

Communication and Culture CMCL 501 Lec 02  
Modernity  
Fall 2013  
TR 12:30–13:45

**Instructor:** Dr. Marcia Epstein  
**Office Location:** SS 332  
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**Web Page:** TBA  
**Office Hours:** By appointment  
M,T,R

**Course Description**

A critical and inter-disciplinary examination, via classic texts, of the meaning of Modernity in western and non-western contexts. Focus will be on major ideas, principles, and their implications within the time frame of the 17th to 20th centuries, as well as reflections on the values implied by modernity.

**Additional Information**

Attendance in class is advisable, since discussion of readings in class will provide significant content. If you need to be absent, ask a classmate to provide you with notes: sharing is encouraged.

**Objectives of the Course**

- (1) Provide an overview of a cultural configuration in which we, to some extent, all live;
- (2) Learn how to interpret classic texts in an inter-cultural context;

- (3) Understand Modernity from a critical perspective and come up with cultural strategies that may help to heal some of the dysfunctions associated with Modernity;
- (4) Explore Modernity from a variety of perspectives
- (5) Develop writing and presentation skills

**Internet and electronic communication device information**

No restriction on the use of laptops 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.

**Textbooks and Readings:**

*Culture & Values: Survey Of Humanities-Vol II (CV)*  
*Classics Of Western Thought Vol III. (CWT)*  
*World Literature & Thought Vol 3: Modern World To 1900. (WLT)*

*(These are bundled in a Course Pack at the Bookstore, or you may use copies from previous Heritage courses, used copies, shared copies, or e-book copies if available: it's up to you)*

**Assignments and Evaluation**

Reflective Journal:		<b>Due:</b>
• 1st Submission	10%	9/26
• 2 <sup>nd</sup> Submission	10%	10/17
• 3 <sup>rd</sup> Submission	15%	11/14
• 4 <sup>th</sup> Submission	15%	12/5
Group Project or paper	25%	Presentations 11/14-28; Papers 11/26
Final Exam	25%	TBA December

*All assignments must normally be completed in order to pass the course.*

**Guidelines for Assignments**

*Reflective Journal:*

The purpose of this assignment is to get you, the students, to do all the course readings and reflect on each reading with 1 to 2 page entry (single-spaced) that touches on some of the following themes:

- (1) *How does the text embody fundamental cultural assumptions? What are they?*
- (2) *How does the text embody its unit theme (fate/freedom, reason/passion, etc.)?*
- (3) *What quotation best exemplifies the message of the text?*
- (4) *What is your personal reaction to the text in view of lectures, class discussions, your own life experience, etc.?*
- (5) *What piece of music, film, ad (etc.) reflects the essence of the text and why?*
- (6) *What cultural differences between the text and your culture are particularly striking to you and why?*
- (7) *How could you express the message of the text in a medium in which you like to work (e.g., photography, rap, haiku, graphic art, etc.)?*

Students are expected to submit the entire journal at four points during the course (Sept. 26, Oct. 17, Nov. 14, and Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>).

The instructor will normally look at two entries chosen randomly, but will also read any entry that the student wishes to have examined (this should be clearly indicated) . The grade for each submission will be based not only on the entries marked, but also on how comprehensive the journal actually is. In other words, marks will be deducted if the journal contains less than 75% of the readings assigned up to the point of submission: if this is the case, the student risks failing. While comprehensiveness is crucial, originality and depth, according to the aforementioned criteria, are also important.

While creative use of language is encouraged if it is done with skill, substandard writing is not acceptable.

If you wish, the journal can be the product of collaboration. A maximum of 3 people can collaborate on a 'group journal' and all will receive the same mark. If you decide to work in a group you must normally maintain the same group for all entries.

Students will also be encouraged to share journal entries with the class through Blackboard Discussion Boards, peer mentoring sessions, and occasionally in class time.

*The advantage of this system is that the journal is a record of what you have learned in the course. This process will also eliminate the need to "cram" for the final.*

### ***Group Projects***

*A group will normally consist of 2-4 members.*

Each group has two options for a project:

Presentation (max. 20 min.) or Paper (max. 10 pages double-spaced + bibliography).

Goal: *Critique of Modernity*

Method: Developing your own definition of modernity on the basis of what you have read in the course and experienced in your life, write an essay or script, or prepare a presentation, with the following elements:

- (i) your definition of modernity;
- (ii) what you base your definition on;
- (iii) which of the course texts best represent or contradict that definition;
- (iv) what is right and what is wrong with modernity (you may disagree and present a debate or skit)

**Note:** While there is no upper limit on the number of course texts you can use, you should include at least three. *Proper footnoting is expected: use APA or MLA format, but keep it consistent.*

Any format may be utilized for presentation: skit, debate, video or short film, slide show, time travel, etc. *There must be a detailed record to hand in, including documentation of all sources used. A written summary is also expected, along with a paragraph from each group member on what you learned from doing the project.*

*All members of the group will get the same mark in normal circumstances. If there is a major discrepancy in work load and/or cooperation within the group, differential grading may be applied at the discretion of the instructor.*

### ***Registrar-Scheduled Exam***

Time: 2 hours

Format: The exam will be in two parts. Part A will consist of objective identifications in a form or forms to be determined. Part B will be an essay with elements of choice in the topic.

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

Note: Please hand in your essays directly to your 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.

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### **Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: Yes**

Please note: If your class is held in the evening, the Registrar's Office will make every attempt to schedule the final exam during the evening; however, there is NO guarantee that the exam will NOT be scheduled during the day.

### **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.

### **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.** Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

### **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://comcul.ucalgary.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: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

### **Grading System**

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

	Grading Scale	Meaning (for written assignments):
A+	96-100	Professional quality work
A	90-95.99	Outstanding and well expressed
A -	85-89.99	Excellent; needs more attention to detail
B+	80-84.99	Very good; well expressed
B	75-79.99	Good: basic expectations are met
B-	70-74.99	Good: needs more attention
C+	65-69.99	Shows promise; improvements needed
C	60-64.99	Adequate: covers the basics only
C-	55-59.99	Barely adequate
D+	53-54.99	Shows gaps in comprehension
D	50-52.99	Grim: see me immediately
F	0-49	Failing

Where a grade on a particular assignment is expressed as a letter grade, it will normally be converted to a number using the midpoint of the scale. That is, A- would be converted to 87.5 for calculation purposes. F will be converted to zero.

*Note: Hard work does not merit an “A” unless it produces outstanding results.*

### **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. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people’s words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Taylor Family Digital Library, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

### **Academic Misconduct**

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary 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 fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

### **Students' Union**

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see

<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

### **Student Ombudsman**

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

### **Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points**

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

### **"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333**

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance.

Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

### **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:

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site:  
<http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics>

or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site:  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/ethics/cfreb>

### **Schedule of Lectures and Readings**

9/9: Introduction - What is Modernity?

*A full schedule of lectures and readings will be posted on Blackboard before classes start.*