majors. Introduces students to the liberal arts in general. Offers students an opportunity to become familiar with media and screen studies as a major discipline; to develop the academic skills necessary to succeed (analytical ability and critical thinking); to become grounded in the culture and values of the university community (including advising); and to develop interpersonal skills—in short, to become familiar with all the skills needed to become a successful university student.

MSCR 1100. Film 101. 4 Hours.
Focuses on the ways in which cinematic language and representations have developed since the late-nineteenth century, how representations of human difference vary in distinct cultural contexts, and how particular filmmakers and historical/national movements have challenged certain representations and ideologies. This range of representations and discourses includes blackface performance and other racist tropes, ethnographic studies of indigenous people as “exotic” curiosities, films noir that demonize independent women, postwar Italian neorealism’s revolutionary focus on the plight of the poor, films by and about marginalized ethnicities in the U.S. and the global south, banned films that highlight the condition of women in post-revolution Iran, and contemporary Hollywood’s treatment of homosexuality and masculinity.

MSCR 1150. TV 101. 4 Hours.
Provides an overview of television studies for nonmajors. Covers different ways to think about how to watch TV and the effect of changing technology and industry practices on television.

MSCR 1220. Media, Culture, and Society. 4 Hours.
Surveys the various media of communication. Includes radio, television, film, newspapers, magazines, and electronic communication. Explores the impact media have on culture and society and addresses some of the key issues and debates that circulate about the media and media influence. Also discusses and develops an understanding of the process of media preproduction and production including storyboarding, budgeting, and the medium requirements.

MSCR 1230. Introduction to Film Production. 4 Hours.
Offers an introduction to production that blends theory and practice of film/video production through an examination of exemplary works, aesthetic strategies, production techniques, and the dynamic relationship between media makers, subjects, viewers, and technology. Offers students an opportunity to gain fundamental moving-image fluency using widely accessible media production tools including camcorders, mobile phones, and digital single-lens-reflex cameras.

MSCR 1310. Introduction to Digital Media Culture. 4 Hours.
Outlines the history and theory of digital media from aesthetic, cultural, and political perspectives. Analyzes digital media as layered objects emerging at the intersection of technological innovation, social experimentation, and power relations.

MSCR 1320. Media and Social Change. 4 Hours.
Explores media’s role in movements for social, economic, and cultural change. Specifically examines how people use media technologies to organize themselves and communicate their message to wider audiences in order to achieve social change. As a way to develop and improve ethical reasoning, students are asked to think about the accountability of media institutions and actions of groups and individuals who use media technologies and tactics in the name of social change.

MSCR 1420. Media History. 4 Hours.
Examines the historical relationships between media, culture, and society with a focus on the role of media technologies as tools of communication. Emphasizes the broad social and cultural conditions that shape media and the ways in which people experience culture and understand meaning. Introduces the concept of mediation to analyze how different forms of communication have emerged in different historical moments. Critically examines past interactions between media and culture, and also examines the emergence of historically specific conceptions of audience, identity, content, industry, information, perception, and so forth.

MSCR 1990. Elective. 1-4 Hours.
Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

MSCR 2220. Understanding Media and Film. 4 Hours.
Introduces how media works—stylistically, socially, and culturally. Topics include genre, narrative, cinematography, ideology, and representation. Offers students an opportunity to learn how to analyze media by acquiring skills associated with research and writing.

MSCR 2300. Television: Text and Context. 4 Hours.
Introduces students to critical television studies. Topics include visual language (use of image, music, graphics, editing, and sound); narrative structure; and genre. Specific critical approaches include semiotics, narrative and genre analysis, feminist analysis, and ideological analysis of representation.

MSCR 2302. Advertising and Promotional Culture. 4 Hours.
Investigates our promotional culture through a close study of advertising’s history and contemporary industry. By analyzing advertising’s production of meaning from storyboard to the complete campaign, the course develops an understanding of the interlinkages among advertising, publicity, promotion, and publications.

