

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
Department of Communication, Media and Film
Graduate Program in Communication and Media Studies

Communications Studies (COMS) 613
Communications Studies (COMS) 713
COMMUNICATION THEORY
Winter 2015
Wednesday 1:00-3:50; SS 202

Instructors:

Maria Bakardjieva	SS230	bakardji@ucalgary.ca	220-7300
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Office hours by appointment.

Course Description

This course is intended to provide an introduction to theoretical perspectives in communications studies. Students will be familiarized with the intellectual roots of various theories and use theories to analyze and critically engage current issues. The goal is to provide students with the theoretical basis for carrying out their own thesis/dissertation research. Some of the traditions that will be covered include structuralism and poststructuralism, theories of meaning and discourse, structuration theory, the theory of communicative action, and theories relevant to the study of science and technology in their social contexts.

The course will be organized as a seminar with brief lectures complemented by student presentations and class discussion. Students are expected to read the assigned readings each week before class, post responses to the readings, and be prepared to participate in active discussion of the material.

Requirements

Each student will be expected to:

- read all of the required readings and post a minimum of seven responses to the readings for the respective week in the D2L discussion forum by 12 am on day of the class **10%**
- take an active role in seminar discussions **10 %**
- give one seminar presentation (approx. 45 min.) **30 %**
- prepare a proposal for a research paper (due: **Feb. 25**) **required - no credit**
(2-3 pages typed, double spaced)
- prepare a research paper (due: **April 20**) **50 %**
(15-20 pages typed, double spaced; due by 4:30 pm to Barbara's Office)
- give a 20 minute presentation of your paper topic (**April 8 & 15**) **required - no credit**

- respond to a classmate's presentation

Total: **required - no credit**
100 %

Readings

Readings and links to readings will be posted online on the D2L site.

Schedule of Topics:

Some of the topics may be changed to accommodate the research interests of students.

Jan. 14: Introduction & Organization; Thinking about theory (BS&MB)

Joas, H. & Knobl, W. (2009). What is Theory? In *Social Theory: Twenty Introductory Lectures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Craig, Robert T. (1999). Communication Theory as a Field, *Communication Theory*, 9/2 pp. 119-161

Jan. 21: Structuralism, Post-structuralism, Semiotics (MB)

Seidman, S. (1994). The French Poststructuralists. Ch. 6 in *Contested knowledge: Social theory in the postmodern era*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Giddens, A. (1987). Structuralism, post-structuralism and the production of culture. In A. Giddens & J. Turner (Eds.), *Social theory today*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Jan 28: Structuration: Giddens (MB)

Giddens, A. (1984). Elements of a theory of structuration. Ch. 1 in *The constitution of society*. Cambridge: Polity.

Giddens, A. (1984). Glossary of terminology of structuration theory. In *The constitution of society*. Cambridge: Polity.

Banks, S. & Riley, P. (1993). Structuration theory as an ontology for communication research. *Communication yearbook*, 16, 167-196.

Feb. 4: Critical theory: The Marxist tradition (BS)

Kellner, D. (2005) Western Marxism. In *Modern Social Theory: An Introduction*, Harrington, A. (ed.). Oxford University Press.

Antonio Gramsci. In Bennett, T. et al. (eds.) 1981, *Culture, Ideology and Social Process: A Reader*

Feb. 11: Foucault and Biopolitics (Joanna Redden)
Readings TBA

Feb. 18: Class cancelled (Reading Week)

Feb. 25 Practice theory (BS)
Reckwitz, A. (2002). Toward a Theory of Social Practices: A development in culturalist theorizing. *European Journal of Social Theory* 5(2), 243-63.

Couldry, N. (2004). Theorizing Media as Practice, *Social Semiotics* 14(1), 115-32.

Schneider, B. (2013). Reporting homelessness: Practice, product, profession. *Journalism Practice*, 7(1), 47-61.

(*Research Paper Proposals due)

Mar. 4: Science/Technology/Society: Social construction of technology, Actor network theory, Critical theory of technology (Edna Einsiedel)

Readings TBA

Mar. 11: Communicative action: Habermas (MB)

Habermas, J. (1991). *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*: Ch.3 On the Genesis of the Bourgeois Public Sphere:

http://pages.uoregon.edu/koopman/courses_readings/phil123-net/publicness/habermas_structural_trans_pub_sphere.pdf

Habermas, J. (1988). Some Further Clarifications of the Concept of Communicative Rationality (1996). In Cooke, M. (ed.), *On the Pragmatics of Communication* (1998). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Mar. 18: Postmodernism and Biography (Lorry Felske)

Readings TBA

Mar. 25 Identity theory (BS)

Hall, Stuart. 1996. Introduction: Who needs "identity"? In Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (eds.) *Questions of Cultural Identity*, pp. 1–17. London: Sage.

<http://diasporanegra.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Stuart-Hall-Who-needs-identity.pdf>

Stryker, S., & Burke, P. J. (2000). The past, present, and future of an identity theory. *Social psychology quarterly*, 284-297.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/2695840>

April 1: Performance Theory. (Brian Rusted)

Readings TBA

April 8: Paper Presentations

April 15: Paper Presentations and Wrap-up

April 19: Final paper due

Policy for Late Assignments: At the discretion of the instructor, assignments submitted after the deadline **may** be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Note: 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.

Registrar's- scheduled exam: No

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. You will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up any assignments or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://www.comcul.ualgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. 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: www.efwr.ucalgary.ca

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film.

Letter Grade	Grading Scale	Grade Point Value (see U of C Calendar: Academic Standing)
A+	96-100	4
A	90-95.99	4
A -	85-89.99	3.7
B+	80-84.99	3.3
B	75-79.99	3
B-	70-74.99	2.7
C+	65-69.99	2.3
C	60-64.99	2
C-	55-59.99	1.7
D+	53-54.99	1.3
D	50-52.99	1
F	0-49	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 the consequences thereof please see the current

University of Calgary Graduate Calendar at the following link:
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

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.

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 . . .
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES	http://grad.ucalgary.ca/home or 403-220-4938
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 (403-220-5333). 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
GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Ombudsman 	http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/ http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/ombudsperson

	(403) 220-6420 or ombuds@ucalgary.ca
STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps 	http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html
SU WELLNESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	<p>403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm</p> <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>