

Department of Communication and Culture
CMCL 627
Media and Politics
Fall 2013
T 13:00-15:45

Instructor: Dr. Michael Keren
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Course Description

In this seminar we shall survey ideas by political thinkers who dealt with the interaction between media of communication and politics from ancient times to the present. The seminar consists of weekly discussions of selected writings and of student presentations of their seminar paper, due on the last day of the seminar.

Course Objectives

The seminar is devoted to in-depth understanding of the role of communication media in forming, reforming and destroying political systems.

Internet and electronic communication device information

The use of electronic communication devices is not allowed. Laptops can be used for note taking only.

Assignments and Evaluation

For the paper (about 20 pages) every student will choose a political regime, movement, leader or event – historical or contemporary – and analyze the role played by one medium (newspaper, novel, pamphlet, radio, TV, theatre, cinema, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, mobile phone, etc.) or a combination of several media in its origin, its development and in its aftermath. The paper will be presented in class.

Composition of the Grade:

Informed participation (i.e. demonstrating profound reading of the assigned material in class discussions) 20%.

Presentations (i.e., showing an ability to orally communicate the main points in the paper in clear, serious, and creative fashion) 20%

Seminar paper to be written in accordance with scholarly rules to be discussed in class, including references and bibliography 60%.

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment. Note: Please hand in your papers directly to your instructor at the beginning of the last session of the seminar.

Registrar's- scheduled exam: No

Policy for late assignments: In case of emergency, please contact the instructor. Otherwise, please submit the assignment on time. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course.

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. You will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up any assignments or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments 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 for all Graduate courses:

Letter Grade	Grading Scale	Grade Point Value (see U of C Calendar: Academic Standing)
A+	96-100	4
A	90-95.99	4
A -	85-89.99	3.7
B+	80-84.99	3.3
B	75-79.99	3
B-	70-74.99	2.7
C+	65-69.99	2.3
C	60-64.99	2
C-	55-59.99	1.7
D+	53-54.99	1.3
D	50-52.99	1
F	0-49	0

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 Writing Support Services (3rd Floor Taylor Family Digital 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 Graduate 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 Student Accessibility Services (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

www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/su

Graduate Students' Association

For details on the Graduate Students' Association, please see

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/GSA/>

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman, please see

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/GSA/services/ombudsperson.html>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly Points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and assembly points, please 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 (ie. surveys, interviews, observation) as a 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:

Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB)

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/ethics/cfreb>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

September 10. Introduction

September 17. Media and Truth

Plato, *Apology* <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/apology.html>

September 24. Media and Freedom

J. S. Mill, *On Liberty* http://www.serendipity.li/jsmill/on_lib.html

October 1. Media and Totalitarianism

Orwell, 1984

<http://www.george-orwell.org/1984>

October 8. Media and Capitalism

Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man*: Introduction, chapter 1, Chapter 4.
<http://www.marcuse.org/herbert/pubs/64onedim/odm1.html>

October 15. Media and Democracy

Vincent Price, "Citizens Deliberating Online: Theory and Some Evidence."

http://www.hks.harvard.edu/netgov/files/talks/docs/11_13_06_seminar_Price_citizens-delib_online.pdf

Michael Keren, "Blogging and Mass Politics." *Biography* 33/1 (Winter 2010): 110-126.

October 22. Media and Protest

Gadi Wolsfeld et. al., "Social Media and the Arab Spring; Politics Comes First." *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 18/2 (April 2013): 115-137.

Nezzar Alsayyad, "The Virtual Square." *Harvard International Review*, Summer 2012.

<http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=d13db8e1-8752-417d-bcbf-a774211bf05d%40sessionmgr15&vid=15&hid=10>

October 29. Media and Existentialism

Michael Keren, "Absurdity and Revolt in Cormac McCarthy's 'The Road'" *Phaenex: Journal of Existential and Phenomenological Theory and Culture*. 7 (Spring/Summer 2012): 221-243.

<http://www.phaenex.uwindsor.ca/ojs/leddy/index.php/phaenex/article/view/3339>

Jerzy Kosinski and Robert C. Jones, *Being There* (screenplay).

http://www.dailyscript.com/scripts/being_there_1_10_79.html

November 5 – 26. Students' presentations

December 3. Conclusion (Paper due at 1 pm).