

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Communications Studies COMS 580 - B02
Advanced BCS/BFS Project
Fall/Winter 15/16

Fall: Tuesdays, Sept. 8, - Dec. 8, 2015 (No Excluded Dates)

Winter: Tuesdays, Jan. 12 – April 12, 2016 (Excluding: Feb. 16)

Lectures: T 18:30 – 21:20

SAIT Campus – Room TBA

Instructor: Dr. Steve Olson
Office: N401, Senator Burns Building, SAIT Campus
Office Phone: 403-284-7100
E-Mail: Steve.Olson@sait.ca
Web Page: N/A
Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description

COMS 580 is a full course. In the Fall semester, teams will produce a media-based project. The first two weeks of the Fall “project” semester will be devoted to group formation, discussion of group process, elaboration of media and critical research projects. In the Winter semester individuals will complete a critical research paper. The first three weeks of the semester will be devoted to the discussion of relevant topics, research methodologies, and issues surrounding format and writing. Both projects will be presented to the class at the end of the relevant semester. As some students may be undertaking practicum work, individual arrangements and expectations are to be made with the instructor. Class meetings will include student led discussions of communication events and theory.

Additional Information

Due to the nature of team projects students should anticipate costs of approximately \$50-\$100 for recording media, equipment rentals and services.

Objectives of the Course

The course will help the student to: 1. Integrate theoretical research and practical experience in media production. 2. Increase understanding of theoretical constructs, methodological approaches and research skills while reflecting upon their value in application to specific productions. 3. Exchange ideas and experiences that will broaden understanding of the field of media production.

Textbooks and Readings

No textbook required. Readings may be assigned according to the project.

Recommended reading:

Action Research, 4th ed., Ernest Stringer, 2014.

Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches, 4th ed., John Creswell, 2013

Theories of communication, culture and media are foundational for this course. Students should already be aware of a wide range of theories from previous studies. At a minimum, you should have a good working knowledge of:

- Interpersonal and Behavioral theories such as, Classical Rhetoric, Social Identity, Expectancy Value, Symbolic Interactionism, Uncertainty Reduction, Cognitive Dissonance, Theories of Attachment and Transportation, Cognitive Psychology, Social Psychology in Virtual Communities, and Captology.
- Mass Media / Media in Culture theories that include, Agenda Setting, Framing, Cultivation Theory, Dependency Theory, Gatekeeping, Hypodermic Needle, Spiral of Silence, Uses and Gratification, Media Ethics, Subliminal Communication, Theories of Propaganda, and Theories of Persuasion.
- Language / Linguistic theories including, Language Expectancy Theory, Semiotics and Semantics.

The above list is not exhaustive, and the placement of specific theories in the above categories is typical, not absolute. Students are encouraged to use any other theories relevant to their work.

Internet and electronic communication device information

The use of internet, laptop computers, tablets, and mobile devices is welcome and encouraged during class time, particularly as they apply to presentations and/or research. Please be aware that the SAIT wireless system on the SAIT campus is restricted to current students at SAIT. If you sign on to the Eduroam system at the UofC (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/it/networks/eduroam#>) you will be able to access wireless while on the SAIT campus through that service. Internet access can also be accomplished in labs that support hardwire connection. You will need to supply your own network cable. Cell phones / pagers should be turned to vibrate mode. Phone calls should only be conducted during breaks. In case of emergency, please conduct your phone calls outside of the class room.

Assignments and Evaluation

Fall semester 45%.

Media Project Proposal: Due September 22, 2015: 5%

Working with a team, students will prepare a project proposal outlining the specifics of their media project. The proposal will include: information on the topic, justification for the topic, identification of significant theories relevant to the topic, a sequence of events necessary to complete the project including a timeline; and a list of duties / assignments for each member of the team. Traditionally the proposals are 5 to 6 pages in length. This is a group mark.

Media Project Mid-Term Group Meeting with the instructor: As assigned: 5%

The purpose of this meeting is threefold: 1) to get a status update on your progress, 2) to view completed material to this point in the semester, and, 3) to identify and put together an action plan for any issues and/or problems faced by the team. This is an informal meeting, is a pass/fail group grade, and will be scheduled based on availability of the groups during the semester.

Media project: Due weeks of Nov. 24, Dec. 1, and Dec. 8, 2015 as assigned: 35% (Note: this is determined by the number of teams presenting. Number of teams is determined by class size.)

