



COMMUNICATE

# A Student-Focused Initiative: The New Media Convergence Center

At Mercyhurst College, real-world media experience is part of the curriculum

## Role of the New Media Convergence Center: Assisting Students

The New Media Convergence Center will become a crossroads for both students and ideas. It will connect students with each other, with faculty, and with practicing professionals by encouraging the school's three concentrated areas of study (Strategic Communication, New Media, and Visual Communication) to work together and support interaction between all of our disciplines. With the addition of the New Media Convergence Center, all of the department's many components will be centrally located, enabling greater interaction and promoting collaboration among faculty, staff and our students. The Center will compel students to combine traditional and progressive media methods to shape ideas and create techniques that will change the face of communication in the future.



The average person spends  
**9 hours per day** with  
some type of media

On a typical day, **70 million**  
Americans go online to use email, get  
news, find health information, and book  
air travel, a figure 37% higher than four  
years ago



# **Purpose of the**

## **New Media Convergence Center:**

### **Provide Work Experience for Students**

The New Media Convergence Center's mission is to understand the future of digital media and to engage students and faculty in defining and shaping that future by using our media outlets such as WMCE radio, Hurst television, and the Merciad newspaper. Through research, teaching, public events and outreach, the Center seeks ways for the media to better serve the public interest. The center will facilitate students to obtain careers in journalism, public relations, advertising, marketing, interactive media programmer, nonlinear editor, project/production manager, interface designer, global communications manager, graphic arts, and other communication fields by combining a strong liberal arts education with unique hands-on training in professional media.

CONVERGE



# The New Media Convergence Center Coordinates with the Traditional Media

The greatest resource for this project is the use of Mercyhurst's traditional multi-media outlets (TV, Radio, and Newspaper) in assisting students with the convergence into new media. Undergraduate students all study the same core communication skills before focusing on one of the three new tracks (Strategic Communication, Visual Communication and New Media). The goal is to give students both conceptual understanding and hands-on, practical experience of why things work as they do in the fields of communication. Cross training students will lead to a more employable graduate who can serve a company or organization in a variety of roles.

Students gain valuable *new media* experience working in the media-laboratory operations at Mercyhurst College. Here are a few examples:

- **WMCE Radio** educates students about audio over I.P., Internet streaming, podcasting, web design, FTP of programs, Google automation system, digital recording and editing.
- **Merciad Newspaper** teaches students about writing for the Internet and how to integrate video, podcasting and photo slideshows to the web.
- **Hurst Television** trains students on digital studio and field cameras; Nexus automated playback video server and Avid non-linear editing suites, which are used by 96% of primetime television, 85% of feature films, and 80% of commercials. Good video composition, lighting, sound, script and performance are all important to a successful video no matter if that video is for broadcast on television or uploaded to YouTube.

## Studies show

that newspaper blogs attract young people because they have more "voice" and "attitude" than traditional reporting

