Media and Cultural Studies

Undergraduate Degrees 2021
Welcome

Dr Allison Hui
Director of Student Engagement
Department of Sociology

Studying in our Department can be challenging, fulfilling and life changing. Our degrees offer you the opportunity to enhance your understanding of our complex social world, now and in the future; to gain experience of doing research; and to develop your employability and life skills.

You will be taught by talented and passionate scholars in Media and Cultural Studies. If you wish, you can elect to combine your degree with Film Studies or take modules in Gender and Women’s Studies; both of these subjects are highly complementary to Media and Cultural Studies. Disciplines we teach and study will open up your curiosity about the world we live in. You will grow into an independent learner as you progress and find your own scholarly interests, in the same way that we have found ours.

Student experience is at the heart of what we do. We encourage your participation in the many opportunities Lancaster University life has to offer; from field trips, work placements and studying abroad, to the film screenings, departmental seminars, public events and major international conferences we hold here. Our staff and students engage with important local, national and international debates around social and cultural issues, via the news and social media, campaigns and activism, and public talks. Our student ambassadors and representatives ensure that your experience and voice is at the centre of departmental life.

We look forward to welcoming you and offering you the opportunity to secure a first-class university education in a supportive, intellectually vibrant and friendly environment.
Media continuously influence the way we live our lives, get in touch with others, and are informed about the world. Our Media and Cultural Studies programme provides you with the opportunity to gain theoretical insights, analytical skills, and wide-ranging knowledge needed to explore the production, consumption, and meaning of media and culture in an ever-changing technological landscape. You will work towards gaining the tools and knowledge to investigate the social, economic, political, and practical dimensions of media in a global cultural setting, and to recognise the key roles of media in shaping who we are, what we think, and what we value.

Media practice
Whether it is looking at audio-visual storytelling in journalism or at the relationship between social media and activist campaigns, optional modules on your degree will help you to experiment with media practice while also studying its social and cultural role. You will have access to cameras and filming equipment for videography, photography, and audio recording. We also have editing facilities and relevant computer programming software.

Teaching
You will normally be taught in lectures and with small groups of students in seminars. Seminars are an opportunity for you to discuss readings, try out new ideas, and take part in practical activities, and also to get to know your fellow students and staff. Some modules in our Department also have hands-on workshops, film screenings, or field trips.

Lancaster University has been awarded the highest possible score in the UK government’s 2017 Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) ratings. Our TEF Gold rating is based on high quality teaching, excellent teaching facilities and the good careers our graduates go into.

Student support
You will normally be assigned an academic tutor in the Department to act as your first point of contact and to provide support. Students are also actively involved in departmental committees, giving you the chance to express your views and inform what we do.

Assessment
As well as writing essays and exam papers, we use innovative assessment methods, such as presentations, posters, scenarios and assessments where you make blogs, vlogs, or conduct your own interviews.
Opportunities beyond your studies

Placement year
With many of our degrees you can apply for a placement year version of the degree where you apply to spend Year 3 doing a placement with a public, private or voluntary organisation. An experience like this aims to boost your employment prospects and allow you to apply your academic ideas in practice. Placement applications are competitive, so to give you the best chance of success, you’ll be supported throughout the process by our team; including taking special, preparatory modules. If you are successful in securing a placement you would complete a reflective portfolio upon your return to showcase your experience; then in Year 4 you would return to the University to complete your academic studies.

Work placement and internships
We offer many opportunities to integrate shorter work placements into your studies, including:

- Independent Research Project - Work with an external organisation in your final year project.
- Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) Internship Scheme - Paid work placements that you can apply to undertake during vacation periods.
- Richardson Internship Programme - Develop your research skills on real-world projects working with NGOs, think tanks, charities and faith-based organisations.

