Department of Media, Culture, and Communication  
Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development New York University  

Youth Media and Social Change  
MCC-UE 1017-001  

Course Overview  
This course will combine theory and practice to explore the media production, pedagogy, and impact of the non-profit youth media organizations and school-based programs working in this field. Students will also conduct some fieldwork in the New York City area that further builds the related fields of youth media/youth development, teaching and learning, and community building. Research projects will document and investigate how youth media is supporting the development of young people’s capacities for 21st century skills of digital communication, critical literacy, and democratic civic engagement.  

Course Learner Objectives  
Students will be able to:  
1. Develop a critical understanding of learning, literacy, identity, and social change theories that underlie youth media pedagogy and production.  
2. Document and assess current practices in the field of youth media, guided by an ethical approach to their research.  
3. Apply theoretical accounts of educational equity, youth development and civic engagement to local contexts.  

Required Reading  
Access a packet of collected articles/chapters at Advanced Copy Center, 552 LaGuardia Place (between West 3rd and Bleecker Street) (212) 388-1001  

Grading and Assignments  
Attendance and Participation 25% (10% attendance; 15% participation)  
Reading Responses 15%  
Reading Facilitation 10%  
Reflection Paper 10%  
1 Digital Media Inquiry Project 20%  
1 Final Paper 20%
*Note on Attendance and Participation:
Attendance matters to us instructors as well as your fellow students who learn and collaborate with you. Attendance will be taken and no more than two absences are permitted. Any absence after that one will result in you failing the attendance portion of the course, unless I am notified in advance of class of an extraordinary reason why you cannot attend. Regardless of the reason for your absence you will be responsible for any missed work. There are no extra credit assignments for this class. Attendance includes being on time to class – if you are significantly or repeatedly late, you will be marked absent. In class, you must be prepared to discuss readings and participate in conversation; participation is not simply about showing up, but about being an active member of the class. Participation will also include your observations in the field of youth media locally, and/or globally via the Internet. Please note: attendance without active participation (i.e. vocal, verbal participation, including asking questions, answering them and/or offering your perspective, analysis, confusion, etc.) will receive no higher than a “C” grade.

Cell phones are not permitted in class. If I see you on your phone, you will be marked absent. Please take care of your phone calls and/or texting before or after class.

Reading Responses
A paper copy (2 pages) of your reading response will be collected each class; you should respond to all readings required for that session in one typed response. Reading responses should demonstrate that you understand the author’s main thesis or arguments and the context in which they were made, and are making thoughtful connections to the ideas/issues they raise. Note any special terms or concepts the author uses to make their argument. Draw connections, where appropriate, between this reading and any others we have discussed. Your responses should include those quotes from the reading that stood out for you, and the questions, comments, connections, problems, disagreements or critiques they provoke.

Co-Facilitation
All students will co-facilitate reading discussions. Co-facilitation includes providing the class with a summary of the main points raised in the reading and then leading a discussion with guiding questions or an activity that engages all students. Co-facilitation teams must email an outline of their plan for review in advance.

Reflection Paper
You will be asked to write a 5 page paper that critically reflects on the issues and themes that have been raised by the readings, class discussions, and your inquiries in the field.
Digital Media Inquiry Project
Working in small teams, you will produce, edit and present a digital media inquiry project that documents and explores an aspect of youth media theory and practice discussed in class, as it takes place within the context of a youth media organization. The project will include images, text, and at least one interview with a student and a youth media practitioner in New York City.

Final Paper
In this final 10 page paper, you will examine two central questions or themes that draw on youth media theory and practice discussed in class and observed in the research you have conducted in the field. To address your questions, you will use case studies and theoretical arguments found in readings and your own first hand observations of youth media process and products.

Format of Written Work
For all written assignments, follow this format: In the upper left corner, include your name, course name, date, assignment heading. All work must be typed and double spaced with numbered pages; multiple pages should be stapled. Follow a formal style manual for guidelines on citations, quotations, etc. Make sure you edit/proof your paper before submitting it. Your grade will be partly based on your ability to follow the norms and conventions of writing using Standard English styles and conventions.

Style Manual
Students are strongly urged to purchase at least one style manual. A good style manual will help to improve the organization and composition of your written work and, used properly, should help to ensure the proper citation of sources. I recommend the MLA or APA guides, available at any bookstore.

