

**University of Calgary**  
**Department of Communication, Media and Film**

**Communications Studies COMS 381 L01**  
**HISTORY OF COMMUNICATIONS**

**WINTER 2015**

**Thursday Jan. 15 – Thursday April 9 (excluding Feb.19)**

**Lectures: Thursdays 12:30-14:15**

**Tutorials: Fridays 9:00 – 9:50 (Lab 1); 10:00 – 10:50 (Lab 2)**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Marcia Epstein
<b>Teaching Assistant:</b>	Kobra Elahifar
<b>Office:</b>	SS 316
<b>Phone:</b>	403 220 4848
<b>E-Mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:epstein@ucalgary.ca">epstein@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>Web Page:</b>	Refer to D2L
<b>Office Hours:</b>	T/Th by appointment

**Course Description**

A general survey of how various communication systems and practices developed through history, and of the social contexts within which they emerged, transformed, and adapted through time. Within this framework, the course examines major technological developments in the history of human communication and uses theory to understand their origins and impacts on social organization and everyday life. The overall objective is to engage students in disciplined reflection upon communication, both past and present, by examining the historical development of ideas about and practices of communication.

Prerequisite or Corequisite: Communications Studies 201[COMS201].

Note: Credit for both Communications Studies 381 and 380 will not be allowed.

**Objectives of the Course**

1. To provide an understanding of a range of theoretical and conceptual interpretations of communications history;
2. To explore the relationships among communications, technological development and social dynamics in historical and current context;
3. To introduce students to communications history as a field of study.

**Textbooks and Readings**

David Crowley and Paul Heyer, *Communication in History*, 6th edition (CH)

Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy* (OL)

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

*No restriction on the use of laptops (ipads, netbooks, etc.) in class if they are used to take notes or find information relevant to the class, and if there is no disturbance of other students or the instructor. Phones must be turned off during class time unless you are a health care or law enforcement professional with appropriate ID.*

## **Assignments and Evaluation**

Annotated Bibliography and proposal for research project:	10%	January 29
Tutorial quizzes (2 out of 3: 10% x2)	20%	TBA(T)
Midterm Exam	25%	February 12
Research paper or presentation	25%	March 19-26
Final Exam	10%	April 9
Participation ( <i>tutorial discussion &amp; activities, discussions posted on D2L,</i> )	10%	

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## **Guidelines for Assignments**

### ***Thematic Groups:***

*In the first two weeks you will register for groups to explore themes and issues in the history of communications. These explorations will generate your project groups for the bibliography, report and paper. Thematic groups can also continue to meet after topics are chosen, so that each group can give and receive feedback (communicate!) with other groups. Time will be built into the class schedule for this purpose, and full directions will be given to you in the first week of classes.*

### ***Thematic group topic areas (all must be focused on historical perspectives):***

- 1 Social impact of communication technologies: newspapers, telegraph, telephone, radio, TV, or internet.*
- 2 Narrative as cultural force: how journalism, storytelling or song can define and unite communities.*
- 3 Visual communication: advertising, visual arts, architecture, clothing, design*
- 4 "Alternate" communication systems, e.g. Braille, sign languages, technological solutions for mediating communication disabilities.*
- 5 Restrictions: copyright, censorship, law and social custom; what is not (or has not been) considered fit to print or broadcast and why.*

### ***Annotated Bibliography and Proposal for research paper:***

*You will normally work in groups of 3-4*

Requirement: A description of what you plan to investigate, with what sources and methods -- the more detail, the better. Any preliminary theories should be stated, but will not need to be proven (or disproven) at this stage. Annotations should demonstrate your familiarity with your chosen sources: they must include

- *information about the content of each source*
- *the credentials of its author (summary)*
- *how it will be useful in your research*
- *complete bibliographic citations (APA or MLA: your choice, but keep them correct and consistent).*

Length: 750-1000 words total.

### ***Research paper or Presentation***

*You will normally continue to work in groups of 3-4.*

Analysis, with use of course materials and methods, of a means of communication (print, electronic, auditory, visual, tactile, etc.) Your project must include:

- *a historical approach to the topic*
- *a description of the topic and its significance (historical/cultural/personal/etc.)*
- *description of any critical theories that are applicable to your approach, derived from coursework or sources*
- *sources you have consulted (with complete bibliographic references, as above).*

A theory or thesis statement will work well for some, but not all, topics. If you have a theory, it is equally acceptable to prove or disprove it: follow the evidence, not the theory.

Your work will be evaluated on degree of familiarity with the topic and sources, application of course content to your topic, coherence, cohesiveness, and accuracy and competence of writing.

#### *Papers:*

Formal style, with subheadings for subtopics, complete bibliographic references and possibly footnotes and/or illustrations if needed. All work must be proofread: do not rely on a Spell-check program to do it for you. Printing should be double-sided if possible, but single-sided is also fine. *All pages must be fastened together and numbered.*

*Length: 1500-2500 words.*

#### *Presentations:*

Your group will hand in a detailed script, a bibliography that includes the sources of all audio-visual as well as written materials (photos, film clips, music, etc.), and a statement from each group member about what you learned from doing the project.

*Length: 15-20 minutes, depending on number of groups.*

*All pages must be fastened together and numbered.*

*Due dates for all projects are by arrangement, between March 19th and 26th.*

### ***Exams and quizzes***

Three brief quizzes on familiarity with lecture material and tutorial discussions will be given in tutorials. These will be given point scores, and the top two scores will count toward your final grade. The best way to prepare is to show up regularly for lectures and tutorials and take notes.

Exams on familiarity with assigned readings and lecture topics (Midterm and Final) will be given during lecture time. Prepare by doing the readings, attending lectures and tutorials, keeping accurate notes, and participating in tutorial discussions.

### **Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No**

All assignments and exams must normally 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 your tutor or instructor if possible. 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 or look at final exams 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, depending on circumstances.

### **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 & Dept of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

Work in this course will be graded using percentage grades. 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 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 (3<sup>rd</sup> 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 . . .
<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>• Calgary Police Service</li> <li>• Emergency Text Messaging</li> <li>• Emergency Evacuation &amp; Assembly</li> <li>• Safewalk Program</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a> <b>403-220-5333</b> <b>403-266-1234</b> <b>Emergency: call 911</b> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints</a> 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT help line</li> </ul>	<a href="http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students">http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students</a> 403-220-5555 or <a href="mailto:itsupport@ucalgary.ca">itsupport@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Support Services</li> <li>• Student Services Mobile App</li> </ul>	<a href="http://ucalgary.ca/ssc">http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support">http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</a> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents">http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</a>
<b>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty of Arts Reps</li> <li>• Student Ombudsman</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html">http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds">http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds</a>

<p><b>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</b></p> <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>	<p><b>403-210-9355</b> (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm</p> <p><a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</a></p> <p><a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</a></p> <p><b>403-266-HELP (4357)</b></p> <p><a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</a></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**

**Jan. 15 Communication and why it matters;**

**Orality and Literacy 1: *Voice and Vision***

*Please prepare the following readings for your first tutorial:*

Crowley & Heyer **Part 2 (articles 3-5)**

Ong, *Orality and Literacy*. Chapters 1, 2

*A complete schedule will be provided on D2L before classes begin.*