

**Communications Studies (COMS) 201 - L01
Introduction to Communications Studies
Fall 2011**

Lectures: Tuesday, 8:30 – 10:20

Tutorial 01: Thursday, 8:30 – 9:20

Tutorial 02: Thursday, 8:30 – 9:20

Tutorial 03: Thursday, 9:30 – 10:20

Tutorial 04: Thursday, 9:30 – 10:20

Instructor: Delia Dumitrica
Office
Location: SS344
E-Mail: dddumitr@ucalgary.ca
Office Hours: Tuesday, 15:00 – 17:00 or by appointment.

Additional Information

- ⤴ This is a reading and writing intensive course.
- ⤴ Due to the nature of the course, some material may manifest coarse language, sexuality, and violence.
- ⤴ This course makes extensive use of Blackboard.

Calendar Description

A general mapping of the field, with an emphasis on its breadth in the areas of media studies, communication of science and technology, and rhetorical communication. The course also provides a general examination of how Communications Studies emerged during the 20th century and how the field relates to issues of social and cultural change.

Course Description

In this course, we will explore the major theoretical traditions in the field of communication studies, covering areas such as: rhetoric; mass media; interpersonal communication; critical theory; science, technology and society; cultural studies; postmodernism; feminist theory.

Using examples from popular culture, this course will prompt you to engage with the major questions around our communication practices: how do we communicate? Are we simply transmitting information? What are we doing when we communicate? What is the relation between the way in which we think and communicate, and the wider social system in which we live?

Objectives of the Course

The goal of this course is to introduce you to the major theoretical traditions in the field of communication studies. By the end of this course, you should:

- ⤴ Be able to recognize and contrast the major authors, concepts and ideas within each of these traditions;
- ⤴ Be able to apply them to analyze communication practices.

Internet and electronic communication device information

All cell phones should be silenced for the entire duration of the class. Laptops and iPads can only be used for taking notes. iPods, cell phones and gaming devices should be off during class. Improper use of electronic devices will impact your participation grade.

Textbooks and Readings:

Julia T. Wood (2004). *Communication Theories in Action. An Introduction*. Third Edition. Canada: Wadsworth.

Assignments and Evaluation

You will be graded on six components:

- Tutorial participation (10%)
- Early quiz (10%) - *October 13, 2011* (Tutorial)
- Midterm examination (20%) - *November 3, 2011* (Tutorial)
- Final examination (30%) - *Registrar Scheduled*
- Research project (20%)
 - Proposal (5%) - *October 20, 2011* (Tutorial)
 - Paper (15%) - *December 8, 2011* (Tutorial)
- Newspaper article analysis (10%) - *November 24, 2011* (Tutorial)

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-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.

Description of assignments

1. Tutorial participation (10%)

You are expected to be present for all classes and tutorials, take detailed notes and actively participate in class discussions. Opportunities to do small assignments and present them in class (such as summarizing the definition of certain concepts, reviewing the abstracts of a few academic articles, etc.), as well as small in-class or online activities will count towards your participation mark.

2. Early quiz (10%) - October 13, 2011

The early quiz will consist of multiple-choice questions (closed books) and is designed to provide early feedback on your comprehension of the course material so far. It will be useful preparation for the midterm and final exams. This assignment will cover the readings and lecture materials discussed until the day of the quiz.

3. Midterm exam (20%) - November 3, 2011

The midterm exam will consist of a combination of multiple-choice questions and short-essay questions. It will cover the readings and the lecture materials discussed from the beginning of the course until the day of the exam.

4. Final exam (30%) - Registrar Scheduled

The final exam will consist of a combination of multiple-choice questions and short-essay questions. It will cover the readings and the lecture materials discussed from the day of the midterm until the end of the course.

5. Research project (20%): Proposal (5%) - October 20, 2011; Paper (15%) - December 8, 2011.

This assignment will give you the opportunity to do in-depth research on a theoretical model. You will choose one of the theoretical models discussed in this course and you will apply it to a specific example. The research project consists of two assignments:

- Proposal: This document indicates the chosen theory, the chosen example, and 3 academic sources (books, book chapters, journal articles) you plan to use. The proposal also indicates how you plan to use the theory in relation to your chosen example. Length: 1 page, double-spaced, TNR 12.
- Paper: The paper consists of the following sections: 1). A description of the theoretical model you are using. This description should be based on additional reading and research (minimum 3 academic sources; at least one of them should be written by one of the original theorists). 2). An analysis of your chosen example (e.g. advertisement; political speech, etc.) using the theoretical model. Length: 5 pages, double-spaced, TNR 12 (about 1250 – 1500 words).

6. Newspaper article analysis (10%) - November 24, 2011

This assignment will give you the opportunity to 1). express your opinion on a topic related to political communication; 2). analyze a newspaper article on the same topic, by using one of the concepts discussed in this course. This activity will help you prepare for the research project. Length: 5 pages, double-spaced, TNR 12 (about 1250 – 1500 words).

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://www.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: www.efwr.ucalgary.ca

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture: (Revised, effective September 2008)

	Grading Scale
A+	96-100
A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99
B	75-79.99
B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99
C-	55-59.99
D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

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.

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 (MacEwan Student Centre 4th floor, efwr.ucalgary.ca) 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 Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) 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.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

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/cfreb>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

A detailed schedule of lectures and readings will be provided in the first day of class and posted on Blackboard.