MECO805

Environmental Communication

S1 Day 2016

Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

Contents

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Convenor
Usha Harris
usha.harris@mq.edu.au
Contact via Email
Y3A165I
Please arrange as needed

Credit points
4

Prerequisites
Admission to MIntComm or MIntCommMIntRel or MBiotech or MEnv or MIntBusMIntComm

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
The field of environmental communication is growing rapidly as scientists, governments, the media, corporations, NGOs, and local communities recognise the crucial role of effective communication about critical environmental concerns that are affecting all species on earth. This unit engages in key themes such as climate change, environmental sustainability, bio-diversity, genetically modified foods, and how different interest groups have used multiple forms of communication to influence society globally. Lectures and readings explore the current issues, debates, and scholarship in environmental communication supported by a variety of case studies.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Identify key theories and concepts and relate their significance to the field of environmental communication.

Examine the debates in relation to environmental communication in the public sphere, politics, science, and civil society.

Critique a range of texts (scholarly articles, news, advertising, literature, visual and web-based media) and determine who the intended audience is, and evaluate their effectiveness.

Develop creative responses to engage mainstream audiences on environmental issues such as climate change, genetically modified foods, environmental sustainability etc.

Consider the importance, relevance and function of cultural environments, geography and social relations in communicating about the environment.

Apply advanced research skills, including the ability to gather data and analyse the findings within a relevant framework.

Participate in team work and contribute towards peer to peer learning in class.

General Assessment Information

As contribution to team work and peer learning during class is linked to and underpins the unit Learning Outcomes, you will need to either apply for Disruptions to Studies to cover any missed tutorial (if the disruption is greater than three consecutive days) or supply appropriate documentation to your unit convenor for any missed tutorial (if less than three consecutive days).

Assessment tasks are aligned to the unit Learning Outcomes. Timely submission of assessment tasks is a unit requirement or penalties apply. 5% per day (including weekends) will be deducted for all late submissions unless Disruptions to Studies (including a request for an extension) is approved.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
Seminar and Synoptic Paper	20%	Weeks 4 to 8
News Framing Analysis	40%	15 April
Communication Plan	40%	Week 12 and 13

Seminar and Synoptic Paper

Due: **Weeks 4 to 8**
Weighting: **20%**

Students will team up in groups of two and select a week to lead seminar-style discussions. Teams find one academic reading (book chapter or journal article) and a relevant community-based case study around which to lead the discussion. All academic readings and case studies are to be sent to the convenor two weeks prior to the presentation date so that these can be posted on iLearn for other students to read. You are expected to think of creative ways of inviting class participation to draw out your peers' views about environmental issues. Each student must

demonstrate his or her contribution. The grade will reflect individual input and performance. Each group will be responsible for approximately 30 minutes of tutorial time.

Written Submission: Submit one 800 word synoptic paper summarising central points in the readings, brief description of case study, one class activity, a list of keywords and a reference list. Distribute several copies of the synopsis to your peers to assist with the class activity, and one copy to the convenor.

Method of Assessment Submission: Submit synopsis in Turnitin on your presentation date or before.

Assessment criteria

Students will be assessed on their ability to: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key ideas and concepts in Environmental Communication; Evaluate the effectiveness of community-based action using specific case studies; Evaluate the effectiveness of environmental responses; Engaging in peer to peer learning.

This assessment task relates to the following learning outcomes:

- Identify key theories and concepts and relate their significance to the field of environmental communication.
- Critique a range of texts (scholarly articles, news reports, advertising, literature, visual and web- based media) and determine who the intended audience is, and evaluate their effectiveness.
- Consider the importance, relevance and function of cultural environments, geography and social relations in communicating about the environment.
- Participate in team work and contribute towards peer to peer learning in class.

Marking rubric is available on iLearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Identify key theories and concepts and relate their significance to the field of environmental communication.
- Critique a range of texts (scholarly articles, news, advertising, literature, visual and web-based media) and determine who the intended audience is, and evaluate their effectiveness.
- Consider the importance, relevance and function of cultural environments, geography and social relations in communicating about the environment.
- Participate in team work and contribute towards peer to peer learning in class.

