New Master's Degree in Media Literacy and Digital Culture Announced

Lori Bindig, Sacred Heart University

Available at: https://works.bepress.com/lori_bindig/5/
Sacred Heart University is announcing a new master’s degree in media literacy and digital culture expected to launch in the fall of 2015. The new program will be administered by the Department of Communication and Media Studies and will be based at the university’s main campus in Fairfield.

“Our media programs at Sacred Heart focus on not just how to create media, but also how media impacts individuals in society.” says Lori Bindig, assistant professor of communication and media studies and director of the media literacy and digital culture program. “As a culture, we spend more and more time with media, and so it becomes increasingly important to understand its impact on us, on our children, on our politics—it affects everything.”

Bindig says the program entails a unique hands-on experience that allows students to create their own curriculum and material, depending on their interests.

“For example, teachers might come up with particular lesson plans that they could use with their students,” she says. “Or mental health professionals could create a handout of best practices to distribute to parents or patients. Students might be able to partner with a non-profit and work with them to raise awareness about a particular issue,” she says.

She says there are only a handful of media literacy programs in the country, “and none of the others are set up this way, with this sort of embedded hands-on learning experience that helps the students, but also gives back to the wider community.”

Students will earn the degree in one of two tracks: Children, Health and Media or Media and Social Justice. The master’s degree will consist of 36 credits that can be completed in as little as one year. Students may also enter the program for the purpose of earning a graduate certificate.
Courses will include “Social Media and Culture,” “Children and Media,” “Media Ethics in a Professional Context,” “Media and Social Movements” and “Multimedia Health Promotions.”

The university will hire one additional full-time, tenure-track professor to bolster its faculty for the new program.

Those interested in the new master’s in media literacy and digital culture degree may attend an information session at the main campus on October 14 at 6:30 p.m. For details, contact Eva Magnuson at 203-371-7884 or magnusone@sacredheart.edu.