

**University of Calgary**  
**Department of Communication, Media and Film**  
**Communication and Culture CMCL 313 L02**  
**INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES**  
**WINTER 2015**

Jan 17 – April 11 (No classes on Feb 21 & April 4)  
Saturday 13:00 pm -16:30 pm

**INSTRUCTOR** : Dr. Adolfo E. Peters  
**OFFICE** : SS 307 (Shared Office)  
**E-MAIL** : [aepeters@ucalgary.ca](mailto:aepeters@ucalgary.ca)  
**OFFICE HOURS** : Saturday after class (or by appointment)

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course covers an area that is distinctively known as *interdisciplinary research* (IDR). Interdisciplinary research can be one of the most productive and inspiring of human pursuits—one that provides a format for conversations and connections that lead to new knowledge (Committee on Facilitating Interdisciplinary Research, 2004).

### **Additional Information**

Please e-mail the instructor for urgent/emergency concerns only. Substantive issues should be addressed in person, either in class, office hours, or making an appointment with the instructor. Therefore, do not expect the instructor to respond to e-mails unless there is a matter of urgency.

Be sure to log on D2L on at least twice a week to check for messages and course documents.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The course will focus on:

- ✓ the role research plays in knowledge development,
- ✓ the regulations and ethics in conducting research,
- ✓ the link between social theory and research,
- ✓ the logics of qualitative and quantitative research,
- ✓ the advantages of triangulation in research
- ✓ the different types of research projects,
- ✓ the basics of data analysis,
- ✓ the uses and misuses of social research

The course will help students to:

- ✓ gain an understanding of the nature of social research and decisions employed in conducting it,
- ✓ understand the logics of interdisciplinary research,
- ✓ gain some experience in developing and conducting research projects of their own,
- ✓ critically examine the research of others,
- ✓ analyze and interpret research findings and assess their soundness

The course is structured within approximately 12 weeks in a very compressed structure. In order to cover effectively all the materials presented, lectures will be followed by in-class exercises in which the topics introduced in the lectures, as well as in the assigned readings and other course material, will be further debated through group discussions.

### **Textbooks and Readings:**

**Required Textbook: NO**

**Recommended Readings:** Please refer to the Schedule of Lectures, Readings and Assignments for readings that can be consulted for supplemental references on specific research topics. Lectures will include information derived/adapted from these readings.

### **Internet and electronic communication device information**

Cell phones, pagers, internet surfing, watching videos, playing computer games, checking E-mail (and/or Facebook, twitter, etc.), text messaging, and listening to music are disruptive to other students in class. Please be courteous to your classmates and Instructor and **turn off all such devices before the class starts**. Laptop computers, I-Pads and other tablets are to be used exclusively for the purposes of taking notes during class.

### **Assignments and Evaluation**

This is a highly research intensive, “hands on” course. There will be no formal partial or final examinations; instead you will work over the length of the course in the following assignments: **ONE Group** Research Project (it includes some individual components as well); **ONE Group** Research Dossier (it includes some individual components as well) prior to conducting the field work; **ONE Individual** Observation Strategies Field Research. Also, you will complete and participate in **three** in-class exercises (individual and group work) including the preparation of a research checklist, a survey on effective teams, and participation in a research panel.

### **COMPOSITION OF FINAL GRADE**

| <u>Component</u>                                 | <u>Due Date</u> | <u>Weight (%)</u> |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|
| ✓ Research Check List (In-Class Exercise #1)     | Jan 31          | 10                |
| ✓ Observation Strategies (Field Research)        | Feb 14          | 20                |
| ✓ Research Dossier                               | Feb 28          | 15                |
| ✓ Research Panel (In-Class Exercise #2)          | Mar 14          | 5                 |
| ✓ Survey: Effective Teams (In-Class Exercise #3) | Mar 28          | 10                |
| ✓ Research Project Final Report                  | Apr 11          | 30                |
| ✓ Research Project (In-Class Presentation)       | Apr 11          | 10                |
| <b><u>Total</u></b>                              |                 | <b><u>100</u></b> |

The description of each one of the above course evaluation components is as follows:

## **Group Research Project**

The major assignment for this course will be a ***Qualitative Research Project on the Many Faces of Homelessness in Calgary***. The Research Project has obtained course-based ethics approval from the Faculty of Arts research ethics committee. Students will work in groups (*3 or 4 members per team*) to design and conduct their research.

At the end of the term, teams will produce a final Research Project Report summarizing each one of the stages of their research project and, most importantly, will present and defend orally the results of their research. The Research Project Final Report (approximately 35 pages including the annotated bibliography section and the full list of references) will be due on **April 11, 2015** and it will count for **30%** of the final grade. The oral presentation and defense component of the research will be due on **April 11, 2015**; this component of the research project will count for **10%** of the final grade.