Find out more about the many Placement and Internship opportunities that will be open to you at: www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass-placements

Global experiences
Lancaster is a truly international university, with students and staff from over 100 different countries and partner institutions around the world. Your global experience is about living and learning with people from different cultures whether through your course, your college or your Students’ Union. You’ll be able to access horizon-expanding opportunities around the world. There are opportunities to study abroad for your second year at one of our partner universities, currently located in Australia, the USA, Canada and Europe. Alternatively, there are short trips in the Easter or summer vacation to destinations such as the US, Malaysia, Ghana, India and China. These trips include meeting local students and businesses as well as academic study and cultural discovery. You can also attend summer schools at one of our many overseas partner universities.

www.lancaster.ac.uk/your-global-experience/
See study abroad case study on page 18.

Degrees and entry requirements

Placement year degrees
Check online for the UCAS codes to apply for a placement year degree, which are available with most of our degree programmes. With the help of specialist support and dedicated modules, you will apply for a professional, paid work placement, which, if successful, you would undertake in Year 3. You would return to Lancaster to complete your degree in Year 4. Read more: www.lancaster.ac.uk/placement-year

Study abroad degrees
You can apply to spend a year studying abroad with most of our degrees. There are opportunities to spend Year 2 studying at one of our international partner universities, where teaching is in English, before returning to complete Year 3 at Lancaster. Read more: www.lancaster.ac.uk/study-abroad

For information on fees, scholarships and any additional costs you might need to consider, please see our website: www.lancaster.ac.uk/study

Maarten Michielse
Director of Media and Cultural Studies

As director of the Media and Cultural Studies programme, I am proud of the wide range of expertise we have in our teaching and research team. This includes colleagues with expertise in (digital) technology, television, journalism, audio and music culture, visual culture, and social media.

You’ll study a variety of media-related topics, thinking critically about what it means to produce and consume media in an ever-changing technological and cultural landscape. You’ll also get to be creative with images, audio, video, and text.
We keep our degree programmes under constant review, and regularly introduce and update modules. In any academic year, the modules offered may therefore differ from those presented here. Similarly, the structure of our degrees may change, in response to curricular developments and following consultation with students. Please check our website for the latest information: www.lancaster.ac.uk/study

Year 1

BA (Hons) Media and Cultural Studies

Transformations: From Mass Media to Social Media

Optional Module

Optional Module

OR

Minor Subject Module

Year 1

BA (Hons) Film, Media and Cultural Studies

Transformations: From Mass Media to Social Media

Introduction to Film Studies

Optional Module

OR

Minor Subject Module

Transformations: From Mass Media to Social Media

Our core first year module runs across all three teaching terms and is made up of short ‘blocks’ that each focus on a key concept related to staff members’ expertise and recent research. The blocks below have run in previous years, and highlight some examples of the topics addressed in the first year.

From Mass Media to Social Media (and back)

All media, from all generations, depend on each other for their meaning. Computer games are often understood in relation to the medium of film, while film is often understood in relation to books and literature. Netflix, as a platform, is inherently interlinked with television, but also with the networked computer and the smartphone. Smartphones seem to have incorporated a whole set of different media: from the telephone, the newspaper, to the typewriter and personal computer. How then can we think critically about how media connect with, and depend on, each other for their meaning?

Media and Representation

Culture is a key site where meaning is produced, and cultural representations give us the framework through which we understand the world. Why does it matter if some people are represented, and others not? What kind of understandings are being produced, and which are not? How might media and culture produce ‘consent’ for how society is organised? And how might media and culture produce ‘consent’ for particular systems of inequality?

Optional Modules

You can select the following optional modules in the department:

- Gender and Women’s Studies: Identities, Inequalities and Politics
- Contemporary Social Problems
- The Sociological Imagination

Minor Subject Module

You will be able to choose one module from a choice of subjects that are complementary to your major subject and are recommended by your Department (these may include Criminology, Film, Marketing, or Management). After you register for your degree we will confirm which minor subject modules are available and how to register for your preferred option.

Media and Participation

Today’s culture is often called a ‘participatory culture’. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Weibo, and YouTube make it possible for everyday users and fans to participate with the media technologies, franchises, and texts that they know and love. How can we critically examine media participation, whether in fan communities or manifest as media detoxes and non-participation?

