

Communications Studies COMS 591 S02
Senior Seminar in Communication
Winter 2011
Wednesday 14:00 – 16:50

Instructor:	Bart Beaty
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Office Hours:	Wed 12:30 – 14:00

Additional Information

I do not read or respond to email outside of normal working hours. Please allow up to 48 hours for responses to emailed inquiries.

Course Description

With reference to a special topic, this course explores the variety of ways in which communication builds social and cultural values. Students will undertake a major project that will integrate their understanding of communication theory, history and methodology. See individual course outlines for current topics.

Objectives of the Course

The objective of this course is to provide an overview of the key analytic questions arising from the study of communication. To achieve this, students become familiarized with the terminology and methods of cultural analysis within the field of media studies and with the tools that are critical to the study of communication.

Internet and electronic communication device information

As this will be a fast-moving class, the use of laptop computers is strongly recommended.

Textbooks and Readings:

Readings are available through Blackboard

Assignments and Evaluation

Reading Responses (50%): Each week students will be asked to respond to a question about the readings. Responses should take the form of a single sentence. Sentences must

be no longer than fifty words long. Responses will be expected to synthesize the readings and analyze key differences in a succinct manner. Only your ten best responses will be counted towards your final grade. All responses must be uploaded to Blackboard no later than midnight on the Tuesday before the class in which the readings will be discussed. Late responses will not be graded.

Presentation (25%): Each student will be responsible for a presentation on one of the weekly discussion topics. The presentation should be no longer than thirty minutes in length and should demonstrate evidence of significant research into the selected topic. Presenters will be required to select the readings for the entire class for the week that they present. Reading selections must be submitted (as PDF files) to the professor at least one week in advance of the presentation. Readings may be rejected as inappropriate by the professor and will not be considered official until posted on the Blackboard site. Presentations will begin on February 2 and run until the final class.

Final Paper (25%): Each student will submit a final research paper of eight to ten pages in length. These papers can be related to the topic of the presentation, but should be an expansion of the material and findings from the presentation. Final papers are due in class on April 13, 2011.

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: No

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

Essays submitted after the deadline will be penalized by the loss of comments. Presentations and Reading Responses will not be graded if not submitted/presented as scheduled.

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

To be distributed in class.