

Self-Determined Major Proposal

Student's Full Name

Class of 2024

Cumulative GPA

Phone Number

Faculty Advisors:

Multimedia Communications

Date of Submission

I propose to major in Multimedia Communications, which is the study of how the media has been impacted by technology, and, thus, learn the different ways to communicate. For my Multimedia Communication major, I plan to concentrate on two sub-areas within communication: Communication Studies, which involves the analysis and history of communication, and Communication Design, which focuses on website design and bringing ideas to life visually. By understanding the history and developing my own communication skills, I hope to work with a non-profit organization for the arts to communicate effectively with their audience. The courses I plan to take will help me work on my research, writing, interviewing, and digital media skills and allow me to be better prepared to apply them to disciplines in the arts.

Goals for the Proposed Major in Multimedia Communications:

- Understand the history of media and its political, social, and global impact
- Learn how mass media is constantly evolving and the impact it has on society
- Write critically and master oral communication skills
- Enhance social media production skills
- Hone media, production, photoshopping, and website design skills in order to reach a variety of audiences

To create my Self-Determined Major in Multimedia Communications and acquire the skills I need, I propose to take a variety of courses at Skidmore. In my first concentration, Communication Studies, I will focus on understanding how various media continue to evolve, and the effects social media can have on an individual and society. I began this portion of my proposed major with two courses, PL 225: Politics and News Media and MF 101: Introduction to

Media and Film Studies. These courses created a foundation for my major. The second part of the communication studies component of my major involves developing my writing skills. EN 228W: Prose Boot Camp with Professor Linda Hall, required me to focus on my writing skills, holding me to the standards of a professional ghostwriter or copywriter. To improve my skills further, I will take EN 280: Introduction to Nonfiction Writing.

To fulfill my Communication Design concentration, I need to learn how to create meaningful content that captivates the attention of my targeted audience, which involves me learning how to manage a website and create images that can tell a story. The digital media classes being offered at Skidmore will allow me to obtain those skills. I am currently enrolled in AR 136: Digital Foundations with Professor Deborah Hall, which allows me to learn the software needed for visual communication and gain an understanding of different Adobe software. I am also currently enrolled in DS 251D: Creative Non-Fiction with Professor Nyssa Chow, and the class teaches me how to write and create non-fictional stories and bring them to life as well as knowing how to capture the audience's attention and be aware of the details you want them to focus on.

I have always enjoyed being involved with the arts, whether through music, theater, dance, etc. To help me build my foundation concerning the arts, I will need to gain an understanding of how to engage with the community, encourage the community to be involved in the arts, and properly interview people from the art world. Combining communications through being in the art world will allow me to gain a better understanding of what the art world is like. To have my Multimedia Communications major focused on the arts, I need to have a solid foundation. In order to successfully do that, I will need to take classes in the Art Administration program and Art History department.

Two classes I plan to take are DS 324: The Artist Interview and AA 312: Engaging and Developing Audiences for The Arts. I am currently enrolled in AN 201R: Ethnographic Research with Professor Bernardo Rios, which is a class that allows me to work on my interviewing and research methods skills. These skills that I am acquiring will be essential for the Artist Interview. The Artist Interview class focuses on learning about the oral histories of art and researching and interviewing artists. The Engaging and Developing Audiences for The Arts class will help me gain a better understanding of how to work with organizations related to the arts, increase funding, and communicate with the audience about the importance of the arts. Taking those classes as well as a class in Art History, a requirement for the Artist Interview, and several dance classes, another artistic discipline, will allow me to be better prepared for the field of the arts. I will have a better understanding of the needs of organizations connected to the arts and ways of helping them grow through social media.

To help me create my proposed major, I looked at Syracuse University for Communication Design and Purdue University for Communication Studies. I knew I wanted my major to be a combination of different communication majors that are available at other institutions. Looking at those two universities, especially since they have good communication departments, allowed me to see the courses they offered and what similar classes were offered at Skidmore. I was able to gain a better understanding of what I wanted my major to look like and how I can combine those two majors and have them be concentrations within my major. For instance, one of the classes offered at Syracuse University for communication design is DES 101: Digital Tools for Designer 1. It is a class where people get introduced to digital design software and can learn how to use it and practice it. One of the classes here at Skidmore that is similar to DES 101: Digital Tools for Designer 1 is AR 136: Digital Foundations. AR 136:

Digital Foundations introduces students to Adobe software including photoshop, lightroom, illustrator, and aftereffects and teaches how to use them. Having the opportunity to combine both and successfully create the Self-Determined major in Multimedia Communication allows me to know the skills needed for my major.

For my final senior project, I am planning to do a social media campaign either with The Tang or with a non-profit or charitable organization for the arts in Saratoga. If the Tang does not allow me to work with them, I will be working with Saratoga Arts, or a store located in the arts district on the west side of Saratoga Springs. My final project will involve knowledge from my classes like media sociology, visual anthropology, documentary production, and ethnographic research. I will be conducting research on the specific organization that I am working with, and understanding who their audience is, how we can bring more people to come and look at the arts, as well as helping to expand their social media presence. In terms of social media campaigns, I will be able to use my photoshopping and digital design skills to help create captivating posts for Instagram or Facebook. As well, I will be using the skills I acquired from the documentary production class in order to help understand the framework and the aesthetic I will be aiming for if I want to use video content.

