

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Communications Studies COMS 201 L01
Introduction to Communication Studies

Spring 2015

May 14 – June 26, 2015

Tuesday & Thursday 9:00am – 11:50 am

Instructor: Dr. Chaseten Remillard
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Office Hours: T/R 3-4pm

Course Description

An introduction to 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, and feminist theory.

Additional Information

Some course content may contain material that is sexually explicit, violent or otherwise offensive. If you have concerns about this please make them known to the instructor in advance.

Be advised: There will be no rescheduling of any test, unless it is missed due to acceptable reasons (as outlined by University policies).

Emails that are sent to the instructor that are not written in a formal, polite, and respectful manner will not be responded to.

Lecture material will not be made available on D2L.

Objectives of the Course

At the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Identify the key concepts of the communication theories covered in the course reading material
2. Compare and contrast communication theories based on key concepts
3. Demonstrate your understanding of the theoretical concepts by applying them to a social context or media text

Textbooks and Readings

Griffin, E. (2011). *A first look at communication theory* (8th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptops and computers are permissible within class. All other personal communication devices should be kept on silent and students should refrain from communicating via such devices during class.

Assignments and Evaluation

Writing Assignment 1 - Rhetorical Analysis (25%); June 2

Using the ideas and terminology from rhetoric, students will analyze a text. The length of the analysis will be 750-1000 words. Further instructions will be posted on D2L.

Writing Assignment 2 - Semiotic Analysis (25%); June 18

Students will apply Barthes' semiotic theory to identify a text's meaning and explain how this meaning is produced. The required length of the analysis is 750-1000 words. Further instructions are posted on D2L.

Midterm Exam (20%); Distributed June 9th, due June 11th

The Midterm exam is a "take home exam" – The exam will be distributed June 9th and you will have until June 11th at 11:59 pm to complete the exam. You will have June 11th off to complete the exam. You will answer two short essay questions from a choice of questions.

Final Exam (20%); Take-Home: Distributed June 23rd, due June 25th

The Final Exam is a "take home exam" – The exam will be distributed June 23rd and you will have June 25th off to complete the exam. It will be due as an online submission to D2L June 25th, 11:59 pm. You will answer two short essay questions from a choice of questions. The questions will be analytical questions focusing on the theories presented throughout the entire semester, with an emphasis on the content (lectures, readings, presentations) covered all semester.

Participation (10%): Ongoing

Students will participate in class through short in class activities.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

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

Submission of Assignments: Please upload assignments to D2L by 11:59 pm on the date they are due.

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment. For courses in which assignments are submitted electronically, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the correct copy of the assignment is submitted. (Including the version date or version number in your file name may help you avoid submitting the wrong version of your written assignments.)

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.

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.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, 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. Sources used in 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 & Department of Communication, Media and Film

Grade Scale Work in this course will be graded using letter grades following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film:

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Department grade scale equivalents	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations
4.00	Outstanding	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent—superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70		A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30		B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good—clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70		B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30		C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%

2.00	Satisfactory—basic understanding of the subject matter.	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70		C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Minimal pass—marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00		D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.	F	00 - 49.99%	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 <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436>. 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 its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

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/resources/ethics>

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 artsads@ucalgary.ca
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 (220-5333). For more information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk
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
STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/ http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds
SU WELLNESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health 403-266-HELP (4357) http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus 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.

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

May 14	Topic: Introduction to course, textbook and projects. What is Communication Theory?
May 19	Topic: Non-Verbal Communication & Symbolic Interactionism (George Mead) Readings: Chapter 5
May 21	Topic: Classic Rhetoric (Aristotle) Reading: Chapter 21
May 26	Topic: Dramatism (Burke) Reading: Chapter 22
May 28	Topic: Semiotics Readings: Chapter 25
June 2	Topic: Media Ecology (McLuhan) Reading: Chapter 24 Assignment: Writing Assignment 1 Due
June 4	Topic: Cultural Studies (Stuart Hall) Readings: Chapter 26
June 9	Agenda-Setting Theory (McCombs & Shaw) & Cultivation Theory (George Gerbner) Reading: Chapter 27 & 28
June 11	Midterm Chapters 5, 21, 22, 25, 24 No class. Take home midterm exam due.
June 16	Topic: Media Ownership & Uses and Gratifications Readings: Chapter 28 (Katz)
June 18	Topic: What is feminist communication theory? Standpoint Theory (Harding & Wood) Readings: Chapter 35 Writing Assignment 2 Due
June 23	Topic: Communicating Power – Foucault’s influence on Communication Studies Readings: TBA and posted to D2L
June 25	Midterm Chapters 26, 27, 28, 35 No class. Take home final exam due.