

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
FOURTH SEMESTER
SKILL ENHANCEMENT COURSE - THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF
COMMUNICATION

NO. OF CREDITS- 2

NO. OF HOURS- 30

Mode: 1 Tutorial + 3 Practical

Course Overview

This interdisciplinary course explores the historical evolution of media from oral traditions, manuscripts, and print culture to television, internet, and AI-powered digital media. It helps students understand the changing modes of human communication and equips them with modern skills to use social media and digital tools responsibly. The course connects historical perspectives with 21st-century media practices, encouraging students to become thoughtful content creators and informed digital citizens.

Course Objectives

- To trace and critically interpret the historical development of communication and media from pre-modern to digital and AI-enabled eras.
- To examine how evolving media forms have shaped public opinion, education, and social transformation across different historical contexts.
- To develop students' creative, ethical, and responsible engagement with contemporary digital tools for historically informed content creation.

Learning Outcomes

- On completing this course, students will be able to:
- Explain the major stages in the evolution of communication and media from early oral forms to the digital and AI age.
- Analyze and compare the purposes, ethics, and scope of traditional and digital communication systems in shaping societies.
- Create responsible and historically informed digital or social media content (such as short videos, blogs, or podcasts) for public history and heritage engagement.

UNIT I: Origins and Evolution of Communication in History (10 Hours)

Oral traditions, storytelling, Invention of writing and manuscripts and inscriptions as early forms of communication, The Printing Press revolution and its social impact, Media as a source for historical reconstruction, Newspapers, pamphlets, and the rise of public opinion, Case study: Media during India's freedom struggle

UNIT II: Mass Media and the Digital Revolution (10 Hours)

Radio (1920s), Cinema (1930s-40s), and Television (1950s-60s), Rise of Computers (1970s-80s), Internet and Digital Communication (1990s), Globalization and Interactive Media (2000s), Social Media and Open Learning (2000s-2010s) - Growth of blogs, YouTube, and open-access digital resources, User-Generated Content and Influencers (2010s onward), Democratization of voice through Instagram, TikTok, podcasts, and short videos, Educational and Heritage Uses (2020s)

UNIT III: AI, Ethics, and Responsible Digital Citizenship (10 Hours)

AI in archiving, heritage documentation, and digital humanities, Augmented and Virtual Reality in historical interpretation, Tools like ChatGPT, Midjourney, and Notion AI for academic use, Ethical and creative challenges in AI-driven storytelling, Digital literacy and responsible engagement online, Copyright, plagiarism, and media ethics, Combating misinformation and fake news, Balancing mental health and screen time

Suggested Reading & References

1. Asa Briggs & Peter Burke (2009). A Social History of the Media: From Gutenberg to the Internet.
2. Marshall McLuhan (1964). Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man.
3. Elizabeth Eisenstein (1979). The Printing Press as an Agent of Change.
4. Erik Qualman (2018). Socialnomics: How Social Media Transforms the Way We Live and Do Business.
5. Selected online resources from Google Digital Garage and YouTube Creator Academy.

Teaching Methods

- Interactive lectures with visual and historical examples.
- Practical workshops on video editing, scripting, and storytelling.
- Comparative analysis: Traditional media vs. modern media.

Evaluation Pattern

- In-Class Activities and Group Tasks – 20%
- Visual Media Evolution Task - 20%
- Digital Storytelling / Short Media Creation – 20%
- Final Presentation / Documentary / Podcast Project – 30%
- Reflection on Course Outcomes – 10%

Recommended Tools and Resources

- Editing Tools: Canva, CapCut, InShot, VN Editor
- AI Tools: ChatGPT, Notion AI, Invideo AI
- Archival Sources: Indian Digital Archive, YouTube History Channels
- Social Platforms: YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn