Intro to Media Studies

Course prefix: LMC

Course number: 2400

Section: B2

CRN (you may add up to five):
25107

Instructor First Name: Cecile (Yangminming)

Instructor Last Name: Zhang

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

1. This course focuses on introducing students to foundational approaches in media studies, with attention to how media forms develop historically, operate culturally, and shape everyday life.
2. This course provides students with core concepts and analytical frameworks for interpreting screen-based media and other cultural artifacts, while emphasizing discussion-driven learning, close reading, and clear communication in both written and oral forms.

Course learning outcomes:

1. This course provides students with a broad understanding of the historical development and cultural impact of media, a set of theoretical tools for critical analysis, and a vocabulary for describing formal and cultural elements of media texts.
2. This course also provides practice in communicating analysis clearly and concretely, locating and using scholarly research through Georgia Tech library resources, and participating in respectful, thoughtful, and professional discussion and collaboration across differences in perspective and experience.

Required course materials:

1. This course provides all required readings through PDFs on Canvas, with additional assigned media such as videos, films, and podcasts when appropriate; accommodations are available for students who cannot purchase required works.

2. This course focuses on readings that build media literacy across three connected units: legacy media (how earlier media forms such as photography, film, and print established key theories of representation, spectatorship, and cultural power), media transformation (how media logics shift through technological change, remediation, and institutional reorganization), and new media (how contemporary digital platforms, networked culture, games, and algorithms reconfigure identity, attention, labor and meaning-making).

Grading policy:

1. This course provides a points-based grading structure in which the final grade is calculated as the sum of attendance, discussion lead, discussion participation, and three major assignments (Creative Reflection Presentation, Decoding Art Presentation, and Final Paper).
2. This course provides ongoing grade posting for discussion lead and assignment grades after each item is completed, while attendance and discussion participation grades are typically available closer to the end of the semester; students are encouraged to raise grade questions early, and grade-related requests will not be considered after final assignment due.

Attendance policy:

1. This course provides an attendance system based on in-class participation checks rather than daily roll, with an expectation that students attend in person approximately 90% of the time.
2. This course focuses on active presence through semi-random call-outs, and if a student is called and not present, the absence results in a 5-point reduction; students should email in advance for planned absences, notify the instructor as soon as possible after emergencies, and provide documentation when absences exceed two.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

1. This course provides clear expectations for academic integrity, including specific guidance on AI use: brainstorming support is permitted, but any AI-generated writing or images must be cited, and uncited AI use is treated as plagiarism and may receive a grade of 0.
2. This course focuses on maintaining professional academic standards consistent with university norms and emphasizes responsible attribution and ethical scholarship in all coursework.
3. The Georgia Tech Honor Code is explicit in defining plagiarism as "the deliberate use of any outside source without proper acknowledgment," including "appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts of passages of his or her writings, or language or ideas of the same, and passing them off as the product of one's own mind." If caught plagiarizing, you will be dealt with according to the GT Academic

Honor Code. The full Honor Code is available online:
http://osi.gatech.edu/content/honor