University of Calgary Department of Communication, Media and Film

CMCL 307 (L01): Contours of Contemporary Culture

WINTER 2023: January 9 to April 12 (excluding Feb. 19-25 and April 07 AND 10)

Lecture: Tuesdays & Thursdays 14:00 to 14:50 (MST)
Lab 1 Fridays, 13:00 - 13:50 (MST); Lab 2 Fridays, 14:00 - 14:50 (MST)

CMCL 307 is a synchronous online course

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR ONLINE COURSE DELIVERY

Asynchronous & Synchronous Course Components: Please read this outline carefully to see which course components will be offered synchronously (where you are expected to participate in person or online at the usual scheduled course time) and which components will be offered asynchronously (to be completed on your own time). Synchronous sessions hosted on Zoom can be accessed on D2L by clicking on the Communications tab and selecting Zoom.

Note: If you will not be able to participate in synchronous in-class or online class sessions owing to time differences or geographical location, then consult with the instructor to see if accommodation is possible or arrange to take this course in a future term.

Instructor:	Dr. Jason Wang	
Office:	via Zoom	
Email:	jason.wang1@ucalgary.ca	
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)	
Office Hours:	Office Hours: Tuesdays, 15:00 - 16:00 (MST) or by appointment	

Course Description

Intersecting communication and cultural studies, this course explores how modernity (and post-modernity) is transformed within the framework of everyday life in relation to power, politics, and social values. It highlights theoretical perspectives on the relationship between cultural modernity and everyday life in the changing dynamics of the 20th and 21st centuries. We explore and employ a wide range of critical tactics to approach pressing social and political issues as well as global crises in our contemporary culture, including the #MeToo movement, climate change, and the

COVID-19 pandemic. We ask: what are the major crises of our time? How do we critically approach them? What are the cultural assumptions of our era and how might they be altered for the public good? Ultimately, how do we shape collective imaginations of the future? Focusing on experiential learning, this course involves lectures, labs, as well as research creation, workshop, and peer feedback.

Additional Information

The weekly schedule of topics and readings can be found at the end of this outline or on D2L. Lectures and labs are synchronous unless otherwise indicated in the weekly schedule. 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

- Demonstrate an understanding of the ways that cultural modernity is constructed as a social inquiry
- Demonstrate an ability to engage ideas and theories critically, knowledgably, and creatively
- Demonstrate writing and public speaking skills
- Work collegially and cooperatively

Textbooks and Readings

All readings are available on D2L.

Learning Technologies and Requirements

In order to complete 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), and a microphone and speaker (built-in or external) or headset with microphone (for online synchronous courses only).

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 IT support services. See https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/student-campus-services-information-technologies-it.html

Policy on the Use of Electronic Communication Devices

Please familiarize yourself with the University's policy on the recording of lectures, which is outlined at https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html, and carefully review the section on Instructor Copyright at the end of this outline.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed Components	Due
10%	Participation: Lecture and Lab Activities	Ongoing
15%	Team Presentation (Lab)	Students will sign up in the first week
35%	Walking the City Assignment There are 2 components of this assignment: 1) Walking the City Essay (including one photograph): 25% 2) Peer Response: 10%	February 9 [Essay] February 16 [Peer Response]
40%	Final Assignment There are 2 components of the final assignment: 1) Proposal (including annotated bibliography): 10% 2) Research Paper OR Research Creation Project: 30%	March 7 [Proposal] April 11 [Research Paper OR Research Creation Project]

Description of Assignments:

Participation: Lecture and Lab Activities (10%)

Weekly lectures and labs are essential to your success in this course. You are expected to come to both lectures and labs prepared (having completed the required readings) and participate in in-class activities and discussions. You will be graded on the quality of your contributions to lectures and labs, including discussing course material thoughtfully, engaging with peers in lecture and lab activities, and asking questions.

Team Presentation (15%)

For the lab sessions, students sign up for team presentations, providing an overview of the course readings for a particular week. Instead of a summary of readings, your presentation should present a critical engagement and analysis of the readings, identifying a key argument and key messages and/or learning points. You should add your own voice and introduce at least one additional example. Each team will need to decide the best way to organize their presentation.