Media and Technology

Media and technology can be considered from optimistic and pessimistic viewpoints. At times, media technologies are linked with assumptions of progress and even a ‘technological determinism’ that presumes the power of technologies to shape cultures. But at other times, media technologies are tied to moral panics and blamed for the ills of society. To what extent can media technologies help us to build utopias in the future?
### Key Perspectives on Media and Culture
Focuses on critical approaches to media and culture and engages with key texts and debates which we will use to inform our analysis of contemporary media practices.

### Skills for Researching Social and Cultural Life
Since real life problems are often complex, multiple types of data can be useful in understanding them. You will be given the opportunity to develop practical skills while undertaking pilot research on a real world problem. This module aims to prepare you for an Independent Dissertation project in your final year.

### Study Abroad Year
If you are on a Study Abroad programme, and you have successfully gained a place to study abroad, you will spend Year 2 at a partner institution studying modules relevant to your degree.

### Independent Dissertation Project
You will write a dissertation or engage in a media project on a topic of your choice (under supervision) and you will be able to apply the knowledge and skills you’ve gained during your degree. Students opting for the Media project variant of the dissertation are able to produce a practical component of their choice (e.g., music/audio, video, ‘zine, etc.) that is informed by research and accompanied by short positioning and critical reflection pieces of writing. For BA (Hons) Film, Media and Cultural Studies it is compulsory to complete a dissertation in either Film or Media and Cultural Studies.

### Independent Research Project
You will conduct an independent research project whilst also gaining highly valued work experience in a charity, local government, social enterprise, or company. This will foster your ability to ask critical questions, drawing on sociological and critical cultural theories to analyse ‘real world’ problems and come up with viable solutions. Faculty staff will help you to find appropriate organisations and negotiate access.

### Placement Year
If you have been successful in securing a placement, you will spend Year 3 on work placement. In your fourth year, you will return to Lancaster to complete the curriculum above.

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### Modules in depth

#### Year 2
**BA (Hons) Media and Cultural Studies**

- Key Perspectives on Media and Culture
- Skills for Researching Social and Cultural Life
- Optional Modules

**BA (Hons) Film, Media and Cultural Studies**

Your degree is weighted 50/50 between Media and Cultural Studies and Film.

- Key Perspectives on Media and Culture
- Skills for Researching Social and Cultural Life
- Hollywood and Beyond: Global Cinema
- Optional Modules

See page 12 for a list of optional modules.

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#### Year 3
**BA (Hons) Media and Cultural Studies**

- Independent Dissertation Project
- Optional Modules

**BA (Hons) Film, Media and Cultural Studies**

Your degree is weighted 50/50 between Media and Cultural Studies and Film.

- Independent Dissertation Project
- 2 Film related modules
- Optional Modules

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Optional Modules

The wide choice of optional modules reflects areas of topical interest and our research expertise. The Department aims for every student to be able to take a module with some assignments involving media practice components in both year 2 and the final year of their degree.

Optional modules are subject to change; please keep an eye on our website for updates to the list below:

www.lancaster.ac.uk/study

Year 1
+ Contemporary Social Problems
+ Gender and Women’s Studies: Identities, Inequalities and Politics
+ The Sociological Imagination

Year 2
+ Consumer Culture and Advertising
+ Documentary Film Practice
+ Gender and Media
+ Hollywood and beyond: Global Cinema
+ Media and Visual Culture
+ Media, Bodies and Society
+ Short Film Production
+ Television, Culture and Society
+ Viral Media

Year 3
+ Cities, Cultures, Creativities - Urban Development in the Age of Global Media
+ Fans and Audiences in a Global Context
+ Food Cultures
+ Games, Play and Media
+ Journalism and Multimedia Production
+ Social Media and Activism
+ Sociology goes to Hollywood

www.lancaster.ac.uk/media-and-culture
Take the opportunity to explore or specialise in Gender and Women’s Studies as part of your Media and Cultural Studies degree. The flexibility of our undergraduate programmes allows you to take one or more modules in Gender and Women’s Studies while working towards a related degree.