MSCR 2325. Global Media. 4 Hours.
Covers global dynamics of media and media systems. Specifically seeks to introduce students to the nuances of globalization and cultural performance through media structures. Introduces a wide variety of topics that fall in the intersection between globalization and media and the ways in which they operate socially and culturally. The course focuses broadly on understanding—in both theoretical and practical ways—how and why global media function as they do and how they contribute to knowledge formation and social justice within various cultural contexts.

MSCR 2400. Hip-Hop in and as Media. 4 Hours.
Explores hip-hop’s capacity to communicate particular images, ideals, and values that represent various social factions at different historical moments. Hip-hop has evolved significantly since its inception over 40 years ago in the South Bronx. Most often understood as a musical genre, hip-hop’s cultural complexity encompasses musical expression, art forms including dance and graffiti/graphic design, new terminology, innovative entrepreneurialism, and myriad other elements that continue to influence popular culture more widely. Analyzes issues of authenticity and genre; modes of representation in rap lyricism; representation via hip-hop literature, press, films, and videos; technologies, media production, and contexts of reception; issues of differences and dissonance across generations; the communication of spatiality through hip-hop; and hip-hop as a transnational/global conduit of meaning and affiliation.
MSCR 2500. Digital Media Research. 4 Hours.

Examines the growing centrality of what has been variously labeled as the "social web," "Web 2.0," "participatory culture," and "convergence culture." Does so by situating blogs, social network sites, Wikis, image boards, and other types of participatory media in a broader social, economic, and political contexts. Examines how the development of social media is infused with gendered, racial, cultural, and subcultural values. Offers students an opportunity to examine key dimensions of cultural life that make up our (online) selves—including friendship, privacy, labor, celebrity, power, gender, race, and activism—by conducting original research.

MSCR 2505. Digital Feminisms. 4 Hours.

Explores the unique ways that feminist activism and theory are impacted by the increasing digital nature of our world. From hashtags to Tumblr, feminists are using digital tools and platforms to aid in the pursuit of social justice. Offers students an opportunity to develop a timeline that traces feminists' engagement with the Internet, new media, and technological innovations from the late seventies to the present. Examines the strengths and challenges that the digital world creates for feminist engagement. MSCR 2505 and WMNS 2505 are cross-listed.

MSCR 2895. Film Analysis. 4 Hours.

Introduces the languages, aesthetics, and cultures of film. Topics include film genre, film history, and film theory; basic elements (e.g., shot construction and sound editing); narrative cinema, nonnarrative or experimental work, and documentaries; and the marketing and distribution of film.

MSCR 2990. Elective. 1-4 Hours.

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

MSCR 3210. Special Topics in Media and Screen Studies. 4 Hours.

Addresses issues in communication and media as well as developments in the production of television and video. Course content may vary from year to year. Students who do not meet course prerequisites may seek permission of instructor. May be repeated up to four times.

MSCR 3300. Media Activism. 4 Hours.

Explores media activism and tactical media as practices emerging at the intersection of political activism, the heritage of the twentieth-century avant-gardes, and technological innovation. By examining social movements media, avant-garde techniques, and critical media theories, offers students an opportunity to acquire the theoretical foundations necessary for a critical understanding of contemporary media activism and tactical media. Couples such historical examination with the review of a variety of contemporary tactical media interventions. Students who do not meet course prerequisites may seek permission of instructor.

MSCR 3385. Video: Story and Sequence. 4 Hours.

Explores narrative structure and the construction of cinematic sequences in a variety of film/video genres. Examines the codes and conventions film/video artists express in narrative, documentary, and experimental forms and how they are expressed through directing, cinematography, editing, and sound design. Offers students an opportunity to apply cinematic language to their work in video, design, animation, or interrelated media forms.

MSCR 3402. Television and Society. 4 Hours.

Offers a critical approach to television and society by approaching television as an institution, industry, and cultural form. Course readings use television to analyze cultural and social issues as well as addressing the political and social consequences of television in a historical and contemporary context. Therefore, rather than analyzing television programs as texts, television is used to address a range of topics that may include identity, globalization, citizenship, neoliberalism, interactivity, nationalism, and technology. Students who do not meet course prerequisites may seek permission of instructor.

