



Media, Film and Communication

Make sense of your world

“Departmental staff were an invaluable asset, taking time to give me expert advice and guidance. I learnt to think critically, and write effectively. This allowed me to achieve much more than I thought possible at the beginning of my degree.”

Hayley Livingston
BA, Hons (Film & Media Studies)
Community Advocate at Trustpilot

Challenge your mind and broaden your views in a diverse, stimulating learning environment that demands you be critical, creative and innovative.

- engage responsibly with a diverse and fast-changing media world
- contribute productively to your communities and chosen fields of work
- increase your awareness of the transformations and the revisions in social and cultural relations
- prepare to take advantage of new career opportunities

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Why Study Media, Film and Communication at Otago?

Courses in the Department will challenge your mind, broaden your views, and help you develop an increased awareness of transformations in society and culture. Our goal is to prepare students to take their place as responsible and engaged citizens, who are critical, creative and innovative, equipped to connect with a diverse and fast-changing media world and to productively contribute to their communities and chosen professions. To serve this goal, our scholarship and teaching is interdisciplinary, inventive, and practical.

But that is not all that we do. Almost all employers look for fundamental life-long skills – literacy, numeracy, communication skills, the ability to lead and contribute to teams, as well as the ability to solve problems through dependable research. All of these skills are taught in our department; they underlie most of what we do. We also value and develop an understanding of cultural diversity and differing perspectives, so it is not surprising that our graduates are to be found in many walks of life.

The Department has a well-established record of teaching and research, and staff who are internationally recognised in their disciplines.

Our major subjects

The Department offers majors in Communication Studies, and Film and Media Studies. Students are able to tailor their studies to pursue their specific interests and goals. Our degrees can also be combined with other subjects to form a double-major or double-degree programme of study.

Communication Studies

Communication Studies focuses on the social, technological, political and cultural implications of current and changing communicative practices and networks.

With an emphasis on social and media-based communication, courses initiate a critical and creative understanding of digital, broadcast, print and mobile communication, and develop written and screens-based skills. These are central to comprehending the role of media and communication industries and practices in the wider context of society and culture.

Film and Media Studies

Film & Media Studies focuses on the aesthetic, cultural and social significance of cinema, television and new screen technologies and their interconnections. It is concerned with the teaching of screen literacy as it applies to moving images and screens and looks at dominant and alternative practices – Hollywood cinema, global media, advertising, art cinema, the avant-garde, local and indigenous media, and documentary.

Career opportunities

Our graduates work in a variety of fields, including media production, journalism, education, advertising, administration, archival and curatorial work, media policy analysis, public relations, tourism, and some go on to postgraduate study in our Honours, Masters and PhD programmes. A degree from the Department prepares you for a wide range of career options, including career pathways that might not yet exist.

After your studies

In the future the media will play an increasingly central role in how we understand and navigate our rapidly changing world. The skills and competencies developed across the two majors offered by the Department – the ability to think critically, communicate in a range of different ways, appreciate diversity, and respond in a creative and effective way – will be in strong demand. The multidisciplinary focus of study within the Department of Media, Film and Communication transforms our students into citizens capable of adapting and contributing to an ever-changing world.

Teaching style

Our academic staff are experts in their fields (you can read about their areas of interest on our staff page on our website.) You will learn from the people who are doing the research. Our papers are designed to help you engage with cutting edge research and ideas through a range of coursework and assessment that will help you develop your written, oral and visual communication skills and critical competencies.

Background required

No prior background is required.

Generic skills

In addition to the specialist skills gained, our programmes enable you to develop general personal and professional skills that are highly valued by employers. They are the kinds of skills that are applicable in many career contexts and in many aspects of your life:

- clear and effective written expression
- verbal reasoning and clear and effective speaking skills
- team work
- research skills
- a broad general knowledge about the world and current events
- the ability to analyse and contribute to debates
- appreciation of diverse points of view
- the ability to think broadly, critically and creatively about social and cultural processes.

PROFILE

Ashleigh Adair BA (Film and Media Studies)

Head of Digital Strategy, Forster Communications, London, UK

Giving a presentation on how virtual reality storytelling can be a force for good to 200 charity professionals at King's College London is something that would daunt a lot of people, but not Ashleigh Adair, thanks to her time at the University of Otago.

"I had plenty of practice presenting my ideas and papers to my classmates whilst studying digital media and marketing so now I can confidently present to rooms full of professional peers and industry specialists."

The wide range of subjects available within the Media, Film and Communication Department was a huge benefit to her studying there. It gave her room to experiment with film history, foreign film-making and digital media and to see what was most interesting. One area of study she really enjoyed was industry structure and the impact of the (then) emerging digital revolution on film production.

"Learning the history of film and exploring the wider context of the modern media industry, makes you ponder the future of that business structure and the impact of digital technology on audience experiences."

Reviewing an array of films such as animations, documentaries, fiction and non-fiction, and studying the unique styles of the world's most famous directors were also interesting but Ashleigh says her degree was so much more than that.

"The skills and knowledge you'll gain can be applied to many other industries when you eventually enter the workforce. There are things I learned during my time at Otago that I now rely on all the time, such as the ability to analyse audience insights, write strategic communications plans and present to rooms full of people."



For questions about
Media, Film and
Communication Studies
otago.ac.nz/mfco