

**University of Calgary**  
**Department of Communication, Media and Film**

**COMS 591 S01**  
**SENIOR SEMINAR IN COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA: INTERNET POLICY**

**WINTER 2020**

**Wed. Jan. 15 – Wed. Apr. 8 (excluding Wed. Feb. 19)**

**W 11:00-13:45**

**Instructor:** Tamara Shepherd  
**Office:** SS 236  
**Office Phone:** 403-220-6729  
**E-Mail:** tamara.shepherd@ucalgary.ca  
**Web Page:** D2L available through MyUofC portal  
**Office Hours:** Please contact the instructor via email

### **Course Description**

This course considers the topic of internet policy: how the internet is regulated as a public good. Topics covered will include network neutrality, data privacy, digital copyright, and freedom of expression. While the focus of the course will be on Canadian internet policy, we will also cover other international regulatory contexts. Students will undertake a major project that integrates their understanding of communication theory, history and methodology in an analysis of internet policy issues.

### **Objectives of the Course**

By the end of this course, students should be able to

- demonstrate familiarity with internet policy issues
- explain how Canadian and other governments regulate the internet
- suggest policy recommendations based on scholarly research
- work effectively individually and cooperatively in groups, and hand work in on time
- develop presentation style and other research and writing skills

### **Textbooks and Readings**

All readings will be posted to D2L; see reading list below. Students are expected to have all readings completed **prior** to scheduled class times in order to contribute effectively during class discussions and activities.

### **Internet and electronic communication device information**

Laptops are permitted for note taking only. **iPods, cellphones and gaming devices may not be used at all during class.** Please respect the instructor and your fellow students. Improper use of electronic devices will impact students' grades.

## Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Course components	Due
10%	<b>Attendance and participation</b> This is a seminar course, and so a significant portion of course time will be devoted to class discussion. All students are expected to be present, to have done the assigned readings, and to offer considered contributions to class discussion.	Throughout the term
20%	<b>Writing prompts</b> These are in-class writing assignments that take place five times throughout the term. They will last from 15 to 30 minutes. Students will be given a notebook for writing in, which will be collected at the end of each class. Students can choose their best four out of five entries to count for the 20% (each entry = 5%).	Throughout the term
20%	<b>Privacy threat analysis</b> In pairs, students submit a 3-4 page (900-1200 word) report on a particular privacy threat, which will be assigned by the instructor. This report should explain the privacy threat, relate it to Canada in some way, and discuss how regulation could help mitigate the threat. Students will also prepare a 5-minute synopsis of the paper to present to the class on February 5.	February 5
10%	<b>Policy blog post</b> Students will develop one of the writing prompts into a 200-300 word blog post. This will involve contextualizing an internet policy issue by referencing at least one news article and choosing an image to accompany the post that is in the public domain or licensed under Creative Commons.	March 22, on D2L
10%	<b>Paper proposal</b> Students will offer a 200-300 word proposal for their final papers. This will help to clarify students' ideas for the final paper and allow them to provide and receive feedback on their idea from their instructor and peers.	April 1, on D2L
30%	<b>Final paper</b> Students will write a major paper that considers two key internet policy issues, chosen from a list provided by the instructor. The paper will include a primer on each of the two issues that describes the issues and discusses how they are related by situating them in relation to a real-world example. Students will support their primer by integrating a review of scholarly literature with some news sources to demonstrate current debates in internet policy. The paper should conclude with policy proposals.	April 15, on D2L

### Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

**Note:** 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 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.

Please include your name and ID number and your instructor's name on all assignments, and be prepared to provide photo ID to pick up assignments or look at marked final exams in SS 320. 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/legalservices/foip/foip-hia>

**Note:** It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission). Including a version date in your file name may be useful.

### **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.

### **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/](http://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**

Final grades are reported as letter grades. Course components will also be graded as letter grades.

The following chart outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations* *
<b>4.00</b>	Outstanding performance	<b>A+</b>	96 - 100%	98.0%
<b>4.00</b>	Excellent performance	<b>A</b>	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
<b>3.70</b>	Approaching excellent performance	<b>A -</b>	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
<b>3.30</b>	Exceeding good performance	<b>B+</b>	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
<b>3.00</b>	Good performance	<b>B</b>	75 - 79.99%	77.5%

<b>2.70</b>	Approaching good performance	<b>B-</b>	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
<b>2.30</b>	Exceeding satisfactory performance	<b>C+</b>	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
<b>2.00</b>	Satisfactory performance	<b>C</b>	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
<b>1.70</b>	Approaching satisfactory performance	<b>C-</b>	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
<b>1.30</b>	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	<b>D+</b>	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
<b>1.00</b>	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	<b>D</b>	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
<b>0.00</b>	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	<b>F</b>	0 - 49.99%	0%

\* If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades.

\*\* 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](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, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](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](http://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>

### **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](mailto:itsupport@ucalgary.ca) or by calling 403-220.5555.

## Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

1	Jan 15	How is the internet regulated?	
2	Jan 22	Access	Prompt 1
	Readings:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2016-496</i></li> <li>• Howard, Busch &amp; Sheets (2010), "Comparing Digital Divides"</li> </ul>	
3	Jan 29	Network neutrality	Prompt 2
	Readings:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Telecom Decision CRTC 2017-105</i></li> <li>• Barratt &amp; Shade (2007), "Net Neutrality"</li> </ul>	
4	Feb 5	Privacy	Privacy threat analysis due
	Reading:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shade (2008), "Reconsidering the Right to Privacy in Canada"</li> </ul>	
5	Feb 12	Surveillance	Prompt 3
	Readings:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)</i></li> <li>• Lyon (2014), "Surveillance, Snowden, and Big Data"</li> </ul>	
-	Feb 19	NO CLASS: Reading Week	
6	Feb 26	Copyright	Prompt 4
	Readings:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Copyright Modernization Act</i></li> <li>• Menard (2016), "Copyright, Digital Sharing, and the Liberal Order"</li> </ul>	
7	Mar 4	Free culture	Prompt 5
	Reading:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lessig (2004), selections from <i>Free Culture</i></li> </ul>	
8	Mar 11	Freedom of expression	
	Reading:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Klonick (2018), "The New Governors"</li> </ul>	
9	Mar 18	Content regulation: online class	Blog post due March 22
	Reading:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roberts (2016), "Commercial Content Regulation"</li> </ul>	
10	Mar 25	NO CLASS: Independent work period	
11	Apr 1	NO CLASS: Paper proposals due on D2L Discussion board	
12	Apr 8	The Public Interest: online class	
	Reading:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shade (2008), "Public Interest Activism in Canadian ICT Policy"</li> </ul>	

13	Apr 15	NO CLASS: class cancelled	Final paper due
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