The media projects will be presented to the class and any guests you invite. You will have a total of 45 minutes for your presentation. This time frame includes the presentation of your project, followed by class discussion. Traditionally, the presentations consist of a 5-minute introduction, a 20-minute presentation, and a 20-minute group discussion. These times can vary based on the needs of the individual project, but will not exceed 45 minutes.

Due to the tight timeframe of the presentation, NO EXTENSIONS will be offered for the Media Project!

Winter semester 55%.

Outline / Preliminary bibliography: Due January 26, 2016: 5%

Students will submit an outline of their research paper with a preliminary bibliography of approximately 6 to 8 sources. The outline, single spaced, should fit on one page, with the bibliography on a second page. Traditional outline format (I.A.1.a) should be used.

Annotated Rough Draft: Due February 23, 2016: 10%

Students will submit an annotated rough draft of their research paper of 8 to 10 pages in length. A more comprehensive bibliography will be included. At this stage of the writing it is impossible to calculate the number of sources you will need, as currency and relevancy of the topic will largely determine how many sources are actually available. As a rule of thumb, however, you should focus on scholarly / academic sources (peer reviewed journals, etc.). ***As an annotated draft, students will italicize comments inside the paper that speak to the process.*** This draft is submitted "as is," and is a pass/fail assignment with no extension granted. Individual meetings with each student will be conducted to review the draft.

Final Paper: Due April 12, 2016: 30%

Students will submit a final research paper. **Traditional and/or alternate formats for this paper are determined in advance in consultation with your instructor.** The paper is 20 pages in length (or equivalent), 12pt., Times New Roman, 1" margins. A completed bibliography in a recognized format (preferably APA) must be included.

Note: each student will present a short overview of their paper to the class **on the due date**. Students on practicum at this time are required to submit their final draft electronically on or before the due date. Further, you are welcome to submit your final draft before, but not after the due date.

In-class topic discussion I: Due as Assigned: 10%

Students will prepare and present an in-class discussion on a communications, culture, or media topic. Presentations are oral, and can include any visual and/or audio support deemed appropriate. Length of the presentation should not exceed 10 minutes. A format sheet to guide you through the process is available as a handout.

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

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO

All assignments and exams weighted more than 20% must be completed in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

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 (UofC) or N402 (SAIT); 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. Electronic submission of assignments is also acceptable and encouraged.

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.

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 & Grade Scale of the Department of Communication, Media and Film

Final grades are reported as letter grades. Assignments, exams, and other work in this course will be graded using:

- letter grades
- percentage grades
- raw scores (e.g., a score out of 15 for an assignment worth 15 /100 of the final grade)
- GPA values (using any value on the 0 to 4.0 scale, including, e.g., 3.2 or 2.8)
- a combination of the above.

The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Department. If letter grades are used for an assignment or other course component, the percentage equivalent in the final column will be used for calculating the final grade:

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 <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436> . 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/resources/ethics>

Depending on the nature of the media project, students may be involved in primary research. You must discuss this with your instructor in advance. Students are expected

to apply for ethics approval themselves prior to the commencement of research activities.

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 artsads@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/ SAIT Safewalk is available 6pm – 11pm Monday to Friday call 403-284-SAFE (7233). For an escort outside of these times please call SAIT Campus Security at 403-210-HELP (4357).
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 	https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/ http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds
SU WELLNESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health 403-266-HELP (4357) http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus 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.
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Schedule of Lectures and Readings

Determined by group and semester requirements.

FALL – The first two weeks will be dedicated to topic discussions and group formations for the media project. Individual schedules for each group will proceed through the remainder of the semester leading up to the presentation dates in December.

- Media Project Proposal: Due September 22, 2015: 5%
- Media Project Mid-Term Group Meeting: **As assigned**: 5%
- Media project: Due weeks of Nov. 24, Dec. 1, and Dec. 8, 2015 **as assigned**: 35%

WINTER – The first two weeks will be dedicated to topic discussions for the paper. The in-class discussions will commence in January, as assigned by sign-up sheet. Individual discussion regarding the paper leading up to both the rough draft and final draft will continue throughout the semester.

- In-class topic discussion I: **Due as Assigned**: 10%
- Outline / Preliminary bibliography: Due January 26, 2016: 5%
- NOTE: Individual meetings to discuss your topics and outline are conducted in February.
- Annotated Rough Draft: Due February 23, 2016: 10%
- NOTE: Individual meetings to discuss the rough draft are conducted in March.
- Final Paper: Due April 12, 2016: 30%