

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

**COMS 595 (S01): Honours Seminar**  
**FILM 595 (S01): Honours Seminar**

**FALL 2019: September 5 to Dec. 6 (excluding Nov. 10-16)**

**Lecture: Thursdays 12:30-2:20pm**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. S. Thrift
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<b>Web Page:</b>	D2L available through MyUofC portal
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Tuesdays 11:30 to 1:00 pm or by appointment

### **Course Description**

Individual research and seminar activities (e.g., critiques, presentations, and peer reviews of drafts) to produce a proposal and a paper to be used as the basis for the Honours Thesis.

### **Additional Information**

This course requires student participation in two components, seminar activities and independent research:

1) The 595 seminar provides a collegial and supportive environment for discussion of thesis-related skills and issues. Students will take part in group critiques, individual presentations, and peer review of draft chapters.

2) Students will also write an extended proposal and paper, which will form the basis for the Honours Thesis. These writing projects will be executed under the supervision of a faculty member and co-direction of the honours program coordinator.

Note: Communication and Media Studies 313 or Communication Studies 313 and admission to the Honours Program is required.

The weekly schedule of topics 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 conduct a senior undergraduate-level independent research project, culminating in an expanded honours thesis proposal and complete literature review and/or theory chapter.
- To learn about various research methods, thesis research and writing processes, and thesis structures and styles through peer review, seminar activities, and thesis-related assignments.
- To learn how to effectively present one's research in a written document and oral presentation format.

## Textbooks and Readings

No textbooks are required, however students will be required to read materials for their thesis and to review each other's drafts and presentations.

## 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	Course components	Due Dates
35%	<p><b>Seminar participation</b> Students are expected to prepare for and actively engage in seminar activities. Class meetings are every two weeks in Fall. Please make a standing appointment to meet your supervisor in the intervening weeks.</p> <p>Your participation will be evaluated by the completion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>in-class progress reports</u> (5%)</li><li>• the <u>(written and verbal) participation in draft chapter peer review</u> (10%)</li><li>• the <u>submission of a revised thesis chapter</u> at the end of the course (20%)</li></ul> <p>Due dates listed in seminar schedule below.</p>	As scheduled.
10%	<p><b>Thesis Project Presentation</b> Students will prepare a 10-minute presentation describing their honours thesis projects, based on initial research and conceptualization of the project. These presentations will be evaluated on the suitability of the presentation format, the clarity of the ideas communicated, and the ability of the presenter to field questions about their research.</p>	Sept. 12
15%	<p><b>Previous Thesis Presentation</b> Students will select an Honours Thesis from the Honours website (<a href="https://commfilm.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate/honours-program">https://commfilm.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate/honours-program</a>). Students must read the thesis and prepare a 10-minute presentation. The presentation should identify not only the topic of the project, but also the key components of the thesis format (i.e., its structure) and its relative strengths and weaknesses.</p>	Sept. 26
20%	<p><b>Honours Thesis Proposal &amp; Bibliography</b> (5 pages) Students must prepare an expanded honours thesis proposal (with bibliography &amp; timeline). This proposal may be based on the initial proposal used to gain admittance to the honours program, but must be developed</p>	Oct. 10

	more fully through additional research and more advanced conceptualization of the project. This proposal should demonstrate the feasibility of the honours research by stating the key research question(s), articulating a clear theoretical framework and methodological approach, and producing a clear timeline to completion. More details provided in class.	
5%	<b>Peer Review: Chapter Posting</b> Students need to upload their chapter to D2L for peer review by Nov.4. All submissions should be read prior to meeting as a group on Nov. 7.	Nov. 4
15%	<b>Methods Presentation</b> Students will deliver a brief (10 min) presentation on their data collection methods to date.	Nov. 21

**Registrar-scheduled Final Examination:** No

You do not need to complete all assignments and exams in order to receive a passing grade in the course. However, students must achieve a grade of B- (or higher) in order to take COMS 597 / FILM 597 (unless exceptional circumstances apply).

If you miss a required course component, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.

**Submission of Assignments**

- 595 seminar documents will be submitted via D2L using the following file name format: 595-Draft01-LastnameFirstname.docx

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments and hand in your essays directly to your instructor or tutor. If you are unable to do so, please use the drop box 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.

**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).

Be prepared to provide photo ID to pick up assignments in SS 320. 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 may be penalized with the loss of 5% or a partial letter 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

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.

Final grades are reported as letter grades. In this course, letter grades will be used for all assignments. 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%

\* 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](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>

## **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>

**Note:** If your thesis requires you to conduct any primary research involving human subjects (i.e., surveys, interviews, observations), OR to analyze data which is not publicly accessible without login or special permission from individuals or organizations (i.e., privacy-protected social media, or internal organizational documents), you must first obtain Faculty of Arts Research Ethics Committee approval.

- Do not recruit any participants or contact organizations until you obtain approval. Guidelines and forms are at: <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/resources/ethics> under “Individual Student Research”
- First, complete the Government of Canada Tri-Council Agency online training program at <http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/>
- By the October deadline, submit your ethics application to the Faculty of Arts Research Ethics Committee. Seek the guidance of your thesis supervisor and obtain their approval of your application. Include the Tri-Council certificate of completion in your application.

After submitting the application to the Faculty of Arts, be prepared to submit revisions requested by the committee; the review may take several weeks to process.

## **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 Seminar Topics and Activities

Seminar Date	Activities & Lectures	Work Due
Sept. 12	Welcome & Introductions. Why an honours thesis? Review of thesis timeline. Ethics applications. *Select a previous thesis to read and present for next meeting.	Project presentations (10 min).
Sept. 26	Present on a previous honours thesis. Preparing your expanded honours proposal.	Previous thesis presentations (10 min).
Oct. 10	Discussion of revised honours projects & next steps.	Revised proposal & bibliography due. Ethics applications due (if necessary). Progress report: your revised project.
Oct. 24	Literature reviews and theory sections.	Progress reports.
Nov. 7	Peer review of first draft chapter.	Draft chapter due & circulated to group by <u>Nov. 4</u> . Read all submissions for our peer review session on Nov. 7.
Nov. 21	Methods!	Method presentations (10 min).
Dec. 5	Fall wrap-up: goal setting for winter break.	Submit revised version of first chapter written to D2L.