

BMED100 Message through the Media

ECTS Value: 4 ECTS
Self-Study Hours: 48

Contact Hours: 20
Assessment Hours: 32

Overall Objectives and Outcomes

The main aim of this module is to help course participants understand better how the media impacts their life significantly in so many ways. Thus, it starts from an examination of the act of communication without abstraction, so that they understand how we communicate, as humans and members of different groups. The academic work of three important scholars and authors who have studied the subject is then presented and discussed, namely that of Audre Lorde, Marshall McLuhan, and Stuart Hall. The concept of media is then defined, as it can mean different things to different people, despite our preconceived notions about them. Course participants are introduced to the concepts of ENCODING and DECODING media messages, as these transpire from the insights of Stuart Hall's proposed theories, so they understand the meanings of messages. They will also discuss concepts such as misinformation, disinformation and malformation. They are also exposed to the concept of "MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE" as discussed by McLuhan, and its rationale and implications to today's media forms and platforms.

By the end of this module, the learner will be able to:

Competences:

- a. Collaborate with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to come up with initiatives that give students and parents opportunities to encode and decode positive messages to different audiences, possibly in every aspect of their education, and thus through various curricular subjects;
- b. Ensure that all MLE students learn and creatively apply into practice the core concepts of MLE, in relation to media messages/texts and the audiences they are addressed to;
- c. Create opportunities for students and parents, through cross-curricular activities, to creatively market various school activities through different media forms and platforms such as websites and social media;
- d. Guide students through a process of gradual understanding of the impact of various kinds of media messages on various types of audiences;
- e. Advise SLT members on how MLE students could contribute to the school's marketing needs, and such contribution would be considered as part of their assessment of and for learning;
- f. Carry out tasks with MLE students using various media forms and platforms, that educate both school audiences and others outside school in various aspects of life that are embedded in different optional subjects;
- g. Supervise students as they engage in practical tasks through which they create their own messages and productions aimed at different types of audiences, and showing different forms of content through various genres;
- h. Design lesson plans for the MLE classroom through which the skills learnt by students are applied effectively to question sources, verify stories, get out of their bubbles, recognize bias in all forms of news, and test critical thinking skills;
- i. Compose resources that embed the knowledge and skills learnt and practiced into MLE lesson plans.

Knowledge:

- a. Describe how various media impact our lives through both their forms and types of content;
- b. Identify the basic elements in the communication dynamic among human beings;
- c. Explain the significance of theories, concepts and insights put forward by important scholars and authors like Audre Lorde, Marshall McLuhan and Stuart Hall;
- d. Identify the implications of these insights, the latter including basic concepts like “the medium is the message” and the origin and dynamic of “encoding and decoding” media messages;
- e. List the various aspects of the media, namely media language, media content/messages, media organizations & representation and media audience;
- f. List the basic questions that need to be asked to encode and decode media messages, each corresponding to an aspect of the media;
- g. Define the concept of audience in general terms;
- h. Describe the relationship between audience and the various forms of media texts;
- i. Identify the implications of the relationship between media and audiences;
- j. Name the three main types of audiences: mass, niche and individual audiences;
- k. Define active and passive audiences;
- l. Identify some important implications of passive and active audiences for MLE;
- m. List various affects of media texts on media audiences;
- n. Name the various and most prominent audience theories/models that branched out from audience theory: hypodermic needle effect, cultivation theory, two-step flow theory, reception theory (encoding/decoding model), uses and gratification theory;
- o. Explain the aspects of audience that are emphasized by each theory, and their implications to MLE;
- p. Tell the importance of audience research;
- q. Define the basic elements of the various media (e.g. news, entertainment, genres, elements of games, visual media, radio and podcast, photography and advertising);
- r. Define fake news, ‘whataboutism’, ‘gaslighting’, ‘alarmism’, ‘blatant bias’, ‘victim blaming’, hypocrisy, propaganda, creeping normality, slippery slope, Cassandra complex (all in the context of fake news);
- s. Tell the implications of fake news, and of its blurred distinction with occurrences in the everyday life of the real world;
- t. Describe Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and its implications to marketing and message reception;

Skills:

- a. Demonstrate the implications of various core media concepts through practical examples and cases from the media world;
- b. Apply the understanding of the various audience theories to an explanation of the influences of various media messages on different audiences;
- c. Show through examples and practice how various structural elements of the various media are employed to convey messages to persuade different audiences;
- d. Create various media messages/products with embedded in messages aimed at various specified audiences;
- e. Construct pedagogically effective student-centred learning activities for the MLE classroom that help students encode and decode various types of explicit and implied/implicit messages, understand different audiences, and distinguish between fake and real news;
- f. Plan lesson plans that embed in each learning activity effective probing techniques through who, what, why, where and how questions, as they relate to the various aspects of media and the technical and aesthetic languages they communicate with;
- g. Apply knowledge about audiences and forms of representation to create a media product/text for a specific medium that conveys a particular message;

Assessment Methods

This module will be assessed through: Assignment, Product Design and Presentation, Forum Discussion

Suggested Readings

Core Reading List:

1. Pernisco, N. (2021). *Media Literacy: An essential guide to the critical thinking skills for our complex digital world*. Understand Media: LA, NY.
2. Potter, W.J. (2022). *Media Literacy* (10th Edition). Sage, LA.
3. Smith, J. *Master the Media: How Teaching Media Literacy Can Save Our Plugged-in World*. Dave Burgess Consulting, Inc, Dan Diego California.
4. Baran, S.J. (2018). *Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture* (10th edition). McGraw-Hill College.

Supplementary Reading List:

1. Cullum, S. (2018). Audiences. *Media Audiences: An Introduction*. [https://www.slideshare.net/alevelmedia /media-audiences-an-introduction](https://www.slideshare.net/alevelmedia/media-audiences-an-introduction) Retrieved June, 2018.
2. D'Antonio, E. (n.d.). Audience. *The Chicago School of Media Theory*. <https://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/mediatheory/keywords/audience/> Retrieved June, 2020.