Late Assignments
1. Your Reading Responses will not be accepted after the day on which the pertinent readings are discussed in class, unless you were absent from that class.
2. Your Reflection Paper will be marked down one grade per day late, including weekends.
3. If you miss class on the day you are supposed to co-facilitate the discussion of the readings, your participation grade for the course will be marked down by half.
4. If you miss class on the day you are supposed to present your Digital Media Inquiry Project, your grade on the project will be an F.
5. Your Final Paper is due on May 9th at class time. If it is not handed it at that time, your grade on the paper will be an F.

Evaluation
A= Excellent: Outstanding work in all respects. This work demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and solid understanding of course lectures, readings, and discussions, and presents thoughtful interpretations, well-focused and original insights, and well-reasoned commentary and analysis. Includes skillful use of source material, illuminating examples and illustrations, and fluent verbal/written expression. “A” work is coherent, fluent, and thorough and shows some creative flair.
B= Good: This work demonstrates a complete and accurate understanding of course material, presents a reasonable degree of insight and broad level of analysis. Work reflects competence, but stays at general or predictable level of understanding. Source material, along with examples and illustrations, are used appropriately and articulation/writing is clear. Classroom participation is consistent and thoughtful. “B” work is reasonable, clear, appropriate and complete.

C= Adequate/Fair: This work demonstrates understanding that covers most or some of the basics but which lacks analysis, remains superficial, incomplete, or expresses some important errors or weaknesses. Source material may be used inadequately or inappropriately. The work may lack concrete, specific example and illustrations, and articulation/writing may be vague or hard to follow. Classroom participation is inconsistent and inarticulate.

D= Unsatisfactory: This work demonstrates a serious lack of understanding, and fails to express the most rudimentary aspects of the course. Sources may be used entirely inappropriately or not at all. The work may be inarticulate or extremely difficult to read. Classroom participation is limited, unprepared, and off topic.

F=Failed
This grade indicates a failure to participate and/or incomplete assignments.

Plus (+) or minus (-) grades indicate your range with the aforementioned grades.

**Note on grading policy: I aim to mark your work in terms of content, not format. If your assignments are technically sloppy (overwhelming spelling/ grammar/ format/ stylistic errors), I will be forced to grade for format and not content – this will severely harm your grade. If you are concerned about your technical writing skills, please seek help well before the assignment is due.

**Schedule of Classes**

January 29  
*Greetings, Overview and Introduction*
Screening of youth media productions

January 31  
*Youth Media- History and State of the Field*


February 5  

February 7  
**EVC Retrospective Screening at Film Society of Lincoln Center**  
Youth Produced Documentaries on Race, Ethnicity and the Media: “Breaking Through Stereotypes”, “We the People”, and “Blacks and Jews: Are They Really Sworn Enemies”

February 12  
**Framing Urban Youth: The Banking and Factory Systems – Constraints, Dialogue and Agency**  

February 14  

February 19  
**Youth Voice and Social Change**  

Developing Preliminary Research Questions and Sites

February 21  

February 26  
**Critical Media Literacy- Problems and Possibilities**  
Screening of “Young Gunz”

Selecting Youth Media Case Study Sites; Settling on the Research Question

February 28  

March 5  
**Studying Youth Media in the Field**
Planning Youth Media Inquiry Projects: Interviews and Site Visits


March 7

*Ethical Challenges in Documentary and Youth Media Work*


March 12


March 14

***Reflection Paper Due***

*Youth Identity and Agency*


March 19 and 21

*No Class -- Spring Recess*

March 26


March 28

*Apprenticeships and Situated Learning Theory*


April 2


Screening of "Aaron’s Story"
April 4  
*Social Media, Online Media and Participatory Culture*

April 9  
Jenkins continued

April 11  
*EVC Retrospective Screening at Film Society of Lincoln Center*
Youth produced Documentaries on Gender and Identity: "Patriarchy is Malarky", "Out Youth in Schools", “Its Not About Sex”

April 16  
Presentation/Critique of Digital Inquiry Works-in-Progress

April 18  

April 23  
Lange and Ito continued

April 25  
*Youth Media in Schools, Third Spaces, Microcultures and Reform*

April 30  


Screening of HSEI student documentary.

May 2  
*Final Project Revisions*

May 7  
***Final Project Presentations***

May 9  
***Final Project Presentations Continued***

***Final Paper Due***