News Framing Analysis

Due: **15 April**
Weighting: **40%**

This assignment assesses your ability to critique news reporting of an environmental issue in the news media. Identify an issue of either global, regional or national concern. Carry out a content analysis focusing on the specific issue. Your discussion should be supported by course readings and other literature. From the data gathered write an analysis of news coverage. You may use tables and charts to demonstrate your findings.

Do the following:

1. Develop a research question e.g. what is the dominant news frame in your chosen media.

2. Over a three-week period gather relevant news stories. Analysis can focus on the way each news outlet reports news stories by looking at the following:

  a. News agenda– What is the placement of the story e.g. is it in the top five stories listed?

  b. News values - What are the dominant news values?

  c. News elements – headlines, photos, leads, words and phrasing.

  d. Sources - who are the experts quoted.

Assessment criteria

Students will be assessed on their ability to: Gather and analyse relevant texts; Identify appropriate framework; Relate key theories and concepts; Examine debates in the public sphere.

This assessment task relates to the following learning outcomes:

  • Identify key theories and concepts and relate their significance to the field of environmental communication.

  • Critique a range of texts (scholarly articles, news reports, advertising, literature, visual and web- based media) and determine who the intended audience is, and evaluate their effectiveness.

  • Examine the debates in relation to environmental communication in politics, the public sphere, science, and civil society.

  • Apply advanced research skills, including the ability to gather data and analyse the findings within a relevant framework.

Marking rubric is available on iLearn.

Method of Assessment Submission: Turnitin on or before April 15th.

On successful completion you will be able to:
  • Identify key theories and concepts and relate their significance to the field of environmental communication.

  • Examine the debates in relation to environmental communication in the public sphere, politics, science, and civil society.

- Critique a range of texts (scholarly articles, news, advertising, literature, visual and web-based media) and determine who the intended audience is, and evaluate their effectiveness.
- Apply advanced research skills, including the ability to gather data and analyse the findings within a relevant framework.

Communication Plan

Due: **Week 12 and 13**

Weighting: **40%**

Develop an environmental communication plan using the framework provided. It is highly recommended that students work on a real project with a partner based either in Australia or internationally.   Students will be assisted in finding partners, but are also encouraged to find an organisation of their own choice. Teams will plan at least three meetings with their partners either face to face or using Skype. They will make their final class presentation in weeks 12 and 13 and submit a written communication plan (report format - details on iLearn). All sections will be collated and submitted as one report clearly identifying the author(s) of each section. Word count: Approximately 1500 words per student.

Partners may include: **Governments, Corporations, Scientists, NGOs, community groups, educational institutions.**

Assessment criteria

Students will be assessed on their ability to: Develop innovative solutions in response to environmental challenges ; Identify appropriate audience; Relate key theories and concepts; Examine the socio cultural context, Engage in team work and peer to peer learning.

This assessment task relates to the following learning outcomes:

- Identify key theories and concepts and relate their significance to the field of environmental communication.
- Critique a range of texts (scholarly articles, news, advertising, literature, visual and web-based media) and determine who the intended audience is, and evaluate their effectiveness.
- Develop creative responses to engage mainstream audiences on environmental issues such as climate change, genetically modified foods, environmental sustainability etc.
- Consider the importance, relevance and function of cultural environments, geography and social relations in communicating about the environment.
- Apply advanced research skills, including the ability to gather data and analyse the findings within a relevant framework.
- Participate in team work and contribute towards peer to peer learning in class.

Marking rubric is available on iLearn.

Method of Assessment Submission: Turnitin of written report in Week 13

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify key theories and concepts and relate their significance to the field of environmental communication.
- Critique a range of texts (scholarly articles, news, advertising, literature, visual and web-based media) and determine who the intended audience is, and evaluate their effectiveness.
- Develop creative responses to engage mainstream audiences on environmental issues such as climate change, genetically modified foods, environmental sustainability etc.
- Consider the importance, relevance and function of cultural environments, geography and social relations in communicating about the environment.
- Apply advanced research skills, including the ability to gather data and analyse the findings within a relevant framework.
- Participate in team work and contribute towards peer to peer learning in class.

Delivery and Resources

Delivery

There are no examinations in this unit. Tutorials begin in Wk 2. All written assignments must be submitted into Turnitin.

