University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

COMS 401.68 (L03): Special Topics in Communication & Media Studies

Disability Media Studies

WINTER 2021: January 11 to April 15 (excluding Feb. 14 to 20 & April 2 & 5)

**Monday (09:30 – 10:45) classes will be synchronous Zoom session
including lecture, discussion and activities for part or all of class time.
Wednesday classes will be asynchronous.**

IMPORTANT NOTE ON COURSE DELIVERY FOR WINTER 2021

This Winter 2021 course will be offered entirely online as part of the University's plan to ensure everyone's safety during the Covid-19 pandemic. Please read the outline carefully to see which course components will be offered synchronously (where you are expected to participate at the usual scheduled course time) and which components will be offered asynchronously (to be completed on your own time). Synchronous course sessions will normally be hosted on Zoom, a video-conferencing program. To access scheduled Zoom course sessions, go to D2L, click on the COMMUNICATION tab, and select Zoom 5 or 10 minutes before class is scheduled to begin.

If you will not be able to participate in scheduled synchronous class sessions owing to time differences, then you should arrange to take this course when it is offered in person in the future.

Note that the time indicated on course outlines for all timed quizzes and exams in CMCL, COMS, and FILM courses includes 50% extra time to allow for technical difficulties.

Instructor:	Dr. Monique Solomon
Email:	solomonm@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	Tuesdays 11am-1pm, or by appointment

Course Description
Special topics courses involve the critical study of contemporary topics or issues related to communications media, technology, culture, or discourse. Past topics include artificial intelligence, Covid-19 and pandemics, video activism, intellectual property, and surveillance. This course introduces students to historic and contemporary issues in disability media studies. The course critically explores how experiences of and ideas about disability are informed, constructed, shaped, and performed in media, popular culture, and social contexts.

Additional Information
Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies described in this outline. Special topics courses are inquiry-based and reading and writing intensive. Students should be prepared to take part in class discussion and activities. The schedule of course topics and readings can be found on D2L.

Objectives of the Course
By the end of this course, students should be able to:
- describe historic and contemporary developments in disability media studies
- recognize and describe the discursive production of disability and its consequences

- critically discuss scholarly and popular media content about disability experiences
- articulate and analyze discourse and narratives of disability as presented in media
- identify and critique specific issues in social and systemic injustice, inequality, discrimination, and stigma experienced by persons with disabilities

Textbooks and Readings
A list of required readings will be posted on D2L.

Email Policy
- Include **COMS 401** in the subject line of email sent to your professor.
  Include your name in the body of the email *as it appears* in your university registration.
- **Email will usually be answered M-F between 10 am – 5 pm**. You can generally expect an answer within 48 hours. Email will not be answered on Sundays.
- **Email is best used for short specific inquiries**. If you have detailed questions about the course material or assignments make an appointment during office hours.
- Regularly check your @ucalgary.ca email. Check that it is not in spam or junk folders.
- Emails to your professor and fellow students must be courteous and professional.

Learning Technologies and Requirements
& Policy on the Use of Electronic Communication Devices

This is an online course. In order to complete online (or blended) courses, University of Calgary students are required to have reliable access to the following technology:
- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security and malware updates, with current antivirus software enabled;

- Broadband internet connection, and a current and updated web browser;

- A webcam (built-in or external);

- A microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone.

Most current laptops will have a built-in webcam, speaker and microphone. If you need access to other software programs to complete assignments, your instructor will provide relevant information and links.

If you have technical difficulties, contact the university's IT department. For more information, see https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/student-campus-services-information-technologies-it.html

Instructor Intellectual Copyright
Instructors may arrange to record synchronous zoom class sessions for lesson capture; however, students are NOT to share recordings with others. All 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 explicit consent of the instructor.

Posting course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites is prohibited. Sharing extracts of 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 questions about sharing materials with classmates.

Students are not permitted to audio or video-record lectures and discussions or take pictures/screen shots during this class. All statements and interactions during class time are a matter of group privacy and cannot be publicized.

Assignments and Evaluation *Assignments will be discussed in class and instructions will be posted on D2L.* *Use APA style for all in-text citations, quotations, and referencing.*
Discussion/Reading Responses (20%) **Due dates (noon): January 20, 27, February 3, 10, March 17, 24, 31.** Students answer/address question(s) about the readings and/or class discussion (ranging between 350- and 750- words max.). Each Wednesday question(s) will be provided with instructions on D2L. Responses are due the following Wednesday by noon. Successful responses must demonstrate engagement in class and familiarity with readings and course material. Evaluation will be based upon quality of content and writing. Students may miss one response at any time in the term without penalty. Details discussed in class and posted on D2L.
Pairs Presentation (20%). Scheduled January 27 – April 14 In self-formed pairs, students present (7-9 minutes) on weekly topic and assigned reading(s). Submit slides and script by noon the day before presenting.
Mid-Term Paper (25%) Due March 03 (11:59 pm) Students prepare an 1800-word paper analyzing an historically and/or socially significant development representing disability experience. Topics discussed in class.
Final Paper (35%) Due April 14 (11:59 pm) Students prepare a 2500-word paper analyzing discourse of a specific disability issue and include media and social media examples. Topics discussed in class.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Submission of Assignments

Students must complete all assignments or a course grade of 'F' may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. If you miss a component contact your instructor as soon as possible.

Follow all assignment instructions carefully. All assignments are due via upload to D2L (.doc, .docx, or .pdf) on the due date stated on the assignment, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. Include your name and ID number on all assignments AND include your surname in the file name of assignments you upload to D2L. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that you submit the correct version.
Do not email your assignments unless directed to by your professor.

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***. Instructors may use audio or video recording for lesson capture, assessment of student learning, and self-assessment of teaching practices.

Policy for Late Assignments
Assignments submitted after due dates (deadline) may be penalized with the loss of a partial letter grade (e.g.: A- to B+, B to B-) for each day late.

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, letter grades will be used for evaluating mid-term and final papers, discussion/reading responses, and presentation.

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 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://success.ucalgary.ca/home.htm

Copyright Legislation
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
The weekly schedule of topics, readings and detailed assignment instructions will be available on D2L.