In the first year here, you can choose the following module: “Gender and Women’s Studies: Identities, Inequalities and Politics”. This module considers women and gender relations, the different social conditions in which women live, especially in relation to differences amongst women, and how this leads to a diversity of feminist politics. Each week a lecturer from across the University will teach you about their research, exploring a range of topics such as:

- feminist histories
- intersectionality
- race and racialisation
- bodies and biology
- sexualities
- gender and class
- women and religion
- gender and language
- popular culture
- crime and law

If you wish to pursue your interest further, you can take further optional modules such as Gender and Media and Feminism and Social Change.

You can also complete your Independent Dissertation Project in a topic focused on gender issues. Previous students have researched topics ranging from women YouTubers and celebrity feminists to intimate partner violence. You can also choose to study gender-related modules taught by other departments, such as English; History; Linguistics; Law; and Politics, Philosophy and Religion.

Check out the Centre for Gender and Women’s Studies Lancaster on Facebook or @cgwslancaster on Twitter to find out more about what we do.

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Our favourite modules

**Media project dissertation**

As a student representative, I helped to develop the media project option for our final year dissertation. I was passionate about implementing this option because it allows people to express themselves in creative ways. Now that I’m taking the module, I’m making a lookbook about cultural appropriation in fashion. It is allowing me to explore aspects of the topic that couldn’t be easily expressed in words alone.

* Sruthi Chilukoti  
  BA (Hons) Media and Cultural Studies

**Digital Cultures**

This module was very enjoyable as I had the chance to explore highly engaging topics that are relevant to post-modern reality - from digital surveillance and self-tracking to the domain of hacking and E-Waste. I recommend it to all those interested, especially for its controversy analysis assignment.

* Marie-Louise Siakki  
  BA (Hons) Media and Cultural Studies

**Television, Culture and Society**

This is an incredibly thought-provoking module. As such a mundane aspect of our lives, we often overlook the significance of television as a social medium. This module unpicks the significance of television, positioning it within the current era of ever-expanding content-streaming platforms such as Netflix or Amazon Prime. It offers a valuable perspective on television, one that explores its history, but also evaluates its future.

* Neve Rawlinson, Alumnus  
  BA (Hons) Sociology

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www.lancaster.ac.uk/media-and-culture
I was incredibly lucky to be taught by some amazing professors and tutors, whose engaging lectures and seminars took a very personal approach. My experience at Lancaster gave me a theoretical and practical knowledge of the industry I wanted to enter and, most importantly, the confidence and the courage to ‘dream big’ and pursue a career in film and media.

As a result of three years of incredibly interesting and yet very intense and hard studies, as well as multiple internships, I managed to secure a full-time job as a Studio Coordinator at Studio of Art and Commerce (London), a progressive advertising and communications agency, primarily working with disruptive brands and spaces across multiple disciplines.
Eleanor spent the second year of her Media and Cultural Studies degree at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia.

I decided to do a year abroad because I had always wanted to live abroad and the opportunity to do it while studying seemed perfect. I went to Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, which was amazing because I had never lived in a massive city before. It was great in terms of meeting new people – Australians, people from other universities in the UK and even people from Lancaster who were also visiting.

The first thing someone said to me when I arrived in Melbourne was “Pick your football team – people will want to know which team you support!” Even though I’m not a big football fan, I became really interested in Australian Football League. I also had a great time travelling around Australia in school breaks and learned that 1) it can be freezing in July and 2) they do not put shrimp on the BBQ!

I learned a lot as a person during my visit – about being independent, about Australian history and culture, and about how celebrity adverts in Australian media are completely different from what we see in the UK. Now that I’m back, these different cultural experiences have been really helpful in my seminars and coursework.

The study abroad teams I worked with were just the best people to contact and were really helpful if there was any confusion with modules. Now that I’m looking into postgrad and careers, Australia is on the list of possibilities – and it definitely wouldn’t have been if I hadn’t been there before.