Core Curriculum

(* = already completed)

Title	Department	Course #	Credit hours
-------	------------	----------	--------------

Foundations:

*Introduction to Media and Film Studies	Film Studies	101	4
*Politics and News Media	Political Science	225	3

Methodology:

*Prose Boot Camp	English	228W	4
Digital Foundations	Art	136	4
Documentary Production	Documentary Studies	351D	4
Ethnographic Research	Anthropology	201R	4
*Visual Anthropology	Anthropology	221V	4
Introduction to Nonfiction Writing	English	280	4

Theory:

Media Sociology	Sociology	221	3
Engaging and Developing Audiences for The Arts	Arts Administration	312	3

Electives:

Creative Non-Fiction	Documentary Studies	251D	4
The Artist Interview	Documentary Studies	324	3

Capstone:

SDM Prep Seminar	SDM	SD 374	1
SDM Final Project	SDM	ID 371	4

Breadth requirements and course sequences

(*) = Already taken the course

(**) = Currently taking the course

Media and Film Studies

*Introduction to Media and Film Studies MF 101

Art

**Digital Foundations AR 136

English

*Prose Boot Camp EN 228W

Introduction to Nonfiction Writing EN 280

Political Science

*Politics and News Media PL 225

Sociology

Media Sociology SO 221

Anthropology

*Visual Anthropology AN 221V

**Ethnographic Research AN 201

Documentary Studies

Documentary Film Production: Form and Content DS 351D

**Creative Non-Fiction DS 251D

The Artists Interview AHDS 324

Arts Administration

Engaging and Developing Audiences for The Arts AA 312

All College Requirements

FOUNDATION REQUIREMENTS

Applied Quantitative Reasoning:

EC 104 Intro to Microeconomics 4 Spring 2022

Writing Course:

EN 105 Food Fight 4 Fall 2021

Global Cultural Perspectives:

LA 231 Latinidades 4 Spring 2022

Language Study:

WLI 101 Elementary Italian 4 Spring 2023

INQUIRIES REQUIREMENT:

Scientific Inquiry:

GE 101 Earth System Science W/Lab 4 Spring 2023

Artistic Inquiry:

DA 101 The Dance Experience 2 Fall 2020

Humanistic Inquiry:

AN 101 Intro Cultural Anthropology 3 Summer 2020

Proposed Course Schedule

Fall 2022 17 credits

Digital Foundations AR 136

Ethnographic Research AN 201R

Creative Non-Fiction DS 251D

Jazz Dance I DA 212B

Theater Management TH 306

Spring 2023 15 credits

Earth System Science with Lab GE 101

Elementary Italian WLI 101

Bridge Experience Course

Art History course (pre-requisite for the artists interview)

Fall 2023 13 credits

SDM prep ID 351A

Introduction to Nonfiction Writing EN 280

The Artist Interview AHDS 324

Media Sociology SO 221

Modern II DM 211A

Spring 2024 15 credits

SDM Final Project ID 371

Engaging and Developing Audiences for the Arts AA 312

Documentary Film Production: Form and Content 351D

Jazz Dance II DA 312B

Modern III DM 311A

Course descriptions

Introduction to Media and Film Studies MF 101

An introduction to multiple forms of modern and contemporary mass media. The course examines film and at least two other forms of mass media (such as television, radio/audio, digital media, print mass media). Students will learn how to analyze media images, texts, and systems and understand how media both informs and is informed by social structures and forces.

I've completed this course and it allowed me to learn about the different types of media and how people have analyzed it in the past couple of years and how much media has and will continue to change.

Politics and News Media PL 225

An introduction to the role and influence of the news media in politics. Students will study political communication theories about news media, identify important news media institutions that shape political communication, and explore how news media influences political attitudes and behavior. The class will provide an introduction to how scholars study politics and media, and how politicians, public officials, interest groups, and campaign operatives interact with the media.

I've already completed this course and I was able to learn more about how exactly the media affects the relationship it has with the public. As well as being able to learn the different types of influences that the media can have over the public and swaying their political opinions.

Prose Boot Camp EN 228W

Can you really teach anyone how to write?" a New York Times reporter once asked Kurt Vonnegut. Writers—especially writers who teach—are accustomed to that question, and generally have a ready reply. Vonnegut's answer was unusual: "Listen, there were creative writing teachers long before there were creative writing courses, and they were called and continue to be called editors." He neglected to mention a crucial difference between teachers and editors: the latter are responsible for preparing writing for publication. Teachers can let things go—in fact, they may have been trained to work with students on one or two weaknesses at a time. If you are sincerely interested in improving your writing at the level of the sentence, Prose Boot Camp offers straight talk about problems and how to fix them. You will undertake the work and be held to the standards of a professional ghostwriter or copywriter. The instructor will furnish you with material; with her guidance, you will shape it into publishable or, as the case may be, presentable prose. Note: "Prose Boot Camp" is similar to Professor Hall's "Writing on Demand" course; the assignments themselves, however, are different. Counts as a "Forms of Language and Literature" course.

