

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film
Communications Studies COMS 371, L01
Critical Media Studies
Spring 2015
TR 15:00 – 17:45

Instructor: María Victoria Guglietti
Office Location: SS 307
E-Mail: mvguglie@ucalgary.ca
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:50 to 2:50 P.M.

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.

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.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptops are permitted in class as long as they are used EXCLUSIVELY for note taking. Cell phones should be turned off during class.

Textbooks and Readings:

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

Assignments and Evaluation

Group presentation and abstract (20%)

Students will form groups of 4 members to organize and deliver this presentation. The presentation will consist of:

1. a summary and critique of one of the mandatory reading's main points (5%),
2. the discussion of one contemporary academic paper in the field of communication studies that uses the theory (5%)
3. the group's application of the theory to a contemporary event or phenomenon (5%).
4. abstract (5%)

Students will form groups and choose the mandatory reading that they will focus on the first week of classes. Presentations are generally due the day the reading selected is discussed in class unless indicated (see schedule below).

Additional instructions will be posted on blackboard,

Reading Responses (two from RR1-RR11 and two from RR12-RR20 - 20%)

Students will submit 4 reading responses throughout the term (the total of reading responses available to choose from is 19). Reading responses will be posted on D2L the first day of the term. Each reading response is based on a mandatory reading. 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. 250 words). Reading responses are due the day the reading will be discussed in class. Responses MUST be handed in at the beginning of the class. No late responses will be accepted because the pedagogical objective of the response is to test the student's comprehension of the reading prior to the lecture and in-class discussion.

Quizzes: May 28th (20%) AND June 16th (15%)

Quiz 1 will cover weeks 1 to 3. Quiz 2 will cover weeks 3 to 5. Quizzes will comprise both long and short answers and will last 90 minutes. Check the schedule of lectures and readings below for more information.

Final take home exam (analysis): June 27th NOON (25%)

This final analysis will require the evaluation of a cultural artifact or phenomenon through the systematic application of the theories studied in class. Unlike a typical discussion paper, students will articulate their analysis as a series of answers to a list of questions provided by the instructor.

You do not need to complete all assignments to receive a passing grade in the course.

Assignment guidelines will be handed in the first day of class.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No.

Submission of Assignments: 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.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at final exams in SS 320 after classes have ended. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>

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>

Dept of Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

Work in this course will be graded using the following grade scale 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 <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/node/208> . 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: <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/research/research-ethics>

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS STUDENT CENTRE (advising)	SS 102 403-220-3580 picarts@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 information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/
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

<p>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	<p>http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html</p> <p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds</p>
<p>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	<p>403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</p> <p>403-266-HELP (4357)</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</p> <p>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.</p>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

	<p>Tuesday Room SA 129 15:00 to 17:45</p>	<p>Thursday Room SA 129 15:00 to 17:45</p>
<p>Week 1 May 14</p>		<p>Topic: Introduction to the class and assignments. Marxism and Hegemony (Williams & Gramsci) Readings: Chapters 2 & 11</p>
<p>Week 2 May 19, 21</p>	<p>Topic: Frankfurt School (Adorno and Horkheimer & Benjamin) Readings: Chapters 3 & 4 Assignment: RR 1 AND/OR 2</p>	<p>Topic: Semiotics and the encoding/decoding model (Barthes & Hall) Readings: Chapters 7 & 13 Assignment: group presentation 1 & 2; RR 3 AND/OR 4</p>
<p>Week 3 May 26, 28</p>	<p>Topic: Cultural battles (Hebdige & Bourdieu) Readings: Chapters 12 & 20 Assignment: group presentation 3 & 4; RR 5 AND/OR 6</p>	<p>Quiz 1 (90') Topic: Public Sphere Readings: Chapter 5 Assignment: RR 7</p>
<p>Week 4 June 2, 4</p>	<p>Topic: Media and Power (Herman and Chomsky & Lievrouw) Readings: Chapters 17 & 35</p>	<p>Topic: Imagining the audience (Ang & Jenkins) Readings: Chapters 14 & 34 Assignment: group presentation</p>

	Assignment: group presentation 5 & 6; RR 8 AND/OR 9	7 & 8; RR 10 AND/OR 11
Week 5 June 9, 11	Topic: The problem of representation (Mulvey & hooks) Readings: Chapters 22 & 25 Assignment: group presentation 9 & 10; RR 12 AND/OR 13	Topic: Postmodernism (Baudrillard & Jameson) Readings: Chapters 30 & 31 Assignment: group presentation 11; RR14 AND/OR 15
Week 6 June 16, 18	Quiz 2 (90') Topic: Globalization (Appadurai) Reading: Chapter 37 Assignment: RR 16	Topic: Feminism and post-feminism? (Radway & McRobbie) Readings: Chapters 24 & 32 Assignment: group presentation 12; RR17 AND/OR 18
Week 7 June 23, 25	Topic: A response from the margins (Schiller & Mohanty) Readings: Chapter 18 & 28 Assignments: RR 19 AND/OR 20; group presentation 13 & 14 Distribution of take-home final exam instructions	No class. Time dedicated to exam preparation.
June 27	Final take-home exam due June 27th at NOON (D2L dropbox)	

Deadlines

Assignment	Due date	Weight
Quiz 1	May 28 th	20%
Quiz 2	June 16 th	15%
Reading responses	two by June 4 th and two by June 23 rd	20%
Group presentation and abstract	May 19 to June 23 rd	20%
Final take-home exam	June 27 th NOON	25%
TOTAL		100%