

**Communication Studies (COMS) 381- Lecture 60**  
**Communications History**  
**Summer 2012**  
**MW 15:00- 16:50 Laboratory: MW 17- 17:50**

**Instructor:** Maria Victoria Guglietti  
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**Office Hours:** Mondays and Wednesdays after 17:50 or by appointment

**Course Description**

This course studies major theoretical perspectives in the study of communication technologies as well as developments in communication technologies from prehistory to the mobile society. Topics will include constructivist and technological deterministic views of technology, the “democratic rationalization” of communication technology, communication before writing, the middle ages and the monopoly of communication and knowledge, the printing press and early literacy, the advent of a consumer society, the development of wireless technologies, the phonograph, film and radio and the development of a star system and new ways of programming leisure, the emergence and evolution of television and the advent of a mobile network society.

**Objectives of the Course**

- .to expose students to different theoretical approaches to the study of communication technologies and their effects on how technology is understood and studied.
- .to develop a critical awareness to the interrelation between society, culture, power and technological development.
- .to encourage students’ critical analysis of academic sources and oral skills.

**Internet and electronic communication device information**

Laptops are permitted in class as long as they are used EXCLUSIVELY for note taking. Cell phones should be turned off during class.

## **Textbooks and Readings:**

David Crowley and Paul Heyer, *Communication in History: Technology, Culture, Society*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Pearson.

Additional MANDATORY reserved readings found in the library:

Wiebe E. Bijker and John Law. "General Introduction." In *Shaping Technology/Building Society: Studies in Sociotechnical Change*, pp. 1-14. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1992.

David Hogarth. "Public Service Broadcasting as a Modern Project: A Case Study of Early Public-Affairs Television in Canada." In *Communication History in Canada*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., edited by Daniel J. Robinson, pp. 228-237. Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2009.

## **Assignments and Evaluation**

### **Reflection of difficulty/ Assessment of engagement with class content 5%**

Students will be asked to write a 500 word reflection piece that will focus on their experience of reading any of the mandatory readings assigned for the class. In their piece students will identify obstacles and ambiguities that affected their understanding of the reading. This reflection is meant to assess students' engagement with the theoretical material. Reflection pieces are due anytime BEFORE the reading that the student chooses to focus on is discussed in class (please, check the schedule of readings and assignments below for a list of mandatory readings and deadlines). No reflections will be accepted after August 13<sup>th</sup>. A rubric will be posted on blackboard at the beginning of the term.

### **Seminars 45%**

Seminars are nine 30 minute in-class group activities based on different mandatory readings. A typical seminar introduces two questions that require students to explain aspects of a mandatory reading and connect readings to contemporary communication contexts. Seminars are completed and handed in during the lecture. To complete the seminars students MUST attend class and do the readings assigned. Students that anticipate that they will be absent MUST inform the instructor AT LEAST 24 hours before class and MUST complete the assignment by 3 PM the day it is due. Absences due to illness can only be justified with a doctor's note. Check the schedule of readings and assignments below for more information about seminars' deadlines.

### **Midterm 25%**

The exam will introduce a combination of short and long analytical questions.

### **Final take-home exam 25%**

Students will complete a final reflection questionnaire that will require active critical engagement with the topics discussed throughout the semester. The questionnaire will be

distributed on August 13th at the end of class and students will submit their answers electronically on August 16<sup>th</sup> by 6 PM.

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: No**

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.

### **Policy for Late Assignments**

Assignments submitted after the deadline will 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: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

### **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 (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Taylor Digital Family 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 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/cfreh>

### **Schedule of Lectures and Readings**

	<b>Monday</b> Room ST 130 15:00 to 17:50	<b>Wednesday</b> Room ST 130 15:00 to 17:50
<b>Week 1</b> July 4		<b>Topic:</b> Introduction to course. Theoretical perspectives: constructivism and technological determinism <b>Reading:</b> Bijker and Law (reserved readings), Chapter 2 (Innis) <sup>1</sup>
<b>Week 2</b> July 9, 11	<b>Topic:</b> Communication before writing, the alphabet, early writing <b>Reading:</b> Chapters 1, 4 and 5 <b>Assignment:</b> seminar/ reflection	<b>Topic:</b> Illuminated manuscripts, block printing, invention of the printing press. <b>Readings:</b> Chapters 8, 9 & 10 <b>Assignment:</b> seminar/ reflection
<b>Week 3</b> July 16, 18	<b>Topic:</b> Reformation and literacy, early press. Telegraphy. <b>Readings:</b> Chapter 12, 13 and 17 <b>Assignment:</b> seminar/ reflection	<b>Topic:</b> Consumer culture, telephony and the phonograph. <b>Readings:</b> Chapters 18, 16 and 21 <b>Assignment:</b> seminar/ reflection
<b>Week 4</b> July 23, 25	<b>MIDTERM</b> (15 - 16:20)  16:30 to 17:50 <b>Topic:</b> The new journalism and photojournalism <b>Readings:</b> Chapters 15 and 19 <b>Assignment:</b> reflection	<b>Topic:</b> Film and the star system <b>Readings:</b> Chapters 22 and 24 <b>Assignment:</b> seminar/ reflection
<b>Week 5</b> July 30, Aug. 1	<b>Topic:</b> Wireless telegraphy, radio <b>Readings:</b> Chapters 25, 26 and 27. <b>Assignment:</b> seminar/ reflection	<b>Civic Holiday- No classes</b>
<b>Week 6</b> Aug. 6, 8	<b>Topic:</b> Television <b>Readings:</b> Chapters 30 and 31. <b>Assignment:</b> seminar/ reflection	<b>Topic:</b> Television formats and audiences <b>Readings:</b> Chapters 36 and Hogarth (reserves). <b>Assignment:</b> seminar/ reflection
<b>Week 7</b> Aug. 13, 15	<b>Topic:</b> The Internet and the mobile society <b>Readings:</b> Chapters 37, 39 and 41. <b>Assignment:</b> seminar/ reflection <b>Distribution of take-home final reflection questionnaire</b>	<b>Class cancelled. Time dedicated to final exam writing.</b>

### Deadlines

Assignment	Due Date	Weight
Seminar: early writing	July 9	5%
Seminar: middle ages technologies	July 11	5 %
Seminar: early "mass" media	July 16	5 %
Seminar: the rise of consumer culture	July 18	5 %
Seminar: the rise of culture industries	July 25	5 %
Seminar: early wireless media	July 30	5 %
Seminar: the early days of TV	Aug. 6	5 %
Seminar: the impact of TV	Aug. 8	5 %
Seminar: contemporary wireless media	Aug. 13	5 %
Midterm	July 23	25 %
Reflection of difficulty	By Aug. 13	5%
Final take-home	Aug. 16	25 %

<sup>1</sup> Chapter numbers are all from C&H's 6<sup>th</sup> edition.