Eleanor Clist
BA (Hons) Media and Cultural Studies, Final Year
Your future career

The Lancaster Award
The Lancaster Award is an innovative non-academic, non-credit bearing certificate of achievement developed in partnership with employers to help you make the most of your time at Lancaster and to demonstrate the skills you have developed along the way. We want you to stand out from the crowd - the Lancaster Award will help you to do so.
Read more www.lancaster.ac.uk/lancaster-award

Careers Service
Our Careers Service offer a lively programme of events and workshops, mentoring programmes and short courses. We have careers advisors who are able to advise you of graduate schemes, jobs, internships, and work experience opportunities relevant to your subject of study.
Read more www.lancaster.ac.uk/careers

Workplace Skills
Our degree could enable you to develop a range of transferable skills that include:
- Research
- Communication and presentation
- Time and priority management
- Team work and individual work
As well as industry specific skills such as:
- Journalistic reports, documentaries, and shorts
- Digital ethnography
- Visual storytelling
- Digital audio podcasts
- Computer programming/hacking initiatives
- Service-learning and community storytelling
Our students often gain experience through involvement in student societies such as:
- LA1TV student television company
- SCAN student newspaper
- Lancaster University Film Society

Careers
The skills that you will develop during your degree could prepare you for jobs in many sectors, however you might be particularly interested in a career in:
- Digital journalism and social media
- Creative sectors
- Publishing
- Online media companies
- Advertising and marketing

www.lancaster.ac.uk/media-and-culture
Here in the Sociology Department, we have always been at the forefront of exciting and innovative research, which has been recognised globally. We are home to several different research centres and are a hub for interdisciplinary research at the University. Our centres bring together diverse staff and students from across the world through their research and events. Our main areas of research include:

**Gender and Inequalities**

We are an internationally-recognised leader in this area of research, which covers issues such as race and ethnicity, sexuality and reproduction, media representations of gender, feminist online activism, gender-based violence, women’s human rights, and gender equality policies. We organise public events such as Feminist Movie Mondays.

**Media and Cultural Studies**

Our research on media and culture emphasises the study of media in their political and social contexts, and we examine the cultural forms created by media industries and the ways they resonate in everyday life. We focus on areas such as visual culture in terms of advertising, urban experiences and cityscapes, digital cultures, media activism, online communities, and cultural politics such as multiculturalism, migration and citizenship. Staff contributed to the UK Parliament Public Inquiry on Reality TV in 2019.

**Mobilities**

Lancaster University is where the new ‘mobilities paradigm’ in the social sciences, humanities and sciences started. Put simply, ‘mobilities’ studies how technological, social and cultural developments in public and private transportation, communications, data storage and retrieval, and surveillance systems are rapidly changing the nature of travel and of communications at a distance. Our research has been conducted with public and industrial partners, such as Airbus DS, Public Safety Europe Network, and Lancashire Resilience Forum.

**Science, Technology and the Environment**

Lancaster University is renowned for its research in the social studies of science, technology and the environment, which involves staff and students from a range of different disciplines. We aim to further critical understanding of the social, political, and cultural dimensions of innovative technologies, and of their implications for public policy and society. Our research addresses the uptake of healthcare technologies, caring practices, climate change, disaster resilience, robotics and automation, energy use, and big data.

**Social and Political Theory**

We have a strong commitment to social critique, applying this to transdisciplinary investigations into the personal, cultural, economic and political foundations of society. Our strengths are in critical realism and the philosophy of social science, contemporary radical philosophy, critique of neoliberalism and forms of resistance, and urban theory.

**Social Futures**

Several members of the Department are also involved in the Institute for Social Futures which aims to improve thinking, visioning, and analysis of the future by combining high-quality social science and humanities research with computing, engineering and medical science. Our research in this area includes the future of AI and human intelligence, the North post-Brexit, and planetary futures and the Anthropocene. We work closely with industries, institutions and people who are part of the future to explore routes to the futures we want and need.

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Important information

The information in this publication relates primarily to 2021/22 entry to the University and every effort has been taken to ensure the information is correct at the time of printing in May 2020. The University will use all reasonable effort to deliver the courses as described but the University reserves the right to make changes after going to print. You are advised to consult our website at www.lancaster.ac.uk/study for up-to-date information before you submit your application. Further legal information may be found at www.lancaster.ac.uk/compliance/legalnotice.