MSCR 3403. Media Industries. 4 Hours.

Offers an overview of media industries studies. Uses a critically informed approach to media industries that offers students an opportunity to learn to identify and analyze the variety of companies that collaborate to produce, distribute, and market media texts. Explores different approaches to studying the life cycle of media, considering such factors as ownership, regulation, marketing, branding, and the impact of new technologies. Students who do not meet course prerequisites may seek permission of instructor.
MSCR 3437. Media and Identity. 4 Hours.
Examines representations of identity (race, gender, sexuality, and class) in the media, investigates their influences, and considers their repercussions. The class especially focuses on understanding identity as a construction, rather than as inherently "natural." Broadly, we discuss the relationship between identity and media representations; more specifically, we look at cultural texts, sites, and practices where the existing racial categories mix, merge, and/or rub up against each other in ways that problematize the naturalness of essentialized identities. Students who do not meet course prerequisites may seek permission of instructor.

MSCR 3438. Celebrity Culture. 4 Hours.
Explores the relationships between media, and celebrity, stardom and fame. Focuses on the structures and industries that produce celebrities and ideas of fame and stardom. In asking why celebrity culture has become so important to twenty-first century culture, media, and capitalism, this course also examines how audiences respond to celebrities.

MSCR 3500. Documentary Storytelling. 4 Hours.
Explores documentary storytelling. Offers each student an opportunity to complete a short documentary. Project assignments mimic professional milestones and practices. Guest filmmakers visit to provide additional insight into how their respective area of professional specialization contributes to storytelling and to give feedback and support to student work-in-progress. Analyzes a wide range of creative storytelling techniques and styles through screenings of documentaries.

MSCR 3990. Elective. 1-4 Hours.
Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

MSCR 4206. Age, Media, and Representation. 4 Hours.
Offers students an opportunity to engage with emerging social and critical theory by encompassing elements of the developing area of critical age studies as well as subcultural theory. Readings include those by Dick Hebdige, Henry Giroux, Margaret Morganroth Gullette. Students who do not meet course prerequisites may seek permission of instructor.

MSCR 4208. TV History. 4 Hours.
Examines the history of television in the United States. Possible topics include style, genre, aesthetics, and television specificity; the audience; and industrial and technological conditions of production. Students who do not meet course prerequisites may seek permission of instructor.

MSCR 4602. Media and Democracy. 4 Hours.
Introduces the role of the media in democratic societies. Explores a number of important questions, including what is democracy? What types of information do citizens of a democracy need in order to participate in the governance of their lives? In an increasingly digital world, where do political discussions happen? Are the media responsible for keeping the public informed? Who constitutes the "public"? Are we citizens? Consumers? Producers? Who decides? In order to address these questions, students have the opportunity to become conversant in a variety of modern and contemporary theoretical and critical perspectives on the relationship between the media, democracy, and what has come to be known as the public sphere. Students who do not meet course prerequisites may seek permission of instructor.

MSCR 4610. The Networked Self. 4 Hours.
Analyzes online participatory culture. With their emphasis on constant sharing and updating, social network sites, blogging platforms, and photo- and video-sharing services are reshaping contemporary culture by providing virtually infinite opportunities for self-expression and conversation. Explores what kind of subjectivity is set in motion by media that demand that users display their network of social relationships and provide constant updates, or conversely, to obliterate their individual selves. Offers students an opportunity to test critical and theoretical problems by analyzing a variety of Web-based phenomena. Students who do not meet course prerequisites may seek permission of instructor.

MSCR 4622. Special Topics in Media and Screen Studies. 4 Hours.
Addresses issues in communication and media as well as developments in the production of television and video. Course content may vary from year to year. Students who do not meet course prerequisites may seek permission of instructor. May be repeated up to two times.

MSCR 4623. Theories of Media and Culture. 4 Hours.
Overviews key conceptual approaches that have developed for the study of the media. Investigates theories that address the role of media in culture and focuses on how cultural studies can inform our reading of both media and culture.

