

University of Calgary
Department of Communication and Culture
Communication & Culture CMCL503 L01
Contours of Contemporary Culture

Summer 2014

Wed., July 2 – Wed., Aug. 13 (no class Mon., Aug. 4)
M/W 12:00 – 14:45

Instructor: Christine Mains
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Web Page: D2L
Office Hours: M/W 11-11:50 or by appointment

Course Description

This course is a critical exploration of how Modernity has been transformed within an evolving global culture. The focus is on major ideas, principles and their implications in the later 20th and 21st centuries. Students will explore our recent past and our complex present, and examine perspectives on basic issues that have always confronted humanity but are even more pressing as technology moves us into the future – what it means to be human; how technological progress shapes ethics, morality, justice, and the social order; what rights and responsibilities come with knowledge and power; how the collapse of truth and “grand narratives” affects religion and science, work, economics, and politics.

Prerequisite: CMCL 501

Objectives of the Course

The course will help students

- develop their ability to read, critically evaluate, and creatively explore classic texts which articulate fundamental cultural assumptions
- learn how to develop and defend intellectual positions concerning those fundamental life questions to which classic texts address themselves
- strengthen their abilities to discuss and present insights gained in the course

Internet and electronic communication device information

Students may use laptops to take notes during lecture portions of the class, but at other times full engagement with the instructor and other students will be required. Laptops and tablets should never be used for personal work (such as Facebook or checking email), and should never distract other students. At no time may students use cell phones for any reason.

Textbooks and Readings

The following texts are required and have been bundled together to reduce costs:

Gochberg, Donald, ed. *Classics of Western Thought – The Twentieth Century* (Mason, Ohio: Cenage Learning, 2003).

Hallman, Max O. *Traversing Philosophical Boundaries*, 4th Ed. (Boston: Wadsworth, 2012).

Assignments and Evaluation

Reflective Journal	Submission #1	July 14	10%
	Submission #2	July 23	10%
	Submission #3	August 6	10%
	Submission #4	August 13	10%
Reading Quizzes	Quiz #1	July 23	10%
	Quiz #2	August 13	10%
Group Presentation		on assigned date	15%
Comparative Essay		August 11	25%

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

Reflective Journal: The purpose of this assignment is to reflect on each reading in order to prepare for regular participation in class discussion and to study for the quizzes. The journal will be composed of one entry for each day's assigned readings; each entry must be no less than 250 words and no more than 500 words. Journals will be submitted at 4 points during the course. The instructor will normally look at one entry of her own choosing, but will also read any entry that the student wishes to have examined. The grade will be based on the quality of the entries marked and on the number of entries completed; marks will be deducted for missing or unsubstantial entries.

Reading Quizzes: The purpose of the quizzes is to test the student's mastery of the assigned readings. The quizzes will be short answer. The instructor will provide a number of passages drawn from the readings and class discussion, and students will be required to identify the author of each passage and answer a few content-related questions about each passage.

Small Group Presentation: Each group of 2-4 students will present (within 20 minutes max.) to the entire class on the day's assigned readings. The emphasis should be on making connections between the readings. Any kind of media or original mode of presentation will be allowed, and creativity is encouraged. All members of the group will get the same grade except for those who made no viable contribution, based on the observation of the instructor and other group members. A written summary and PowerPoint slideshow is expected. Groups will be created and presentation dates will be assigned by the instructor.

Comparative Essay: The essay of 2000-2500 words will require students to make connections between 4-5 readings from the textbook, and explore how those readings relate to a developing understanding of a particular fundamental cultural assumption. No secondary research will be required, but the textbook readings must be properly cited using MLA. Essays will be evaluated on content, structure & organization, grammar & expression, and citation.

Submission of Assignments

All written assignments will be submitted and returned through Dropbox on D2L. No assignments will be submitted in hardcopy, whether handed to the instructor, dropped at the main office, or slid under office doors, nor will assignments be accepted through email attachment. It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment, and to check email regularly for notices of missing assignments.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments are due through Dropbox on the stated due date. Assignments may be submitted after the deadline only with the emailed permission of the instructor, and may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Grading System

In this class, you will receive grades in the 4-point GPA scale *rather than* percentages.

	Grading Scale	GPA
A+	96-100	4.0
A	90-95.99	4.0
A -	85-89.99	3.7
B+	80-84.99	3.3
B	75-79.99	3.0
B-	70-74.99	2.7
C+	65-69.99	2.3
C	60-64.99	2.0
C-	55-59.99	1.7
D+	53-54.99	1.3
D	50-52.99	1.0
F	0-49	0

Writing Skills Statement

All written assignments (including 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. Essays and research papers must be properly documented, using MLA style correctly and consistently.

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>

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 (3rd 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>

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>

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>.

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

Please note the evacuation points for this particular classroom. All classrooms on campus exit to specific places in case of emergency. The emergency assembly points differ depending upon where your classroom is located. For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see

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

"SAFEWALK" Program

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 403-220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

Schedule of Readings

CWT: Classics of Western Thought Vol. 4

TPB: Traversing Philosophical Boundaries

Date	Topics	Deadlines
July 2	Introduction to Course Concepts	
7	Bettelheim, Wiesel: CWT 3-29; 416-421 Arendt: CWT 30-46 Solzhenitsyn: CWT 75-116	
9	Robinson: CWT 422-437 Daly: TPB 415-422 Radhakrishnan: TPB 377-382	
14	Carol Christ: TPB 663-673 C.W. Mills: CWT 204-221 Huxley: CWT 184-203	Journal #1 Due
16	C.P. Snow: CWT 119-130 Farber, Brustein: CWT 467-485 Heisenberg: CWT 303-313	
21	Hawking: TPB: 163-168 Dobzhanski: CWT 261-270 Dennett: TPB 70-80	
23	Benally: TPB 292-297 Anderson: TPB 336-344 Gandhi: TPB 541-545	Journal #2 Due Reading Quiz #1
28	Ellul: CWT 131-145 Marcuse: CWT 60-74 DeBeauvoir: CWT 486-505	
30	Hooks: TPB 564-571 Fanon: CWT 506-521 Abu'l A'la Maududi: TPB 506-516	
Aug 4	NO CLASSES: HERITAGE DAY	
6	Wiredu: TPB 689-698 Frye: TPB 225-237 Foucault: TPB 58-63	Journal #3 Due
11	Heller: CWT 345-370 Maslow: CWT 604-614 Toffler: CWT 640-660	Essay Due
13	Schweitzer: TPB 383-388 Starhawk: TPB 635-642 The Earth Charter: TPB 408-414	Journal #4 Due Reading Quiz #2