Resources

Recommended reading list is available via library online Reserve and iLearn

Cox, Robert, (2013). *Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere Third Edition*, Thousand Oaks: London: Sage.

Hansen, Anders; Cox, Robert (2015). The Routledge Handbook of Environment and Communication. Retrieved from http://www.eblib.com

Environmental Communication A Journal of Nature and Culture, Abingdon : Routledge, 2007
  Online access

Unit Schedule

Weekly Topics

- Introducing Environmental Communication – key themes, actors, frameworks.
- Environmental Communication within the field of communication theory and practice.
- Challenges of communicating the science to society.
- Influence of culture, politics and geography in EC practice.
- The role of (private and public) media in reporting key environmental issues in different

societies.

- Communicating the environment through visual media

- Ethics of Environmental Communication

- Designing environmental campaigns

- Participation and community representation

- Environment and corporate social responsibility

- Environmental activism - role of Civil Society (NGOs and activism)

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central. Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

New Assessment Policy in effect from Session 2 2016 http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html. For more information visit http://students.mq.edu.au/events/2016/07/19/new_assessment_policy_in_place_from_session_2/

Assessment Policy prior to Session 2 2016 http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html

Grading Policy prior to Session 2 2016 http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html

Grade Appeal Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Additional information

MMCCS website https://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/department_of_media_music_communication_and_cultural_studies/

MMCCS Session Re-mark Application http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914

Information is correct at the time of publication

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module for Students
- Ask a Learning Adviser

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Service who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Develop creative responses to engage mainstream audiences on environmental issues such as climate change, genetically modified foods, environmental sustainability etc.

- Consider the importance, relevance and function of cultural environments, geography and social relations in communicating about the environment.
- Participate in team work and contribute towards peer to peer learning in class.

Assessment tasks

- Seminar and Synoptic Paper
- Communication Plan

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify key theories and concepts and relate their significance to the field of environmental communication.
- Examine the debates in relation to environmental communication in the public sphere, politics, science, and civil society.
- Critique a range of texts (scholarly articles, news, advertising, literature, visual and web-based media) and determine who the intended audience is, and evaluate their effectiveness.
- Consider the importance, relevance and function of cultural environments, geography and social relations in communicating about the environment.
- Apply advanced research skills, including the ability to gather data and analyse the findings within a relevant framework.

Assessment tasks

- Seminar and Synoptic Paper
- News Framing Analysis
- Communication Plan

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Examine the debates in relation to environmental communication in the public sphere, politics, science, and civil society.
- Critique a range of texts (scholarly articles, news, advertising, literature, visual and web-based media) and determine who the intended audience is, and evaluate their effectiveness.
- Apply advanced research skills, including the ability to gather data and analyse the findings within a relevant framework.

Assessment tasks

- Seminar and Synoptic Paper
- News Framing Analysis
- Communication Plan

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Develop creative responses to engage mainstream audiences on environmental issues such as climate change, genetically modified foods, environmental sustainability etc.
- Consider the importance, relevance and function of cultural environments, geography and social relations in communicating about the environment.
- Apply advanced research skills, including the ability to gather data and analyse the findings within a relevant framework.

Assessment tasks

- Seminar and Synoptic Paper
- Communication Plan

PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify key theories and concepts and relate their significance to the field of environmental communication.
- Examine the debates in relation to environmental communication in the public sphere, politics, science, and civil society.
- Critique a range of texts (scholarly articles, news, advertising, literature, visual and web-based media) and determine who the intended audience is, and evaluate their effectiveness.
- Develop creative responses to engage mainstream audiences on environmental issues such as climate change, genetically modified foods, environmental sustainability etc.
- Consider the importance, relevance and function of cultural environments, geography and social relations in communicating about the environment.
- Participate in team work and contribute towards peer to peer learning in class.

Assessment tasks

- Seminar and Synoptic Paper
- News Framing Analysis
- Communication Plan

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Develop creative responses to engage mainstream audiences on environmental issues such as climate change, genetically modified foods, environmental sustainability etc.
- Consider the importance, relevance and function of cultural environments, geography and social relations in communicating about the environment.
- Participate in team work and contribute towards peer to peer learning in class.

Assessment tasks

- Seminar and Synoptic Paper
- Communication Plan