MSCR 4685. Interactive Documentary. 4 Hours.
Introduces the historical context, evolving aesthetics, and contemporary production practice of interactive documentary, an emerging genre that brings together interrelated media forms. Topics include documentary storytelling, content architecture, and interface design. Builds on a variety of production methods: photography, audio production/editing, video production/editing, animation, graphic design, interaction design, information visualization, writing, archival research, etc. Seeks to weave individual contributions into a cohesive experience suitable for online publication at the conclusion of the course.

MSCR 4970. Junior/Senior Honors Project 1. 4 Hours.
Focuses on in-depth project in which a student conducts research or produces a product related to the student’s major field. Combined with Junior/Senior Project 2 or college-defined equivalent for 8 credit honors project. May be repeated without limit.

MSCR 4971. Junior/Senior Honors Project 2. 4 Hours.
Focuses on second semester of in-depth project in which a student conducts research or produces a product related to the student’s major field. May be repeated without limit.

MSCR 4990. Elective. 1-4 Hours.
Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

MSCR 4991. Research. 4 Hours.
 Offers an opportunity to conduct research under faculty supervision.

MSCR 4992. Directed Study. 1-4 Hours.
Offers independent work under the direction of members of the department on a chosen topic. Course content depends on instructor. May be repeated without limit.

MSCR 4993. Independent Study. 1-4 Hours.
Offers independent work under the direction of members of the department on a chosen topic. Course content depends on instructor. May be repeated without limit.

MSCR 4994. Internship. 4 Hours.
Offers students an opportunity for internship work. May be repeated without limit.
MSCR 4996. Experiential Education Directed Study. 4 Hours.
Draws upon the student’s approved experiential activity and integrates it with study in the academic major. Restricted to those students who are using the course to fulfill their experiential education requirement. May be repeated without limit.

Media—Cinema Studies Courses

CINE 1200. Exploring the Humanities through Film. 4 Hours.
Investigates the ways in which the methods of the humanities can expand one’s awareness of the sources, statements, and meanings of popular films. Presents films for evaluation in the light of reading, various approaches presented by faculty members from a number of humanistic disciplines, and student’s own experiences.
CINE 1990. Elective. 1-4 Hours.
Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

CINE 2160. Narrative Filmmaking. 4 Hours.
Introduces narrative filmmaking without synch sound. Offers students an opportunity to create several short projects without dialogue. The successful student leaves the course with a portfolio of work, a basic knowledge of video cameras, and one editing software program (either Avid or Final Cut Pro). Focuses on storytelling through visuals.

CINE 2161. Video Software Tools. 1 Hour.
Offers a technology workshop introducing intermediate skills and software used in capturing, manipulating, and editing video and audio.

CINE 2336. American Film and Culture. 4 Hours.
Surveys the rise of American film from the late nineteenth century to the present. Examines key films, directors, major themes, and film forms and techniques. Includes lectures, screenings, and discussions. Students who do not meet course prerequisites may seek permission of instructor.

CINE 2350. History of Film. 4 Hours.
Surveys major international developments in film from the late nineteenth century to the present. Examines national movements, technological and aesthetic innovations, important figures, and significant films. Includes films, lectures, and discussions.

CINE 2394. Modern Film and Global Culture. 4 Hours.
Studies a selection of major modern films from around the world from a thematic, cultural, and historical perspective. Special attention is given to political, social, ethical, and psychological issues, as well as to the way common human themes emerge in quite diverse cultures. Also covers the basic procedures of film interpretation.

CINE 2990. Elective. 1-4 Hours.
Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

CINE 3370. Contemporary Directions in Cinema. 4 Hours.
Provides a comparative study of major international film movements from 1960 to the present. Studies selected films by representative contemporary directors. Includes lectures, screenings, and discussions.

CINE 3389. Screenwriting. 4 Hours.
Approaches the unique narrative form of the dramatic short film, with the goal of having students produce a short film screenplay (under twenty minutes in length) which could eventually be shot. Takes students through the storytelling process, from conception to visualization, dramatization, characterization, and dialogue, ending in a project which should reflect the student’s own personal voice and unique vision. Offers students an opportunity to work on many writing exercises involving free association, visualizations, and character explorations, and to evaluate and critique each other’s work in a workshop setting. May be repeated up to two times.