It is the student's responsibility to organize and equally contribute to all teamwork. All members of a team are assigned a team grade except either in specific individual components (i.e. conclusions and recommendations of personal significance – disciplinary concentration) or in situations where individual team members have not contributed equally to the research efforts in which case the instructor will evaluate the individual student's work. It will be at the instructor's discretion to attend to situations (and possible penalties) where some team members are not fully attending to their team responsibilities.

Since the research project in total will count for **40%** of the final grade it will be important that students allocate time wisely and give significant attention to the project to ensure that they do well in the course.

## **Research Dossier**

In the first part of the course you will be required to: conceptualize your research question, conduct a literature review on your topic (annotated bibliography style), complete a research ethics form and other research forms, design your research plan, etc. All these will be included in a Research Dossier, which will allow the teams to apply for and obtain approval for their project from the instructor, and conduct their fieldwork. The Research Dossier will be due on **February 28, 2015**; this assignment will count for **15%** of the final grade.

## **Observation Strategies (Field Research)**

Students will conduct a field exercise around the observation of an important social or cultural activity. Guidelines for this field exercise will be discussed in class as the term progresses. The report of this exercise will be due on **February 14, 2015**; this assignment will count for **20%** of the total grade.

## **In-class exercises**

There will be three in-class exercises: completion of a research checklist (**10%**), completion of a survey research - team player approach (**10%**), and participation in a research panel (**5%**).

**Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO**

**Note:** All assignments 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 assignments directly to the instructor. 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. **You are strongly reminded not to leave your assignments in the instructor's office** as this space is shared with other instructors and teaching assistants and papers can get misplaced.

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.

### **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 date late.

You must provide advance notice to the instructor if you are unable to complete the group research project activities or to hand in your assignments. All requests for extension of an assignment due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Travel arrangements, personal engagements (i.e. work, meetings, etc.) and/or misreading of the syllabus are not valid reasons for requesting an extension of an assignment or absence to an in-class exercise. Extensions will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student. Please notice that there is no any type of make-up work for missed the in-class exercises.

### **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, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://www.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 all research assignments must be properly documented. If you need help with

your writing, you may contact the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details:  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

### Grading System & Dept of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

Grades are entered as raw scores (percentages) into the grading system. Your final letter grade is computed based on the weighted sum of your raw scores.

The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in 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 course 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%   |

Notes: (1) Please be aware that the instructor does not post partial grades on D2L. Students are advised to keep track of their partial grades as returned by the instructor. (2) Final grades will not be posted by the Department of Communication and Culture, they will be available on your Student Centre once they have been reviewed and approved by the Department.

### 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 quotations marks. 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. All assignments must be properly documented employing the *APA Citation Format*. There are several academic sites (i.e. Calgary, Cornell, Purdue, Toronto, Alberta, Simon Fraser) that can be consulted for examples about how to use the APA format. If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Taylor Digital Family Library, <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>.

**Note:** The Research Project has obtained course-based ethics approval from the Faculty of Arts research ethics committee. The instructor will facilitate for your completion and final review of your research plan and work an Ethics form that has been adapted for the purposes of this course.

### Important information, services, and contacts for students

| For information about...   | Visit or contact...   |
|--|---|
| <b>ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (PIC)</b>   | SS 102 403-220-3580 <a href="mailto:picarts@ucalgary.ca">picarts@ucalgary.ca</a>  |
| <b>CAMPUS SECURITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Calgary Police Service</b></li> <li>• <b>Emergency Text Messaging</b></li> <li>• <b>Emergency Evacuation &amp; Assembly</b></li> <li>• <b>Safewalk Program</b></li> </ul> | <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a> <b>403-220-5333</b><br><b>403-266-1234</b> <b>Emergency: call 911</b><br><a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergency/plan/textmessage">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergency/plan/textmessage</a><br><a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergency/plan/assemblypoints">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergency/plan/assemblypoints</a><br>If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort ( <b>220-5333</b> ). For more information, see <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a> |
| <b>DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support</b><br><b>IT help line</b>   | <a href="http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students">http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students</a><br>403-220-5555 or <a href="mailto:itsupport@ucalgary.ca">itsupport@ucalgary.ca</a>   |

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| <b>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Writing Support Services</b></li> <li>• <b>Student Services Mobile App</b></li> </ul>  | <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/ssc">http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</a><br><a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support">http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</a><br><a href="http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents">http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</a>  |
| <b>STUDENT UNION CONTACTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Faculty of Arts Reps</b></li> <li>• <b>Student Ombudsman</b></li> </ul>  | <a href="http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html">http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html</a><br><a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds">http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds</a>   |
| <b>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Counselling Services</b></li> <li>• <b>Health Services</b></li> <li>• <b>Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE</b></li> <li>• <b>Online resources and tips</b></li> </ul> | <b>403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9.00-4:30 pm</b><br><a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling">http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</a><br><a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health">http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</a><br><b>403-266-HELP (4357)</b><br><a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus">http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</a><br><p>If you are 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> |

### **SCHEDULE OF LECTURES, READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

A detailed schedule of lectures, readings and assignments will be posted on D2L. I will endeavour to have my lecture notes posted once a week.