

Department of Communication and Culture
Communications Studies (COMS) 603 S01
Thursdays 13:00-15:45
Fall 2013

Instructor: Dr. Dawn Johnston
Office/Phone Number: SS 234; 403-220-3199
Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:00-12:00 or by appointment
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Additional Information

This course, by virtue of examining artifacts of media and popular culture, may contain texts/images which are violent, sexually explicit, or challenge your comfort level with relation to gender, sexuality, ethnicity, etc. These texts will be crucial to the course, so please consider your course selection carefully if analysis of these texts will pose a problem for you.

Course Description

This seminar explores theories and perspectives in the study of media production, industries, genres, and reception. The course will draw on important theoretical texts in media studies to aid students in grounding their analysis of their chosen genres/texts in the literature of the field.

Course Objectives

- 1) To provide students with an overview of the field of media studies, its theoretical contexts and modes of analysis.
- 2) To guide students in researching and writing on their particular areas of interest in media studies.
- 3) To allow students to develop skills in evaluating and applying theoretical approaches to their own particular areas of interest.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptops should be used for note-taking only. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices. In such a small class, improper use of electronic communication devices is extraordinarily distracting to both the instructor and other students.

Textbooks/Readings

Durham, Meenakshi Gigi and Kellner, Douglas, Eds. *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords*. 2006 (revised edition) or 2012 (second edition). Blackwell.

Other required readings will be posted or linked on Blackboard at least two weeks prior to discussing them in class. A full schedule of topics and readings will be posted on Blackboard in the first week of classes. Your assigned reading will be approximately 2-3 journal articles or book

chapters per week for this course.

Assignments and Evaluation

Participation	10%	Ongoing
Seminar Presentation on assigned reading	30%	September 26-November 21
Term Paper Proposal	10%	November 7
Research Presentation	5%	November 28 and December 5
Term Paper	45%	December 13

Participation is absolutely central to a graduate seminar. For each student, this will require regular attendance, reading of all the assigned material, and active involvement in discussion of the material with your classmates and the instructor.

For the **seminar presentation** (45-60 minutes), each student will be expected to present on and lead class discussion of one of the assigned readings during the term (selection of readings will take place in the first class). In addition to providing a close reading of the article, the presenter should thoroughly research the reading and be able to present at least some of its scholarly and theoretical context. The use of specific media examples for analysis and illustration is encouraged, but the presentation should be substantially oral. Speaking notes and a complete bibliography should be submitted on the day of your presentation.

For the **term paper** (20 pages, double-spaced), each student will develop a research topic relating to media studies as the focus of their research in the course. The **proposal** (2-3 pages, double-spaced), due on November 7, should articulate a provisional research question, include a brief overview of the topic and a preliminary bibliography of 7-10 scholarly sources. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with the instructor in advance of submitting the proposal in order to ensure the appropriateness of topic and approach. The term paper is due on Friday, December 13 by 4:30pm.

The **research presentations** will take place over the last two classes of the semester. Each student will have 15-20 minutes to present orally on their term paper research and 10-15 minutes to answer questions on the topic from the rest of the class.

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Note: Please hand in your papers directly to your 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's- scheduled exam: No

Policy for late assignments: Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (ie: A- to B+) for each day late. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course.

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. You will be required to provide a piece of

picture identification in order to pick up any assignments 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 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 for all Graduate courses:

Letter Grade	Grading Scale	Grade Point Value (see U of C Calendar: Academic Standing)
A+	96-100	4
A	90-95.99	4
A -	85-89.99	3.7
B+	80-84.99	3.3
B	75-79.99	3
B-	70-74.99	2.7
C+	65-69.99	2.3
C	60-64.99	2
C-	55-59.99	1.7
D+	53-54.99	1.3
D	50-52.99	1
F	0-49	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. 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 Writing Support Services (3rd Floor Taylor Family Digital Library, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) 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 Graduate 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 Student Accessibility Services (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

www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/su

Graduate Students' Association

For details on the Graduate Students' Association, please see

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/GSA/>

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman, please see

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/GSA/services/ombudsperson.html>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly Points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and assembly points, please 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 (ie. surveys, interviews, observation) as a 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:

Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB)

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/ethics/cfreb>

Reading List

To be posted on Blackboard in the first week of classes

Schedule of Lectures

To be posted on Blackboard in the first week of classes