

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

COMS 367 (L01): Visual Communication and Culture
FALL 2019: September 5 to Dec. 6 (excluding Nov. 10-16)
Lecture: Tuesdays and Thursdays 09:30 to 10:45

Instructor:	Maria Victoria Guglietti
Office:	SS220
Office Phone:	(403)- 220-3381
Email:	mvguglie@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours:	Fridays 11:00 to 2:00 pm or by appointment

Course Description

This course introduces students to the critical study of images in society. Topics will include the relationship between images and culture, the role images play in the formation of identity, the status of images as evidence, the institutionalization of images to discipline subjects and the construction of audiences through visual culture. The class will introduce students to Canadian scholarly studies from a wide array of disciplines.

Additional Information

The weekly schedule of topics and readings 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

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

- think critically about images
- analyze images from multiple theoretical perspectives
- engage with multidisciplinary scholarly work in the area of visual culture

Textbooks and Readings

Finn, J. (2012). *Visual communication and culture. Images in action*. Don Mills, Canada.: Oxford.

Policy on the use of Electronic Communication Devices

Laptops, tablets or smartphones are required in class for the completion of in-class discussion questionnaires and group activities. Students who have no access to an electronic communication device should arrange with classmates the sharing of a device during these assignments.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed components	Due
25%	Midterm- individual assignment- closed book- 75 minutes The midterm will consist in an analysis of a case study in light of the theories studied in class from Week 1 to Week 7 (included). Further instructions will be posted on D2L.	Oct. 22
10%	Case study presentations- 10 minutes each- all group members should present. In groups of four, students will plan and deliver an oral presentation that will consist in the visual analysis of visual artifact (image, audiovisual, multimedia, performance, etc.). The presentation will introduce the class to the case study and introduce at least three connections to key concepts and theories studied in class. Each group is responsible to bring at least two questions for in-class discussion. The presentations will receive a group mark. Further instructions will be posted on D2L.	TBD by groups during the first week of class. Dates available: Thursdays from Sep. 19 until Dec. 5 (included)
30%	In-class group activities: In groups of four, students will complete five open book assignments in class; each will require the theoretical analysis of a case study. Students will have two sessions of approx. 40 minutes to complete each group activity (the sessions will take place during time allocated in two consecutive Thursday lectures- see schedule below). Group activities are questionnaires that require the application of theories studied in class. Each group assignment is 6%.	Sep. 19 Oct. 3 Oct. 17 Nov. 7 Dec. 5 One submission per group by midnight the day it is due. D2L dropbox Students need to be present in class to complete the assignment.
10%	Participation- This grade will be assessed based on each student's documented participation in at least ten in-class reading discussions. Reading discussions will take place every Tuesday, and will require students to form groups of max. six members to discuss and answer a question assigned by the instructor in connection with the mandatory reading due that day. Students will access the question via D2L, and sign in their names next to the question assigned as proof of participation.	ongoing
25%	Final take-home exam- individual assignment, cumulative, 3-4 pages This final exam will be an evaluation of a cultural artifact or phenomenon through the systematic application of the theories studied in class. Unlike a typical discussion paper, students will articulate their analysis as a series of answers to a list of questions provided by the instructor. The final exam will be posted on D2L on Dec. 3	Dec. 10 @ 9:30AM D2L dropbox

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

If your class is held in the evening, the Registrar's Office will attempt to schedule the final exam during the evening; however, there is no guarantee that the exam will NOT be scheduled during the day.

Note: You do not have to complete all the assignments and exams in order to receive a passing grade in this course.

Submission of Assignments

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments and upload them to the D2L dropbox assigned.

Note: It is your responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that you submit the proper version.

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 will receive a 0.

***The Day of Grace:** One day of grace is available to all students to cover unforeseen problems that prevent them from meeting a deadline such as computer crashes, vehicle breakdowns, lack of printer ink or money, unexpected family obligations, etc. Students may use this day ONLY ONCE during the semester. Students using this day of grace must upload the assignment by 4:30 pm the next calendar day to avoid a late penalty, and write "grace" on their subject line. It should be noted that assignments handed in this manner may be returned 1-2 classes later than those submitted on the due date

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/. 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.

In this course, final grades are reported as letter grades. All other assignments (exams, group presentations and group activities) will receive a percentage grade.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations*
4.00	Outstanding performance	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent performance	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70	Approaching excellent performance	A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30	Exceeding good performance	B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good performance	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70	Approaching good performance	B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance	C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory performance	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	F	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

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, please consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, 3rd 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

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) 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>

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 or by calling 403-220.5555.

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

	Tuesdays 9:30- 10:45 SS113	Thursdays 9:30- 10:45 SS113
Week 1 Sep. 5		Introduction to class
Week 2 Sep. 10 & 12	Topic: Visual knowledge Reading: Arnheim, Vision in Education, pp. 16-29.	Assignment: Group activity 1
Week 3 Sep. 17 & 19	Topic: Images and Social Life Reading: Sontag, In Plato's Cave, pp. 30-39	Assignment: Group presentation Group activity 1 due
Week 4 Sep. 24 & 26	Topic: Identity and the Visual Reading: Wagman, The Suspicious and the Self-Promotional, pp. 145-154	Assignment: Group presentation Group activity 2
Week 5 Oct. 1 & 3	Topic: Identity and the Visual Reading: Roth, Flesh in Wax: Demystifying the Skin Colors of the Common Crayon. pp. 73-85.	Assignment: Group presentation Group activity 2 due
Week 6 Oct. 8 & 10	Topic: Images as Evidence Reading: Goodwin, Professional Vision, pp. 91-117.	Assignment: Group presentation Group activity 3
Week 7 Oct. 15 & 17	Topic: Images as Evidence Reading: Schwartz, To Tell the Truth: Codes of Objectivity in Photojournalism, pp. 222-232.	Assignment: Group presentation Group activity 3 due
Week 8 Oct. 22 & 24	Assignment: Midterm	Assignment: Group presentations
Week 9 Oct. 29 & 31	Topic: The institutionalized image Reading: Whitelaw 'Whiffs of Balsam, Pine and Spruce", pp. 281-291	Assignment: Group presentation Group activity 4
Week 10 Nov. 5 & 7	Topic: The institutionalized Image Reading: Payne, Through a Canadian Lens, pp. 310-325	Assignment: Group presentation Group activity 4 due
Week 11 Nov. 12 & 14	Reading Break	
Week 12 Nov. 19 & 21	Topic: The institutionalized image Reading: Kinahan, Votes for Stoves, pp. 326-339	Assignment: Group presentations
Week 13	Topic: Images and audiences	Assignment: Group

Nov. 26 & 28	Reading: Spigel, Television in the Family Circle, pp. 354-385	presentation Group activity 5
Week 14 Dec. 3 & 5	Topic: Images and audiences Reading: Botterill & Kline, From Counting Calories to Fun Food, pp. 397-408	Assignment: Group presentation Group activity 5 due