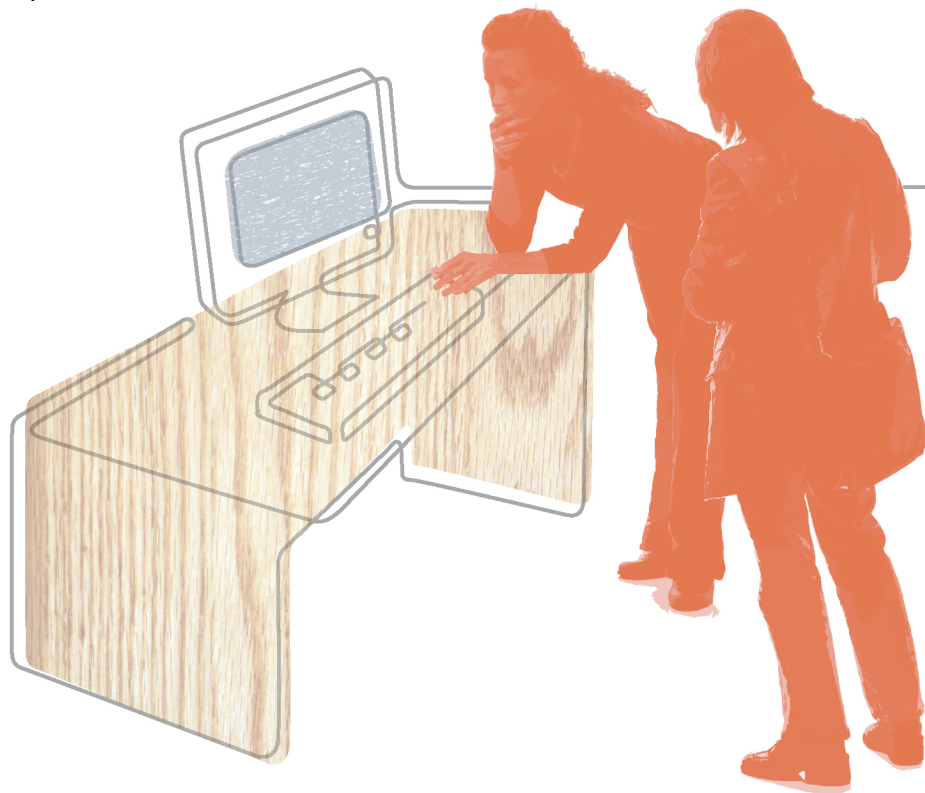
CREATE



# The New Media Convergence Center Assists Communication Department's New Curriculum

The Communication program is designed to prepare students for entry to the communication industry in three distinct, but complementary areas – Strategic Communication, New Media and Visual Communication. The curriculum also employs a “learn by doing” approach to expose students to the necessary knowledge and skills to enter a chosen career path and advance within their profession. This is where our traditional media outlets (radio, television, and newspaper) are extremely critical to the success of the program.

It is crucial for a communication student to have a working knowledge of the traditional media-outlets in order to comprehend and master the new technology. For example, one of the new communication tracks is New Media. This sequence prepares students to work in today's converged media environment. With convergence of print and electronic, as well as new developments such as podcasts, blogs and streaming video, students learn the creative and technical skills for new media, including design, writing, editing and operations.



Television is becoming an “enhanced media experience” allowing viewers to chat via instant messaging as they watch the same program in different locations

The cell phone is quickly becoming the “hub” of people’s digital life, providing access to information, data, and entertainment alike



Here are more examples of how the new communication courses will benefit by having the New **Media Convergence Center** include:

### **BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION**

- Students learn basic presentation skills including techniques for informative and persuasive speaking. Students will learn multi-media presentations that will include digital computerized presentations.

### **ELECTRONIC MEDIA PRODUCTION**

- Students are given basic instruction in producing video in and outside of the television station. This is the first class where students are introduced to the operation of new digital field and studio cameras, and the Avid.

### **NEW MEDIA**

- This course introduces students to technologies which have changed the role of communication professionals. Topics include implementation of the Internet to reach audiences, copyright issues and impact on media, discussion of new technologies such as animation, streaming media, and new digital technologies and formats. WMCE radio uses many of the new media theories to illustrate for students the importance in convergence of traditional media outlets.

### **NEWSWRITING**

- A fundamental course in journalistic writing that focuses on reporting, writing, producing and presenting news stories in varied formats. This class also focuses on writing for various media platforms such as public relations, promotional writing and newspaper and broadcast writing.

### **MULTIMEDIA STORYTELLING**

- This intermediate reporting and production course focuses on gathering information and relaying it to a mass audience through various technologies, including blogs, websites, and podcasts. The course also looks at how the digital revolution is changing traditional news media coverage.

### **CONVERGENCE MANAGEMENT**

This course ties together print, broadcast and computer skills, theory, and practice, for the new digital media world. Students are challenged to extend their knowledge by creating specific digital content for on-campus media (Merciad, WMCE, Hurst TV and Internet).