CINE 3392. Gender and Film. 4 Hours.
Examines the representation of gender in film. Uses concepts and research from film and media studies to investigate the influences and consequences of gender representations in film. CINE 3392 and WMNS 3392 are cross-listed.

CINE 3446. Topics in Documentary Production. 4 Hours.
Offers a hands-on documentary production course. Provides an historical retrospective of the documentary. Explores a variety of filmmaking styles. After instruction in cameras and digital editing, students have an opportunity to produce their own documentaries from concept to finished product. May be repeated up to two times.

CINE 3500. Film Theory. 4 Hours.
Explores the movement from modernist concern with the art object to postmodern concerns with subjectivity and spectatorship, race, and gender. Requires a paper using formalist analysis and later revision using cultural analysis, psychoanalysis, philosophy of perception, race studies. Also offers students an opportunity to learn research methods in cinema studies and perform a metacritical review of their own work and to present their findings from film journals, databases, Web sites, blogs. Presents the relation of perception to reality; levels of representational reality; reception theory; digitalization in its relation to movement and meaning. Seeks to enable students to recognize structures and problems for analysis in a film and to apply appropriate theoretical models to analyze these structures.

CINE 3851. Film Festivals: Exhibition and Distribution. 4 Hours.
Examines the role of the film festival in the film industry. Analyzes the actual workings of an array of film festivals from the boutique, short, and independent showcases to the large international festivals. (a) MSCR 1230 or permission of instructor and (b) sophomore standing or above.

CINE 3900. Film and Psychoanalysis. 4 Hours.
Explores one of the most influential approaches to the study of film. Readings introduce students to key concepts in the psychoanalytic approach to film analysis. Students who do not meet course prerequisites may seek permission of instructor.

CINE 3920. Topics in Film Studies. 4 Hours.
Focuses on a specific issue and topic in film studies. Course content varies from semester to semester. Students who do not meet course prerequisites may seek permission of instructor. May be repeated up to three times.

CINE 3990. Elective. 1-4 Hours.
Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

CINE 4500. Modernism/Modernity and Film. 4 Hours.
Offers an interdisciplinary course that traces the modernist impulse in literature, film, art, and architecture from the early twentieth century to the multifaceted development of postmodernism at the end of the century. Emphasizes the relationship of art to society, and studies the way in which modernism’s revolutionary strategies required constant innovation and renewal in the face of such challenges as fascism, the Cold War, and postcolonial struggles for national identity. Students complete individual projects (creative or research paper) and also contribute to the Web site Boston modernism (http://www.atsweb.neu.edu/bostonmodernism). Counts as a capstone course for the cinema studies combined major.
CINE 4550. Cinema Studies Seminar. 4 Hours.
Encourages students to reflect on their undergraduate experience as well as to make the transition to the next stage of their career. Students are asked to complete an individual creative project (the experiential component) that reflects a significant engagement with the world beyond the academic setting. They are also asked to complete a research paper that draws together aspects of their combined major and the world of work and/or graduate study. Classes consist of screenings and lectures, guest lectures and field trips, and student presentations. This junior/senior seminar is a capstone course in the cinema studies combined major.

CINE 4560. Directing the Short Fiction Film. 4 Hours.
Offers a directing workshop in which students have an opportunity to create short films with dialogue and to prepare a larger and more ambitious project. Students have an opportunity to become familiar with a broad range of production techniques as well as screenwriting and storytelling, both in the field and through class discussions, and to work both individually and in groups.

CINE 4990. Elective. 1-4 Hours.
Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

CINE 5239. Media and History. 4 Hours.
Introduces students to the variety of chemical and electronic media, and the appropriate uses of these media for teaching, preservation, outreach, and primary research documents. Each student engages in research related to the selection and evaluation of existing media, and on the deconstruction, analysis, evaluation, and assembly of documentary presentations. Students then form research and production teams for the creation of media production, which takes place during the semester. Topics include media preservation, production budgeting, marketing, and intellectual property.