

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Communication and Culture CMCL 313 01
Interdisciplinary Research Methodologies

Winter 2015

Tues., Jan. 13 – Tues., April 14 (excluding Feb. 17 & 19)

Lectures, Tu and Th 11 - 12:15

Instructor: Dr. Joanna Redden
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Office Phone: 403.220.8728
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Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: Wed. 13:00 – 15:00, or by appointment

Course Description

This course provides a critical introduction to interdisciplinary research methodologies. Students will explore, practice, and critique various quantitative and qualitative research methodologies (including surveys, content analysis, discourse analysis, frame analysis, interviews, ethnography, focus groups, and digital research methods). We will discuss various perspectives on the processes and ethics involved in knowledge production.

The course provides an overview of the principles, methods, and practices involved in doing media and communication studies. We will discuss ways of knowing and knowledge generation, why we do media and communication studies, designing a research question and writing a proposal, ethics, researching media institutions and producers, researching texts (including digital texts), researching audiences, and emerging digital methods. The aim of the course is for students to learn how to do media and communication studies research. The course requires active engagement and participation.

Additional Information

This course emphasizes learning through active participation. Students will learn through course materials, discussing examples and case studies, devising their own research proposal, conducting research, identifying and discussing problems, and reflexively considering their research process.

Objectives of the Course

The aims of this course are to help students learn how to conduct research, and how to critically assess their own research and the research of others. By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Evaluate media and communication research methods;
- Design, conduct and carry out a research project;
- Place their research within media and communication studies scholarship.

Textbooks and Readings

Stokes, Jane (2013) *How to Do Media and Cultural Studies*, Los Angeles: Sage.

Additional readings will be posted to D2L.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptops are permitted for note taking only. iPods, cellphones and gaming devices may not be used at all during class. Please respect the instructor and your fellow students. Improper use of electronic devices will impact your participation grade.

Assignments and Evaluation

Proposal:	Feb. 3	20%
Group Presentations:	Feb. 3 – March 26	25%
Research Essay:	Apr. 2	35%
Reflexive Analysis:	Apr. 14	20%

Proposal: Your research proposal will outline the analysis you intend to undertake. The proposal should be no more than 1,500 words (excluding bibliography). The proposal should identify your research question, your object of analysis, the research method you intend to use, and the theoretical paradigm informing your approach. Your proposal should also include a bibliography of at least three scholarly sources. *Please remember that any research involving human subjects requires ethics consent – the instructor can support you in applying, but you must leave ample time to apply for and receive ethics approval.*

Group Presentations: Different groups will present on different research methods for our classes from Feb. 3 to March 26. A signup sheet for presentation groups will be available on the first day of class – those who do not sign up will be assigned to a group. Each group will be responsible for one topic area. Groups will be responsible for summarizing a method or approach, identifying its strengths and weaknesses, and possible applications. More detail about group presentations will be provided in class and posted to D2L.

Research Essay: The research essay for this course gives you an opportunity to pursue a research method of your choice, and to use one of the methods we cover this term to analyze a media example. The research essay will build upon the research proposal. You are also welcome to build upon material used for your group presentation. Your paper should be approximately 2,500 words in length, and should be double-spaced, in a 12 point font, with one inch margins. Proper citations and referencing are required. More information about essay requirements will be provided in class and on D2L.

Reflexive Analysis: The aim of this assignment is to think critically and reflexively about the research method you used, and your use of this method. The aim of this assignment is to identify challenges you encountered in your use of the method, how you overcame these challenges, things that were not possible to overcome, and how you might approach or alter your use of this method if you were to do another similar project. More information about the expectations for the reflexive analysis will be provided in class and on D2L.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

All assignments and exams must be completed or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

Submission of Assignments: Please hand in your essays directly to me at the beginning of class. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments in SS 320 after classes have ended. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment. For courses in which assignments are submitted electronically, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the correct copy of the assignment is submitted. (Including the version date or version number in your file name may help you avoid submitting the wrong version of your written assignments.)

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Student Accessibility Services (220-8237, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of the course.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Grading System & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

Work in this course will be graded using letter grades. The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film:

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Department grade scale equivalents	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations
4.00	Outstanding	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent—superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70		A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30		B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good—clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70		B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30		C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory—basic understanding of the subject matter.	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70		C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Minimal pass—marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00		D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.	F	00 - 49.99%	0%

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/node/208> . If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor TFDL, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Research Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/research/research-ethics>

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (PIC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 picarts@ucalgary.ca
CAMPUS SECURITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calgary Police Service • Emergency Text Messaging • Emergency Evacuation & Assembly • Safewalk Program 	http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333 403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911 http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort (220-5333). For more information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/
DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students 403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca
STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	http://ucalgary.ca/ssc http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents
STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds
SU WELLNESS CENTRE	403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Counselling Services• Health Services• Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE• Online resources and tips	<p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</p> <p>403-266-HELP (4357)</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</p> <p>If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.</p>
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Schedule of Lectures and Readings

To be posted on D2L in the first week of classes.