Course Code
Media Convergence
Module 3, 2025-2026

Course Information

Instructor:
Office: PHBS Building, Room 663
Phone: 86-755-2603-3409
Email: luyebao@phbs.pku.edu.cn
Office Hour:
Tuesday & Friday 10:30am-12:00pm
Wednesday 3:00pm-4:00pm (or email by appointment)

Teaching Assistant:
Email:

Classes:
Lectures: Tuesday & Friday 3:30pm-5:20pm
Venue: PHBS Building

Course Website:
https://cms.phbs.pku.edu.cn/claroline/course/index.php?cid=MEDIA_001 (key: 2026)

1. Course Description

1.1 Context

Course overview: Media convergence, the merging of previously distinct media platforms, industries, and content forms, has accelerated dramatically in recent years, driven in large part by advances in artificial intelligence. This graduate-level course examines how AI-powered convergence is reshaping practice in journalism and communication. Students will gain an understanding of key AI technologies such as generative AI, algorithmic curation, and cross-platform analytics, and critically analyze how these tools are transforming news reporting, content distribution, and public relations. Through engagement with current research and real-world case studies, students will explore how the integration of AI across media platforms is collapsing traditional boundaries between content producers, distributors, and audiences. Over the semester, we will also consider how journalists, communication professionals, policymakers, and citizens can navigate the ethical, economic, and professional challenges that arise when AI accelerates media convergence.

Prerequisites: No prerequisites are required.

1.2 Textbooks and Reading Materials

No specific textbooks. Reading materials may include journal articles, popular media coverage, and industry reports. All readings are provided on the course website.

2. Learning Outcomes

2.1 Intended Learning Outcomes

Learning Goals	Objectives	Assessment (YES with details or NO)
1. Our graduates will be effective communicators.	1.1. Our students will produce quality business and research-oriented documents.	Yes – evaluated by their final paper and presentation.
	1.2. Students are able to professionally present their ideas and also logically explain and defend their argument.	Yes – evaluated by their participation in class activities and discussions.
2. Our graduates will be skilled in team work and leadership.	2.1. Students will be able to lead and participate in group for projects, discussion, and presentation.	Yes – evaluated by their performance in group projects.
	2.2. Students will be able to apply leadership theories and related skills.	Yes – evaluated by their performance in group projects.
3. Our graduates will be trained in ethics.	3.1. In a case setting, students will use appropriate techniques to analyze business problems and identify the ethical aspects, provide a solution and defend it.	Yes
	3.2. Our students will practice ethics in the duration of the program.	Yes
4. Our graduates will have a global perspective.	4.1. Students will have an international exposure.	Yes
5. Our graduates will be skilled in problem-solving and critical thinking.	5.1. Our students will have a good understanding of fundamental theories in their fields.	Yes
	5.2. Our students will be prepared to face problems in various business settings and find solutions.	Yes
	5.3. Our students will demonstrate competency in critical thinking.	Yes

2.2 Course specific objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of how AI-driven media convergence is reshaping the media and communications industry across platforms, practices, and audiences.
- Develop informed perspectives on the ethical and responsible use of AI as it accelerates the integration of content creation, distribution, and consumption in communication practices.
- Critically assess the role of AI agents in media and communication, including how autonomous and semi-autonomous systems are transforming journalistic workflows, audience interactions, and strategic communication decision-making.

2.3 Assessment/Grading Details

Grades in the class will be based on letter grades for each of the following assignments: (1) in-class participation and activities — 30%, (2) individual AI news project — 20%, (3) final group project — 50%.

In-class participation (30%)

- This course provides the opportunity to engage with course materials and discuss interesting topics with your peers and the instructor. Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis and make contributions to discussion that are informed by readings and other materials as well as personal experience, but not based merely on personal opinions.

- Throughout the semester, there are several in-class activities, including writing a news article with automated writing tools and developing a chatbot. These activities are designed to assess your understanding of the course materials and provide hands-on experience with AI tools. Students are expected to actively participate in these activities.

Individual project: Follow the news on AI (20%)

- Students are expected to stay updated on the latest news related to AI development and present relevant examples in class. The examples can be from any industry of interest, such as media, finance, transportation, etc. During the 5-minute presentation, students must (1) briefly describe the specific AI application, (2) discuss why the AI application could be beneficial, and (3) examine any (un)intended consequences.

Final group project (50%):

- In groups of up to three, you will design and build an AI agent that enhances a traditional journalism workflow. Groups will use agent development tools such as OpenCode to build their projects. The goal is to develop an agent that assists with tasks such as source discovery, data collection and analysis, fact-checking, content drafting, or cross-platform distribution, and compare how these tasks are typically performed through conventional methods with how your agent can streamline or improve the process.
- In the final week of the class, each group will deliver a 10-minute presentation supported by visuals or a live demo of the agent. Your presentation should explain the journalistic workflow your agent addresses, demonstrate how the agent works in practice, and critically reflect on what the agent does well, where it falls short, and what aspects of journalism remain uniquely human.
- Each group will also submit a written report (approximately 10-12 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 11-12 pt) that documents the project in full. The report should include the rationale for choosing the specific workflow, a description of the agent's design and technical architecture, a detailed comparison of conventional and agent-assisted approaches, and a critical analysis of the agent's strengths, limitations, and ethical implications. Submit your report to luyebao@phbs.pku.edu.cn by midnight on Friday, May 15, 2026.

2.4 Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

It is important for a student's effort and credit to be recognized through class assessment. Credits earned for a student work due to efforts done by others are clearly unfair. Deliberate dishonesty is considered academic misconducts, which include plagiarism; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; or altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying of data, research procedures, or data analysis.

All assessments are subject to academic misconduct check. Misconduct check may include reproducing the assessment, providing a copy to another member of faculty, and/or communicate a copy of this assignment to the PHBS Discipline Committee. A suspected

plagiarized document/assignment submitted to a plagiarism checking service may be kept in its database for future reference purpose.

Where violation is suspected, penalties will be implemented. The penalties for academic misconduct may include: deduction of honour points, a mark of zero on the assessment, a fail grade for the whole course, and reference of the matter to the Peking University Registrar.

AI tools requirements：
Using AI tools to complete assignments or assessments without the approval of the course instructor will be regarded as an act of academic dishonesty. Depending on the severity of the situation, penalties will be implemented in accordance with the provisions of the Peking University Graduate Student Handbook.

For more information of plagiarism, please refer to *PHBS Student Handbook*.

3. Topics, Teaching and Assessment Schedule

This class meets for two 100-minute class periods each week over the module. During the in-depth lecture, the instructor will be reviewing theories and/or empirical research that serve as the foundational information. Additionally, the instructor will be leading discussions of readings and/or activities that apply the concepts or recognize them in the real world.

General Topic Schedule

	Topic
Week 1	Overview
Week 2-3	Journalistic data mining
Week 4	Automated writing systems
Week 5	Newsbots
Week 6	Distribution algorithms
Week 7	OpenCode I
Week 8	OpenCode II
Week 9	Final project workshops