Team Presentation should include:

- Opening strategy: Introduction to the **thesis** and main content
- Brief summaries of the readings
- Individual critical analyses and discussion of concrete examples
- Conclusion or take-away statement
- Pose **two** guestions for the audience
- Question and answer (Q&A) period
- Visual support: PowerPoint slides are mandatory.

Team Presentation Format:

- Presentations (excluding Q&A) shall be a maximum of 25 minutes long (or maximum 5 minutes for each team member).
- The total presentation time, the presentation plus the mandatory Q&A period, will not exceed 40 minutes (5 members per group).
- EVERY team member shall present for 3 to 5 (consecutive) minutes.
- After the title slide, a slide should be presented with the main idea of the
 presentation and its components. Each team member's full name shall be listed next
 to the section of the presentation for which that team member is responsible.
- The team's ability to engage the Q&A will be reflected in their grade.
- The presentation shall be carefully thought-out, organized and practiced beforehand.

Note: Group members will receive the same grade on the presentation; however, the instructor reserves the right to award differential grades based on group peer feedback or information indicating significantly uneven contributions by group members.

Walking the City Assignment (35%)

In the *Walking the City* Assignment, students will choose a street or a neighbourhood in the city they reside and use walking as a research method to explore contemporary urban culture. In this assignment, students must engage with **at least two course readings from Week 1 to Week 4**. There are two components of this assignment: 1) *Walking the City* Essay and 2) Peer Response. Students will only receive the grade for this assignment by completing two components. Information on peer pairing will be posted on D2L. More information on the assignment and guidelines will be discussed in class.

- 1. Walking the City Essay (25%): 800 words and at least one photograph (MLA format).
- 2. Peer Response (10%): 150-word letter to the author, addressing the following: 1) What is the major learning point from your peer's essay? 2) What surprises you most from reading it? 3) How would you evaluate your peer's engagement with the reading(s)? 4) Ask the author at least one question.

Note: The *Walking the City* assignment must be submitted to Discussion forum in addition to submission in the Assignment dropbox on D2L.

Final Assignment (40%)

In the final assignment, students can choose EITHER a Research Paper OR a Group Research Creation Project. Only ONE of these two final options may be submitted. Students must choose a topic from Week 5 to Week 13 and conduct a media analysis assignment for the Research Paper option or produce a creative project for the Group Research Creation Project option. Students who choose to do a group research creation project must discuss their plan with the instructor beforehand and receive the instructor's approval. More information on the assignment and guidelines will discussed in class.

A. Research Paper:

1. Proposal (10%): **250-word abstract**, including introducing the chosen media piece (such as a film, a TV show, a newspaper article, and a Podcast), an overview of key arguments, and **2 entries of annotated bibliographies** that

- provide a brief account of the available research on their chosen topic (MLA format)
- Final Paper (30%): 1,500 to 1,750 words, including notes and works cited (MLA format). The paper will take the approach of media analysis to critically engage with the chosen media piece in relation to the chosen topic.

B. Group Research Creation Project:

- Proposal (10%): 250-word abstract, including the rationale and plan of the creative project and 2 entries of annotated bibliographies that provide a brief account of the available research on their project (MLA format).
- 2. Final Project (30%): in addition to completing the research creation project, each member must submit an individual written entry (200 words/member) on their experience of doing the project and evaluation of their group members' engagement in the project (MLA format).

Note: In the Group Research Creation Project option, group members will receive the same grade on the final creative project; however, the instructor reserves the right to award differential grades based on group peer feedback or information indicating significantly uneven contributions by group members.

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 submit all assignments by uploading them to the designated D2L dropbox (or discussion forum). Include your full name and ID number on all assignments. Be sure to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to 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 recording for lesson capture, assessment of student learning, and self-assessment of teaching practices.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of 5% or a partial letter grade (e.g.: A- 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. For the full policy on Student Accommodations, see https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-accommodation-policy

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors.

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, numerical grades will be used for all assignments and participation grades.

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	Α	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70	Approaching excellent performance	Α -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30	Exceeding good performance	B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good performance	В	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	С	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, consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support

Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation

Course materials created by the instructor (including lectures, 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.

To ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes & electronic versions of textbooks), all students are required to read the *University of Calgary Policy on Acceptable Use of Material*

Protected by Copyright at https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy and the requirements of the Copyright Act (https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html). Students who use material protected by copy-right 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 deferral of term work, see https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html

For information about deferrals of final examinations, see https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html

For information about requesting a reappraisal of course work or of a final grade, see https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html

Student Support Services and Resources

Please see 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, Zoom, Yuja, etc., see

https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/resources-for-students/. (Find the topic menu under the icon to the left of the ELEARN banner.)

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

Note: Readings with asterisks (***) are supplementary (NOT mandatory) readings.

Weeks & Dates	Topics & Readings
Week 1 January 10 & 12	 Course Introduction Course Syllabus Williams, Raymond. "Culture." <i>Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society</i>, Oxford University Press, 1976, pp. 76-82. Berman, Marshall. "Modernity—Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow." <i>All That Is Solid Melts into Air</i>, Penguin, 1982, pp. 15-36.
Week 2 January 17 & 19	 Theorizing Cultural Modernity Giddens. Anthony. "Introduction." <i>The Consequences of Modernity</i>, Stanford University Press, 1990, pp. 1-53. ***Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." <i>Illuminations: Essays and Reflections</i>, edited by Hannah Arendt, Schoken Books, 1968, pp. 217-251. ***Groys, Boris. <i>On the New</i>, translated by G. M. Goshgarian, Verso, 2014, pp. 1-28.
Week 3 January 24 & 26	 The City as Modern Practice Simmel, Georg. "The Metropolis and Mental Life." <i>The Urban Sociology Reader</i>, edited by Jan Lin and Christopher Mele, Routledge, 2012, pp. 37-45. Debord, Guy. "Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography," and "Theory of the Derive." The Situationists and the City, edited by Tom McDonough, Verso, 2009, pp. 59-63; 77-85.

- De Certeau, Michel. "Walking in the City." *The Practice of Everyday Life*, translated by Steven Rendall, University of California Press, 1984, pp. 91-110.
- ***Michallef, Shawn. "Dorset Park." Stroll: Psychogeographic Walking Tours of Toronto, Coach House, 2010, pp. 220-229.

Workshop (January 36): Walking the City Assignment

Week 4

January 31 & February 2

Consumer Culture and Avant-garde Disruption

- Von Freytag-Loringhoven, Elsa. "Subjoyride." Body Sweats: The Uncensored Writings of Elsa von Freytag Loringhoven, edited by Irene Gammel and Suzanne Zelazo, MIT Press, 2011, pp. 99-102.
- Anderson, Heather, and Irene Gammel. "The Baroness Elsa Project."
 RACAR: revue d'art canadienne/Canadian Art Review 47.1 (2022):
 94-112.
- Watch: Carol Elinor Sawyer. "Subjoy Ride." Vimeo. August 29, 2021, https://bit.ly/3WQNQuN.
- ***Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception." *Dialectic of Enlightenment:* Philosophical Fragments, edited by Gunzelin Schmid Noberr, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Stanford University Press, 2002, pp. 94-136.

Asynchronous Class (February 2): Practices of Walking the City

Week 5

Ethics of Techno-culture

February 7 & 9

McLuhan, Marshall. "Medium Is the Message." Understanding Media:
 The Extensions of Man, Signet, 1964, pp. 23-35; 63-67.

- Tierney, Matt. "Introduction." *Dismantlings: Words Against Machines in the American Long Seventies*, Cornell University Press, 2019, pp. 1-28.
- ***Kingwell, Mark. "The Crisis." Wish I Were Here: Boredom and the Interface, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019, pp. 55-95.

Due (February 9): Walking the City Essay

Week 6

February 14 & 16

The Crisis of Liberal Democracy

- Appadurai, Arjun. "Democracy Fatigue." The Great Regression, edited by Heinrich Geiselberger, Polity, 2017, pp. 1-12.
- Francis Fukuyama. "What Is Classical Liberalism," and "From Liberalism to Neoliberalism." *Liberalism and Its Discontents*, 2022, pp. 1 - 30.
- ***Brown, Wendy. "Neo-liberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy." Theory & Event, vol 7, no.1, 2003.
- ***Streeck, Wolfgang. "The Return of the Repressed." New Left Review, vol. 104, 2017, https://newleftreview.org/issues/ii104/articles/wolfgang-streeck-the-return-of-the-repressed.

