

Communication and Culture (CMCL) 503 L03
Contours of Contemporary Culture
Winter 2014
M/W 2 - 3:15

Instructor: Dr. Marcia Epstein
Office
Location: SS 332
Office Phone: 403-220-4848
E-Mail: epstein@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: See *Blackboard* for
course pages
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

A critical and inter-disciplinary examination, via classic texts, of how modernity has been transformed within the framework of an evolving global culture. Focus will be on major ideas, principles, and their implications within the time-frame of the early twentieth to early twenty-first centuries. Emphasis is placed primarily on Western writings but inter-cultural perspectives will also be considered.

Additional Information

This is a reading-heavy course in which active participation is an absolute requirement.

Students will be challenged to keep up with readings in order to engage in class discussion. Clear guidelines and grading criteria are provided for all assignments and class participation components.

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

- To enrich students' intellectual perspective on how the events and factors at play in the 20th century have shaped the world we now experience in the 21st.
- To develop skills in the interpretation of inter-cultural texts, and in writing and presentation.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Cellphones and pagers must be turned off during class unless you are a health care or law enforcement professional, or responsible for the care of a family member.

Computers are welcome as long as they are used appropriately. Research and note-taking are appropriate during class; social sites, Twitter, games, YouTube and e-mail are not.

Textbooks and Readings:

- D. S. Gochberg, ed., Classics of Western Thought, Vol. III (from CMCL 303 & 501)
- D. S. Gochberg, ed. Classics of Western Thought, Vol. IV, The Twentieth Century.
- M. O. Hallman, Traversing Philosophical Boundaries

Assignments and Evaluation (see instructions below):

Reflective journals on readings:	<i>Due</i>
-Journal 1 (10%)	Feb. 3
-Journal 2 (20%)	Feb. 26
-Group project proposal 10%	Feb. 12
-Group project (presentation/skit/video/website/etc. OR paper) 25%	Mar. 19-24
Final Exam 25%	TBA
Participation 10%	

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

Instructions for assignments

Reflective journals:

Journal entries must be written individually. They are designed to stimulate reflection on the assigned readings.

A set of brief essays (1-2 pages each) commenting on at least four readings is required for each journal; two entries in each set will be graded (students may choose which two they wish to have evaluated).

The first set will focus on personal reflections; the second set on reflecting a chosen thematic concentration (*see below*).

Evaluation will be based on coherence, relevance, depth of understanding, and rhetorical and writing skills demonstrated.

Group Projects:

Groups for projects will focus on solving a problem associated with one of the following themes:

- Environment*
- Economy & Social Hierarchies*
- Education*

This assignment is an exercise in speculative thinking as well as research. The proposed problem should be based in real issues. The proposed solution does not need to be definitive; it can be possible or theoretical, local or national or international. It should be based in readings from the Heritage (CMCL) courses, in identification of cultural assumptions, and in real-world statistics.

Group project proposal (10%)

Groups of 2-3 members are acceptable; individual projects are not.

The proposal must identify the problem being addressed and use course readings and themes to explain why the topic is relevant; what the specific interest or angle taken to explore it will be; what other literature has been consulted to frame and deepen understanding of the problem (bibliography); how the group will tackle the project (methodology), including rules of engagement for completing the work (who will do what) and resolving any conflicts that arise among group members.

Length: 2-4 pages double-spaced.

Group project (20%)

Each group will complete a final project for submission by prior arrangement, on or before March 26.

Projects can take many forms, as long as emphasis on the quality of the thinking and analysis relating to the topic is maintained. Projects may include skits, videos, debates, mock UN reports, presentations, or papers. Performative projects, such as skits and videos, will get class time to make their presentations. These must be accompanied by:

- a script and/or storyboard, or a *detailed* outline of contents;
- a bibliography of all written and “clipped” sources;
- a statement from each group member of what you learned from doing the project.

Timing for presentations will be determined when the number of them is known.

Length for papers (non-performative):: Depends on topic and size of group: avg. 8-12 pages double-spaced.

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

You will be graded on the results of your work. Hard work does not merit an A unless it produces outstanding results.

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

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: Yes

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 papers):
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

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>

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

A complete schedule will be posted on Blackboard in the week before classes start.

1/8 Overview: Where we are and How we got here;
Identification of themes and issues