**70%**

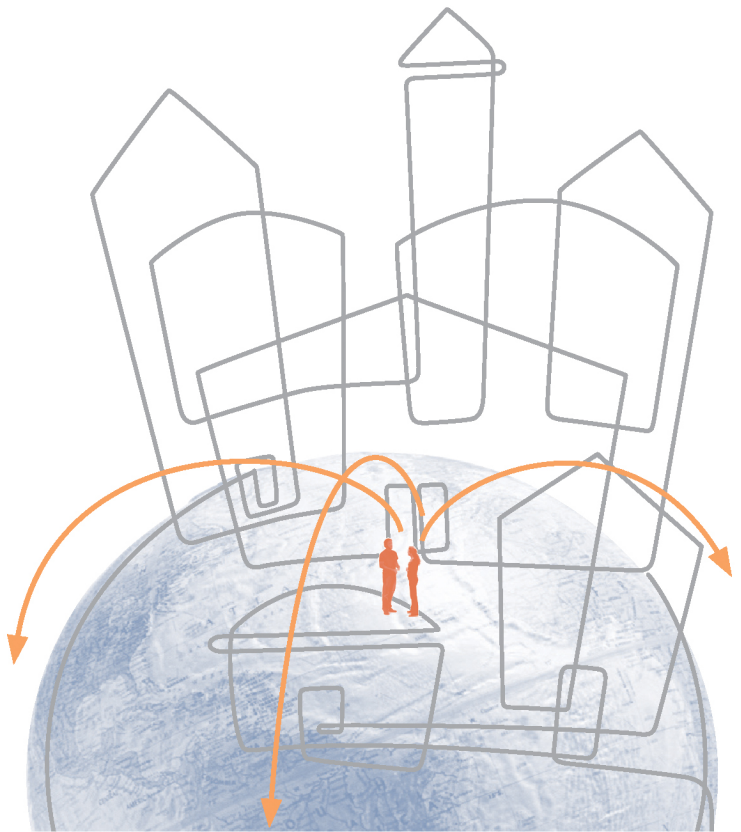
of all newspaper and television managers believe that today's college students should be trained in cross-media skills

INTERACT

Broadband Enterprises reports that **Internet-video ads** produce 100 times as many clicks as do static banner ads on a Web page

# Students gain real-world experience at WMCE Radio

- **Students learn valuable core concepts in the communication discipline and its practical aspects with their experience at WMCE Radio**
  - ✚ News editing and news reporting
  - ✚ Producing and editing programs
  - ✚ On-air host, sports announcing
  - ✚ Writing public service announcements, commercials, news, sports, and promotions
- **Students achieve working knowledge about new media equipment at WMCE Radio**
  - ✚ Audio over I.P.
  - ✚ Internet streaming
  - ✚ Podcasting
  - ✚ Web design
  - ✚ FTP of programs
  - ✚ Google automation system
  - ✚ Digital recording and editing
- **Students gain hands-on experience at WMCE Radio, to include:**
  - ✚ Narration and correct enunciations
  - ✚ Operation of the production studio
  - ✚ Operating the mixing board and other main studio features
  - ✚ Engineering live broadcasts from the satellite and live broadcasts from various campus locations
- **Students can put into practice their management skills at WMCE Radio, such as:**
  - ✚ Program development and scheduling
  - ✚ Policy issues
  - ✚ Initiating underwriting - program sponsorships
  - ✚ Supervising the operation of others
  - ✚ Decision making, conflict resolution
  - ✚ Assertiveness, trust and other forms of effective communication skills
- **Students learn other practical aspects of the communication discipline, for instance:**
  - ✚ Media law
  - ✚ FCC rules and regulations
  - ✚ Media access
  - ✚ Gate keeping
  - ✚ Agenda setting
  - ✚ Public relations



**WMCE Radio** is an extension of the Communication Department. With this view, the radio station presents a more involved and a more integrated form of experiential education. It is equally important to view the operation of the radio station as a practice ground for interpersonal and group communication whereby daily activities include topics mentioned in the above paragraphs.

## Students Who Work For HURST TV

- ✚ Work with professional level equipment like AVID and other digital equipment
- ✚ Polish their writing and speaking skills
- ✚ Learn to take raw video and edit it into broadcast quality segments
- ✚ Gain knowledge of a live television situation and make fast decisions
- ✚ Become skilled in interviewing, how to talk to someone and obtain information
- ✚ Are able to express their ideas to audiences outside of the Mercyhurst campus and potentially see an impact or reaction to their work
- ✚ Expand their critical thinking skill
- ✚ Improve their teamwork skills - because all television is a team effort
- ✚ Have an outlet for their creativity
- ✚ Learn skills that can be applied to a variety of jobs and industries
- ✚ Can take on many responsibilities such as on-camera talent, videographer, editor, director, producer, writer, sportscaster or newscaster

## Students Who Work For MERCIAID NEWSPAPER

- ✚ Learn to work under a deadline
- ✚ Have an outlet to express their opinions and creativity
- ✚ Learn to take criticism and direction
- ✚ Become better writers and editors
- ✚ Learn the importance of teamwork
- ✚ Learn to express themselves in a clear, concise, and responsible manner
- ✚ Have opportunities to discover how a business operates
- ✚ Become an active member of the community they cover
- ✚ Support the 1<sup>st</sup> amendment rights of free speech
- ✚ Can take on many responsibilities such as reporter, editor, graphic designer, photographer, new media specialist or advertising salesperson

CONNECT