Due (February 16): Peer Response

Week 7

February 21 & 23

Term Break (No Class)

Week 8

Black Lives Matter

February 28 & March 2

- Fanon, Frantz. "The Lived Experience of the Black Man." Cultural Theory: An Anthropology, edited by Imre Szeman and Timothy Kaposy, Wiley, 2010, pp. 422-431.
- Darrick Hamilton and Jesse A. Myerson. "Economics for Black Lives." *Dissent*, June 29, 2020, https://bit.lv/3i6Fslo.
- Cole, Teju. "The Superhero Photographs of the Black Lives Matter Movement." New York Times. July 26, 2016, https://nyti.ms/3GuhPTe.
- ***hooks, bell. "Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance." Media and Cultural Studies: Keyworks, edited by Meenakshi Gigi Durham, and Douglas M. Kellner, John Wiley & Sons, 2012, pp. 355-380.

Workshop (March 2): Final Assignment–Proposal and Annotated Bibliography

Week 9

Climate Change as Perpetual Crisis

March 7 & 9

- Szeman, Imre. "On the Politics of Extraction." *Cultural studies*, vol. 31, no. 2-3, 2017, pp. 440-447.
- Wark, McKenzie. "On the Obsolescence of the Bourgeois Novel in the Anthropocene." Verso Blog. 16 August 2017, https://bit.ly/3CfkFZT.
- ***Banting, Pamela. "Walking through Lightning: A Peripatetic Bioregional Reading of a Novel." PAN: Philosophy Activism Nature 12 (2016): 179-194.

Due (March 7): Proposal and Annotated Bibliography

Week 10

#MeToo and Feminist Intervention

March 14 & 16

- Anne Enright. "The Monsters of #MeToo." London Review of Books, vol. 41, no. 20, 24 October 2019, https://bit.ly/3vr0dSb.
- Baer, Kate. I Hope This Finds You Well: Poems. Harper Perennial, 2021, pp. 26-41.
- Rose. Jacqueline. "I Am a Knife: Sexual Harassment in Close-up."
 On Violence and On Violence Against Women, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021, pp. 35-55.
- ***Irigaray, Luce. "Chapter 2: This Sex Which Is Not One." This Sex Which Is Not One, translated by Catherine Porter, Cornell University Press, pp. 23-33.

Workshop (March 16): Professional Development

Week 11

Indigeneity, Resilience, and Media Activism

March 21 & 23

- Vanstone, Gail, and Brian Winston. "'This would be scary to any other culture... but to us it's so cute!' The Radicalism of Fourth Cinema from Tangata Whenua to Angry Inuk." Studies in Documentary Film, vol. 13, no. 3, 2019, pp. 233-249.
- Wilson, Pamela, and Michelle Stewart. "Introduction: Indigeneity and Indigenous Media on the Global Stage." Global Indigenous Media: Cultures, Poetics, and Politics, edited by Pamela Wilson, Michelle Stewart, Duke University Press, 2008, pp. 1-38.

Guest speaker: Dr. Gail Vanstone, Professor of Humanities, York University

Week 12

COVID-19 and Community Mobilization

March 28 & 30

	 Murray, Stuart J. "The Cost of Living: On Pandemic Politics and Protests." The Living from the Dead: Disaffirming Biopolitics, Penn State University Press, 2022, pp. 21-47. Gammel, Irene, and Jason Wang. "Introduction." Creative Resilience and COVID-19: Figuring the Everyday in a Pandemic, Routledge, 2023, pp. 1-14. Ryan, J. Michael. "COVID-19, Individual Rights and Community Responsibilities." COVID-19, Individual Rights and Community Responsibilities, Routledge, 2023.
Week 13 April 4 & 6	 Radical Happiness and Collective Future Segal, Lynne. "What's Wrong with Happiness?" Radical Happiness: Moments of Collective Joy, Verso, 2017, pp. 1-30. ***Lear, Jonathan. "Ethics at the Horizon." Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation, Harvard University Press, 2006, pp. 55-80. Workshop (April 6): Final Assignment
Week 14 April 11	Course Wrap-up Due (April 11): Final Assignment