

Science, Technology and Society (STAS) 341 - Lecture 01
New Media, Technology and Society
Fall 2011

Tuesday, 12:30-13:45 and Thursday, 12:30-13:45

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Office Hours: Thursday, 15:00 – 17:00 or by appointment

Additional Information

This is a reading and writing intensive course.

Calendar Description:

A study of the implications of information technology for political, social and economic organization, individual psychology, and concepts of knowledge. Historical, ethical and legal implications will be discussed.

Course Description:

In this course, we will focus on the social, political and cultural context of the internet. From a critical standpoint, we will investigate what it means to live in an 'information society'. We will try to expand and critically engage with our knowledge of the social context of ICTs, by using the theoretical and empirical cases provided in the textbook and discussed in class. Topics to be examined include: history of the internet; political processes and new media; identity and gender on the internet; social networks and virtual communities; economic implications of media convergence; ICTs and the concentration of ownership; digitization and copyright; social networks and postindustrial economies.

You will be expected to do the required readings, participate in class discussions, and engage in group and independent research. Classes will combine lecture with student presentation and group work.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the course, you will:

- be familiar with a number of theories about ICTs;
- be familiar with the history and development of ICTs in their social context;
- be able to think critically about the design, marketing, consumption and use of ICTs;
- develop some expertise on how ICTs are being conceptualized, designed and used in a particular field (e.g. health, personal identity, surveillance etc.).

Internet and electronic communication device information

All cell phones should be silenced for the entire duration of the class. Laptops and iPads can only be used for taking notes. iPods, cell phones and gaming devices should be off during class. Improper use of electronic devices will impact your participation grade.

Textbooks and Readings:

New Media. An Introduction, Canadian Edition.

Terry Flew and Richard Smith

Oxford University Press, 2011

Please note that this is a new edition of the textbook. If you have already purchased an older edition, you are responsible for identifying and covering the missing or modified sections.

Recommended website:

STAS 341 Student Website available at <http://wcmprod2.ucalgary.ca/stas341/>

(Note: you do not need to login).

Assignments and Evaluation:

You will be graded on five components:

- Class participation (10%)
- Midterm Exam (25%) - *Thursday, October 20, 2011*
- Final Exam (25%) - *Registrar Scheduled*
- Group presentation (25%) - *Tuesdays, October 4 to November 29, 2011*
 - Proposal (5%) - *September 27 & September 29, 2011*
 - Presentation (20%)
- Newspaper article analysis (15%) - *December 6, 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: YES.

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.

Description of assignments

1. Class participation (10%)

You are expected to be present for all classes, take detailed notes and actively participate in class discussions. Opportunities to do small assignments and present them in class

(such as summarizing the definition of certain concepts, reviewing the abstracts of a few academic articles, etc.), as well as small in-class or online activities will count towards your participation mark.

2. Midterm Exam (25%) - Thursday, October 20, 2011

This exam will cover all lecture material and assigned readings discussed until the exam date. The exam will last for the entire duration of the class. It will consist of three sections: factual questions, synthesizing questions and an essay. This assignment will test both your knowledge of the readings and class lectures, and your ability to synthesize the material and to express your ideas in a coherent form.

3. Final Exam (25%) - Registrar Scheduled

This exam will cover all lecture material and assigned readings from October 20, 2011 until the end of the course. The exam will last for two hours. It will consist of three sections: factual questions, synthesizing questions and an essay. This assignment will test both your knowledge of the readings and class lectures, and your ability to synthesize the material and to express your ideas in a coherent form.

4. Group Presentation (25%) - Proposal (5%) due September 27 & 29, 2011; Presentation (20%), Tuesdays, October 4 to November 29, 2011

This assignment will give you a chance to explore in-depth some of the issues discussed in the readings or in the class lectures. Groups of maximum 4 people will choose from a list of areas of research (e.g. identity online) provided by the instructor, and identify a specific topic for the presentation. Ideally, you will choose a topic which addresses your chosen area in the context of Calgary (e.g. online identity-building in the context of Calgary-specific forums). The presentation will use a concept or idea presented in the reading to discuss your specific topic.

This assignment tests 1). your understanding of the theory used for the analysis; 2). your ability to provide a context for that theory (based on additional reading and research); 3). your ability to do sound research on your chosen topic (informed by additional reading and research); 4) your ability to present the results of your research to an audience. Formal presentation skills as well as research skills will be evaluated.

You will work in small groups to create a proposal and a presentation. You will be graded as a group, but each member must keep track of what they have contributed to this project. Each member is expected to equally contribute to the research process (your contribution cannot be merely presenting). Group members will have the opportunity to evaluate each other. Should these peer-evaluations indicate any major problems within the group, each member will be graded individually.

Group project proposal (5%) - further instructions will be provided in class. You will receive feedback from the instructor before you start working on the presentation. Length: 1- 2 pages, double spaced, TNR 12.

Presentation (20%) - Each presentation should last for 15 to 20 minutes, followed by a 10 minutes Q&A session.

5. Newspaper article analysis (15%) - *December 6, 2011.*

This assignment will give you the opportunity to: 1). express your opinions on a topic related to political processes and new media in Calgary; 2). critically engage with a newspaper article. Details of this assignment will be provided in class.

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.

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

A detailed schedule of lectures and readings will be provided during the first day of class.