

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

COMS 367 (L01): Visual Communication and Culture

SPRING 2021: May 6- June 17 (excluding May 24)

Lecture: Tuesdays and Thursdays 14:30- 15:45 via Zoom

Instructor:	Maria Victoria Guglietti
Email:	mvguglie@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours:	By appointment via email or Zoom

Course Description

This course introduces students to the critical study of images in society. Topics will include the relationship between images and culture, the centrality of vision in Western thought, the role images play in the formation of identity, the rise of a society of spectacle and a disciplinary society, visual methods and visual literacy, and the construction of audiences through visual technologies.

Additional Information

Note that this class will be structured to accommodate remote teaching and learning. The weekly organization is as follows:

- Narrated powerpoint presentations posted on D2L on Tuesdays and Thursdays before 1PM.
- **Zoom video conferences on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 14:30 to 15:45.** During conferences the instructor will review the readings, introduce examples and answer questions from students.
- All remaining communication will be made available via D2L in written or audiovisual form.

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 and with images
- analyze images from multiple theoretical perspectives
- reflect on and evaluate multidisciplinary scholarly work in the area of visual culture

Textbooks and Readings

Arnheim, R. (1983). Perceiving, thinking, forming. *Art Education: Art and the Mind*, 36(2), 9-11. https://ucalgary-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1vibdgm/TN_informaworld_s10_1080_00043125_1983_11653390

- Cartwright, L. (1995). An etiology of the neurological gaze. In *Screening the body: Tracing medicine's visual culture*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=310310&ppg=66>
- Codeluppi, V. (2017). The integrated spectacle: Towards aesthetic capitalism. In M. Briziarelli & E. Armano (Eds.), *The spectacle 2.0: Reading Debord in the context of digital capitalism* (pp. 51-66). University of Westminster Press. www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv5vdd8n.5
- Crary, J. (1988). Techniques of the observer. *October*, 45, 3-35. https://ucalgary-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1vibdgm/TN_proquest1300018712
- Dittmer, J., & Larsen, S. (2007). Captain Canuck, audience response, and the project of Canadian nationalism. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 8(5), 735-753. https://ucalgary-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1vibdgm/TN_informaworld_s10_1080_14649360701633311
- Foster, H. (1991). *Armor Fou*. *October*, 56, 65-97. doi:10.2307/778724 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/778724>
- Jay, M. (1993). The disenchantment of the eye: Bataille and the surrealists. In *Downcast eyes: The denigration of vision in twentieth-century French thought*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=223794&ppg=129>
- Jenks, C. (1995). The centrality of the eye in Western culture. An introduction. In C. Jenks (Ed.). *Visual culture* (pp. 1-16-up to the heading "Visualizing the visual"). <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=166771&ppg=14>
- Mitchell, W.J.T. (2007). Visual literacy or literary visualcy? In J. Elkins (Ed.). *Visual literacy*, (pp. 11-22). <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=446781&ppg=20>
- Mirzoeff, N. (2011). Introduction. In *The right to look: A counterhistory of visibility*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=1172318&ppg=22>
- Rose, G. (1996). Teaching visualised geographies: Towards a methodology for the interpretation of visual materials. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 20(3), 281-294. https://ucalgary-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1vibdgm/TN_informaworld_s10_1080_03098269608709373
- Sontag, S. (2004). Regarding the torture of others. *New York Times Magazine*, 6.24. https://ucalgary-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1vibdgm/TN_proquest215471234

Policy on the use of Electronic Communication Devices

Laptops, tablets or smartphones are required for the completion of course work.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed components	Due
25%	<p>Midterm- individual assignment- take-home approx. 3-5 pages long. The midterm will consist of an analysis of a case study in light of the theories studied in class from Week 1 to Week 4 (inclusive). Further instructions will be posted on D2L May 19.</p>	June 2 11:59PM Dropbox
24%	<p>Visual Journal- individual Students will complete a reflective visual journal assignment throughout the term. To complete the journal students will address 8 of 12 questions provided by the instructor for each reading discussed in class. The questions promote the written and visual reflection of students, who will be not just writing their answers but producing an image (i.e. the alteration and repurposing of a publicly available image or the production of an original image) that captures their answer to the question they are addressing. This production will not be evaluated in technical or formal terms but for depth of reflection and clear engagement with the readings. A more detailed rubric will be provided in D2L.</p>	<p>First part (4 entries- 12%) due on May 20 by 11:59PM (dropbox)</p> <p>Second part (4 entries- 12%) due on June 15 by 11:59PM (dropbox)</p>
24%	<p>In-class group activities: In groups of four, students will remotely collaborate to complete three open book assignments, each will require the theoretical analysis of a case study. Instructions will be posted a week before the deadline. Students will have the chance to form groups online the first week of class. Each group assignment is 8%.</p> <p>Further instructions will be posted on D2L.</p>	<p>Due: May 12 May 26 June 9</p> <p>One submission per group by 11:59 PM D2L dropbox</p>
27%	<p>Final take-home exam- individual assignment, cumulative, 3-4 pages The first part will require students to research and write a critical analysis of an image. (approx. 1000 words). A second part will consist in a series of 4-6 short answer questions about the mandatory readings discussed in class. Further instructions will be posted on D2L on June 2nd.</p>	June 18 th by 11:59PM D2L dropbox

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

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 14:30 – 15:45 via Zoom	Thursdays 14:30 – 15:45 via Zoom
Week 1 May 6		Topic: The constructed nature of seeing Reading: Berger, Ways of seeing https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0pDE4VX_9Kk
Week 2 May 11 & 13	Topic: Visual Literacy Reading: Arnheim, Perceiving, Thinking, Forming, pp. 9-11; W.J.T. Mitchell, Visual literacy or literary visualcy? pp. 11-22 Assignment: Group activity 1 due May 12	Topic: Interrogating images Reading: Rose, Teaching visualized geographies, pp. 281-294.
Week 3 May 18 & 20	Topic: Beyond the Image: Affect Reading: Foster, Armor Four, pp. 65-97	Topic: Beyond the Image: Suffering Reading: Sontag, Regarding the torture of others, pp. 6-24. Assignment: Visual journal (first part)
Week 4 May 25 & 27	Topic: Vision and modernity Reading: Jenks, The centrality of the eye in Western culture, pp. 1-16. Assignment: Group activity 2 due May 26	Topic: Anti-ocularcentrism Reading: Jay, The disenchantment of the eye, pp. 129-158
Week 5 June 1 & 3	Topic: Spectacle Reading: Codeluppi, The integrated spectacle, pp. 51-66. Assignment: Take-home midterm	Topic: Discipline Reading: Cartwright, An etiology of the neurological gaze, pp. 47-80
Week 6 June 8 & 10	Topic: The observer Reading: Crary, Techniques of the observer, pp. 3-35. Assignment: Group activity 3 due June 9	Topic: National identity Reading: Dittmer & Larsen (2007). Captain Canuck, audience response, and the project of Canadian nationalism
Week 7 June 15 & 17	Topic: Countervisuality Reading: Mirzoeff, Introduction to the right to look, pp. 1-34. Assignment: Visual journal (second part)	NO CLASS- TIME DEDICATED TO FINAL EXAM Final take-home due June 18th @ 11:59PM via dropbox