

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

**Communication Studies (COMS) 435 L01**  
**Mass Communications and Canadian Society**  
**Winter 2015**  
**Mondays (M) 16:00—18:45**  
**January 12<sup>th</sup> – April 13<sup>th</sup> (excluding February 16<sup>th</sup>)**

**Instructor:** T.A. Pattinson  
**Office:** Social Sciences Building Room 307  
**E-Mail:** [tawpatti@ucalgary.ca](mailto:tawpatti@ucalgary.ca)  
**Web Page:** D2L available through MyUofC portal  
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays (T) 14:00-16:00 or by appointment

### **Course Description**

This course introduces students to theoretical literature on various aspects of the media, including public policy questions such as the concentration of media ownership, Canadian content requirements, censorship, the role of the media during elections, and the problems and opportunities that might be brought by advances in technology.

### **Objectives of the Course**

Through lectures, readings, class discussions, and course assignments, students will:

- Explore a range of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of mass communications and Canadian society.
- Develop critical and analytical skills through the interrogation of texts, media, policies, organizations, corporations, and events.
- Examine the social, political, and economic impacts of contemporary Canadian mass communications upon Canadian populations.

### **Mandatory Textbooks and Readings**

*Mediascapes: New Patterns in Canadian Communication*. Ed. Leslie Regan Shade. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Toronto: Nelson, 2014. Print.

Additional mandatory readings (\*) are available online through Desire2Learn (D2L) via MyUofC portal.

### **Suggested Textbooks and Readings**

*Mass Communication in Canada*. Eds. Mike Gasher, David Skinner, and Rowland Lorimer. 7th edition. Don Mills, Ont.: Oxford University Press, 2012. Print. (on reserve at University of Calgary library)

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

Students are welcome to use laptops and other electronic note-taking devices in this course. Please be considerate of others during lectures, screenings, and discussions and switch off all MP3 players, cellphones, etc., whenever you enter the classroom.

Sending/receiving text messages or leaving the class to take calls is disruptive to the entire class and will not be tolerated unless absolutely necessary.

Failure to respect these rules may result in the revocation of your privileges to use devices in the classroom.

### **Assignments and Evaluation**

Participation (ongoing):	10%
D2L Writing Prompts (2 X 10%):	20%
Essay Proposal:	5%
Annotated Bibliography:	10%
Midterm:	25%
Final Essay:	30%

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

#### ***Participation—10% : Due date—ongoing***

Students are expected to not only be in attendance every week, but to contribute significantly to the class discussions via individual comments, group work activities, and short presentations. Oral participation will help solidify concepts.

#### ***Desire2Learn Writing Prompts—20% (2 X 10%) : Due date—various***

Throughout the course, students will be required to write a total of two (2) responses to a prompted discussion question posted on D2L. Students may choose from any of the eleven (11) weeks when prompted discussion questions will be posted.

Each response must be between 500 and 750 words, equivalent to two (2) or three (3) pages double-spaced. Responses with more than 750 words will lose marks. Responses must have a thesis statement, a definitive argument, and conclusion. Responses must also draw upon ideas from course readings and in-class discussion.

#### ***Essay Proposal—5% : Due date—February 23<sup>rd</sup>***

Students must submit a two (2) to three (3) page, double-spaced proposal regarding their final essay research project. Essay proposal submissions must include the following: a critical question about the relationship between mass communications and Canadian society; a possible thesis statement; one media industry; and a rationale as to why you have chosen your critical question and media industry. Students may also briefly consider additional arguments for future use (audiences, events, texts, etc.). Proposals will be returned to students two weeks later.

#### ***Annotated Bibliography—10% : Due date—February 23<sup>rd</sup>***

In addition to the essay proposal, students must submit a list of ten (10) academic sources from a variety of resources (books, book chapters, journal articles, etc.). Academic sources must come from outside the course. Each academic source must include a brief annotation of three-to-five (3-5) lines, written in full sentences, as to its importance for your potential final essay research project. Annotated bibliographies will be returned to students two weeks later.

**Midterm—25% : Due date—March 9<sup>th</sup>**

A midterm examination will test knowledge on readings and content presented in lectures. Midterms must be taken in class unless documentation is provided for a legitimate absence. Possible testing formats include multiple choice, true or false, short answers, and/or an essay question. Students will have the full three hour period to write the midterm.

**Final Essay—30% : Due date—April 13<sup>th</sup>**

Students will submit a ten (10) page research essay. Essays must have a thesis statement to be argued throughout the body of the text. Essays must evince exhaustive research in order to support thesis statement. All references must be properly and fully cited. Essays must generally follow what was proposed in the preceding essay proposal assignment.

Students will ask one critical question about the relationship between mass communications and Canadian society. Students are to contextualize this question through the examination of one media industry. Through the study of one media industry, students will consider the following ideas: what kinds of mass communications (media, technology, etc.) typify this media industry's use? Who and what are its audiences? How does this media industry function politically, economically, and socially? Are there examples—real world events and/or specific texts—that concretize how notions of Canadian society are produced, reproduced, represented, critiqued, or disseminated? What is to be said about our understanding of mass communications and Canadian society via this media industry today?

**Submission of Assignments:** Please hand in your assignments 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>

D2L Responses must be posted one week after prompted discussion questions are available on D2L by the beginning of class (e.g. a response to a prompted discussion question on January 12th is due January 19th, 16:00 PM, etc.). After this one-week time period, prompted discussion question topics will be closed. Students must also submit hard copy versions of responses at the beginning of class.

Make-up responses are NOT permitted unless granted permission for legitimate reasons (illness, bereavement, sports, etc.). ALWAYS keep a copy of your responses. If you are having difficulty posting to D2L, responses can be e-mailed to the instructor.

**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 & Dept of Communication and Culture Grade Scale**

Work in this course will be graded using letter grades, percentage grades. The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in Communication and Culture:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Department grade scale equivalents</b>	<b>Letter grade % equivalent for calculations</b>
<b>A+</b>	96 - 100%	98.0%
<b>A</b>	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
<b>A -</b>	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
<b>B+</b>	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
<b>B</b>	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
<b>B-</b>	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
<b>C+</b>	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
<b>C</b>	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
<b>C-</b>	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
<b>D+</b>	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
<b>D</b>	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
<b>F</b>	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>• <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> <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>
<b>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling Services</li> <li>• Health Services</li> <li>• Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE</li> <li>• Online resources and tips</li> </ul>	<b>403-210-9355</b> (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</a> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</a> <b>403-266-HELP (4357)</b> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthy-campus">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthy-campus</a> 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.