

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

COMS 371 (L01): Critical Media Studies

FALL 2019: Sept. 5 to Dec. 6 (excluding Oct. 14 and Nov. 10-16)

Lecture: Wednesdays 11:00 to 12:50

Lab 1 F 12:00–12:50; Lab 2 F 13:00 –13:50; Lab 3 F 12:00- 12:50; Lab. 4 F 13:00-13:50

Instructor:	Maria Victoria Guglietti
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Email:	mvguglie@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours:	Fridays 11:00 to 2:00 pm or by appointment.

Course Description

This course emphasizes major critical approaches in the field of communication studies with the intent of introducing students to the theoretical foundations of media related research. The course explores the contexts in which these theories arose, identifies their major strengths and weaknesses, and provides an appreciation of how critical theory engages the social world through research on communications and media.

Additional Information

The weekly schedule of topics and readings can be found at the end of this outline or on D2L. Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline.

Objectives of the Course

- To offer students a first approach to the theoretical foundations of critical media research.
- To encourage students to develop critical awareness of media strategies and contents.
- To help students develop analytical skills necessary for communication research.

Textbooks and Readings

Durham, M. & Kellner, D. (2012). *Media and cultural studies: Keywords*. 2nd edition. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Policy on the use of Electronic Communication Devices

Laptops, tablets, and mobile phones may be used in class and tutorials only for course-related purposes and only if their use is not distracting others or negatively impacting the learning environment. No audio or video recording is allowed in any class without the instructor's permission.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed components	Due
20%	Midterm- closed book. 90 minutes- a combination of short and long answers- covers content from Week 1 to 7.	Oct. 30
12%	Reading responses: 2 (1RR from RR1 to RR5; 1 from RR6 to RR 9) Students will submit 2 reading responses throughout the term (the total of reading responses available to choose from is 9). A list of instructions and questions will be posted on D2L the first day of the term. Each reading response is based on a mandatory reading and worth 6%. To complete the response students are required to read the reading and briefly answer the question linked to the reading and assigned by the instructor (approx. 500 words). Reading responses are due the day the reading will be discussed in class. Responses MUST be digitally submitted (D2L dropbox) by the beginning of the class.	Ongoing D2L dropbox
24%	In-class group activities: In groups of four, students will complete four open book assignments in class; each will require the theoretical analysis of a case study. Group activities are 50 minute long, will be completed during the laboratory and require the completion of a series of short analytical questions. Each group assignment is 6%. Further instructions will be posted on D2L	Sep. 20, Oct. 18, Nov. 8 and Nov. 29 D2L dropbox
10%	Group presentation of case study: Students will form groups of max. 4 members to organize and deliver a 10-minute presentation. The mandatory components of the presentation are the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a summary and critique of the mandatory reading, 2. the application of the theory to explain a contemporary event or phenomenon, 3. questions for the audience <p>Students will form groups and choose the mandatory reading that they will address in their presentation the first laboratory. Presentations are generally due the week the reading selected is discussed in class unless indicated (see schedule below).</p>	Dates available: Sep. 27, Oct. 4, 11, Nov. 1 AND 22 Students will sign in for a presentation date the first week of the term. See schedule on D2L.
25%	Final exam: individual, closed book. Cumulative. The final exam will consist of short and long answers.	TBD
9%	Tutorial Participation: Students will receive 1 percentage point up to a maximum of 9% for each laboratory they attend and actively participate in. To receive the participation grade students need to be present during the entire laboratory session and engage with the activities and in-class discussions.	Ongoing

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: Yes

Note: You do not have to complete all the assignments and exams in order to receive a passing grade in this course.

Submission of Assignments

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments and upload them to the D2L dropbox assigned.

Note: It is your responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that you submit the proper version (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission).

Private information related to individual students is treated with the utmost regard by University of Calgary faculty. Student assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty, and personal information is collected in accordance with the ***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act***. Please note that instructors may use audio or video recorded for lesson capture, assessment of student learning, and self-assessment of teaching practices.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline will receive a 0.