This course will allow me to help work on my writing since as a communications major there will be a lot of writing required to do. I will be able to focus on how to improve my sentences and as well as understand what the standards of a professional copywriter are.

Digital Foundations AR 136

A survey of aesthetic and technological best practices in visual communication today. Students will study the basic functions and integral properties of Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, as well as After Effects or other video software while learning the principles of design. Vector and raster imaging techniques, scanning, printing, and font and file management are introduced through a series of demonstrations/projects that build upon each other. Through projects and critiques, students will work to make a visual voice that is distinctive and original. No digital experience necessary.

This course will allow me to help learn more about photoshop, illustrator, InDesign, and other online tools that can help with digital media in communications and how I can apply it to being a social media planner.

Documentary Film Production: Form and Content DS 351D

An introduction to the tools, skills and practices used in documentary film production. Through the frameworks of documentary aesthetics and ethics, students will learn about style and craft in non-fiction films and apply this knowledge to their own documentary production work. Over the course of the semester, students will work in groups and individually to create multiple short documentary films in varying styles. All skill levels are welcome. Central to this course is the close observation and understanding of the world around us. Students will learn how to be respectful and acute observers in order to focus their lenses on the immediate and personal stories surrounding them.

This course will allow me to focus on being able to understand what framework I want to use or what aesthetic I want to aim for when working with video and visuals. It will also allow me to understand the different types of styles when it comes to working with video and producing content.

Ethnographic Research AN 201R

An exploration of the research methods anthropologists uses to collect ethnographic data. Students conduct ethnographic projects in local community settings and collect primary data using a variety of techniques, including mapping, interviewing, participant observation, and photography. In the process, students gain experience in formulating research questions, designing an ethnographic project, and analyzing results. Students also learn guidelines for

establishing rapport with research participants and for applying anthropology's code of ethics. Special attention is given to organizing and communicating findings orally and in writing.

This course will help me learn how to interview, what questions to ask when interviewing, learn how to work with the local community. It would also allow me to apply what I learn when doing my final project.

Visual Anthropology AN 221V

The study of the principles for thinking visually and creating images to present ethnographic data, with an emphasis on photography and videos. Students will examine the ethics of images, cameras in social science research, organizing images, and analyzing images. Students will also design short visual ethnography projects to gain experience in formulating research questions, visual ethnography, and analyzing and presenting results.

This course will help me understand the use of the media and how we can see it from a broader and cultural perspective. It will allow me to do some research and what I can learn from being able to work digitally and analytically.

Introduction to Nonfiction Writing EN 280

Introduction to Nonfiction Workshop- What is "creative nonfiction"? How is it different from other forms of nonfiction, as well as from other forms of creative writing? How do we know when we're doing it, and how do we learn to do it well? In this introduction to the so-called "fourth genre," we will explore the boundaries of essay writing, with an emphasis on personal and meditative essay, memoir, nature and travel writing, portraiture, and other less conventional forms, including the many varieties of lyric essay. Guided by exercises, prompts, workshop discussion, and published examples, students will discover the forms, style, subject matter, and sound that best suit their writerly intentions.

This course will allow me to work more on my writing skills and allow me to know how to write certain styles of writing better.

Media Sociology SO 221

An exploration of social, political, and economic forces that influence contemporary mass media. Students will examine a range of social scientific methods that have been used to document the nature of media content and understand how it is produced. Topics include the consequences of concentration in media ownership, the dynamic relationship between producers and consumers of media, and the study of class, race, and gender inequalities in media content.

This course will help me focus on looking at the media from a social perspective and how much of an impact it can have on society.

Engaging and Developing Audiences for the Arts AA 312

An examination of how to engage communities through the arts while raising the profile of artistic work. Students will explore the history of marketing the arts as well as current methods and tools used to communicate and activate the arts for audiences. The course will teach students how to authentically entangle the artistic work of individual artists and organizations into the life of a community while also increasing funding and earned income for the arts.

This course will help me understand how to communicate and gain people interested in the arts and learn how to better understand and to reach out to people who are interested in the arts.

Creative Non-Fiction DS 251D

This multi-media documentary course will introduce students to the variety of ways in which to creatively tell a non-fiction story through mediums that may include photo, video, sound, web, design, performance, etc. This course will help students to understand what stories they are interested in telling, the ethical considerations that apply to creative non-fiction, and how different medium choices can support their creative decisions and expressions.

This course will allow me to introduce myself in different ways I can tell a non-fiction story that will allow me to create social media campaigns for organizations I plan to work with in the future.

The Artist Interview DS 324

An exploration of the artist interview as a form of original art historical research. Students will learn how oral histories can function in a museum collection archive. Working in teams, students will closely examine and research artworks in the Tang Museum collection, prepare questions for the artists, and create videotaped interviews. Students will learn different methodological approaches to the interview and consider such questions as: how does editing play a role in making meaning; who defines the meaning of an artwork; and is the artist always the best source about his or her own work? Prerequisites: One art history course.

This course will allow me to practice the interviewing skills that I have gained from my other classes and apply them to the art world.