***The Day of Grace:** One day of grace is available to all students to cover unforeseen problems that prevent them from meeting a deadline such as computer crashes, vehicle breakdowns, lack of printer ink or money, unexpected family obligations, etc. Students may use this day ONLY ONCE during the semester. Students using this day of grace must upload the assignment by 4:30 pm the next calendar day to avoid a late penalty, and write "grace" on their subject line. It should be noted that assignments handed in this manner may be returned 1-2 classes later than those submitted on the due date

Student Accommodations

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS); SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should provide supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require that a medical note be presented. For the policy on supporting documentation the use of a statutory declaration, see Section M.1 of the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>. Also see FAQs for Students: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals/student-faq>

Expectations for Writing

Department policy directs that all written assignments and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization and proper documentation of research sources. For further information, please refer to the *University of Calgary Calendar* section on writing across the curriculum: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html>

Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

The following table outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. Final grades are reported as letter grades. For components graded using percentages or numerical scores, those values will be used directly in calculating the final course grade, while for components graded using letter grades, the letter grades will be converted to the midpoint values listed in the final column of the table below in calculating the final course grade.

In this course, final grades are reported as letter grades. All other assignments (exams, group presentations, group activities, tutorial attendance and reading responses) will receive a percentage grade.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations*
4.00	Outstanding performance	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent performance	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70	Approaching excellent performance	A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30	Exceeding good performance	B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good performance	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70	Approaching good performance	B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance	C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory performance	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	F	0 - 49.99%	0%

* Column 4: If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades. Column 5: These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

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. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

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.

For information on citation and documentation styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, IEEE, etc.), visit the Student Success Centre resource links at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support> or the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) Research and Citation Resources at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, please consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, 3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library. To

book an appointment, go to https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success?utm_source=ssc&utm_medium=redirect&utm_campaign=redirect

Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation

Course materials created by the instructor (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the same course section and term may be allowed under fair dealing. Check with the instructor if you have any questions about sharing materials with classmates.

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

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, including surveys, interviews, or observations as part of your university studies, you are responsible for obtaining research ethics approval and for following university research ethics guidelines. In some cases, your instructors may apply for course-based research ethics approval for certain assignments, and in those cases, they must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, please see <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/arts-researchers/resources-researchers-and-instructors/ethics>

Deferrals of Course Work and Requests for Reappraisal

For university regulations and procedures related to deferrals of exams and course work, requests for reappraisals, and other matters, please see the relevant sections in the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html>

Student Support Services and Resources

Please visit <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for information about student support services and resources, including Wellness and Mental Health Resources, Student Success programs and services, the Student Ombuds Office, the Student Union, and Safewalk.

For resources on D2L, visit <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students>. IT support is available at itsupport@ucalgary.ca or by calling 403-220.5555.

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings: No laboratory on Sep. 6

	Wednesday Lecture 11:00 A.M- 12:15 P.M. ES162	Friday Lab.
Week 1 Sep. 11 & 13	Introduction to the class, readings and assignment	Introduction to group assignment and in-class group activities. Group sign-up
Week 2 Sep. 18 & 20	Topic: Marxism and Hegemony (Williams) Readings: Chapter 11	Assignment: in-class group activity 1
Week 3 Sep. 25 & 27	Topic: Culture Industry- Frankfurt School (Adorno and Horkheimer) Readings: Chapter 4 Assignment: RR 1	Assignment: group presentations
Week 4 Oct. 2 & 4	Topic: Semiotics (Barthes) Readings: Chapter 7 Assignment: RR2	Assignment: group presentations
Week 5 Oct. 9 & 11	Topic: Subculture (Hebdige) Reading: Chapter 12 Assignment: RR3	Assignment: group presentations
Week 6 Oct. 16 & 18	Topic: Postmodernism (Baudrillard) Reading: Chapter 30 Assignment: RR4	Assignment: in-class group activity 2
Week 7 Oct. 23 & 25	Topic: Propaganda (Herman & Chomsky) Reading: Chapter 17 Assignment: RR5	Topic: Midterm review
Week 8 Oct. 30 & Nov. 1	Midterm	Assignment: group presentations
Week 9 Nov. 6 & 8	Topic: Public sphere (Habermas) Reading: Chapter 5 Assignment: RR6	Assignment: in-class group activity 3
Week10 Nov. 13 & 15	No classes- Reading Break	
Week 11 Nov. 20 & 22	Topic: Gender (Radway) Reading: Chapter 24 Assignment: RR7	Assignment: group presentations
Week 12 Nov. 27 & 29	Topic: Race (hooks) Reading: Chapter 25 Assignment: RR8	Assignment: in-class group activity 4
Week 13 Dec. 4 & 6	Topic: Participatory culture (Jenkins) Reading: Chapter 34 Assignment: RR9	Topic: Final Review
Week 14+	Final Exam: TBD	