

**University of Calgary**  
**Department of Communication, Media and Film**

**COMS 203 (L01): New Media**

**Winter 2021: Jan. 12 to Apr. 13 (excluding Feb. 16-19 & Apr. 2 and 5)**

**Lecture: posted to D2L Tuesdays at 11am**  
**(Lectures will be asynchronous)**

**Labs 1&5 F 9-9:50; Labs 2&6 F 10-10:50; Labs 3&7 F 11-11:50; Labs 4&8 F 12:00-12:50**  
**(Labs will be synchronous)**

**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 lab sessions will normally be hosted on Zoom, a video-conferencing program. To access scheduled Zoom 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.

<b>Instructor:</b>	Tamara Shepherd
<b>Email:</b>	tamara.shepherd@ucalgary.ca
<b>Web Page:</b>	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Wednesdays 11am-1pm, or by appointment

**Course Description**

An introduction to the social, political and cultural aspects of new media. Examines the social factors that influence the use of new media, as well as the effects of new media on different spheres of social life. Topics to be examined include the defining characteristics of new media in relation to networked infrastructure, representation, identities, users, political engagement, and regulatory frameworks. Toward the conclusion of the course, these elements will be brought together through case studies of specific new media forms: social media platforms, mobile technologies, and digital games. The goal of the course is to provide students with the opportunity, through lectures and tutorials, to gain a broad understanding of new media as a terrain marked by diverse struggles for communication power.

**Additional Information**

The weekly schedule of topics and readings can be found at the end of this outline and on D2L. Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline.

## Objectives of the Course

COMS 203 has the following major objectives:

1. To provide you with the basis to identify, analyze and evaluate the social factors influencing the design and use of new media;
2. To encourage critical thinking about new media's historical development and its broader role in society, economics, politics, and culture;
3. To provide you with the opportunity to discuss how the course material relates to everyday new media cultures through written assignments as well as lab activities and group discussion;
4. To help prepare you for further undergraduate study.

## Textbooks and Readings

The required textbook for the course is *New Media: An Introduction, Third Canadian Edition* by Terry Flew and Richard Smith (Oxford University Press, 2018). New & used copies are available for purchase at the campus bookstore. Additional readings will be posted to D2L.

## 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>

Instructors may arrange to record synchronous zoom class sessions for lesson capture; however, students are not to share recordings with others. Please carefully review the section on Instructor Copyright at the end of this outline.

## Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed Components	Due
45% (5% each)	<b>Quizzes</b> Every week, students will complete a timed quiz (30 minutes, which includes the extra 50% time) on D2L that covers the content from that week's required reading and lecture. Each quiz has 10 multiple choice and true/false questions. Students can complete the quiz at any point from Tuesday 11am to Thursday 12:15pm. The quizzes are open-book. While completing the quiz, students may consult their textbook and course materials, but communicating with other students about a quiz before it closes will be considered academic misconduct. There are 10 quizzes in total, but the lowest mark will be dropped.	Weekly: Jan. 21 to April 8 (inclusive)

20%	<p><b>Presentation</b></p> <p>On March 26, April 6, and April 9 students will submit either a recorded presentation (5 minutes) or slides with notes (10 slides) via the D2L dropbox. There will be a sign-up period for students to choose a presentation date/topic in tutorial on March 5. The presentation will cover a particular new media example, according to the topic for the week: social media, mobile technologies, or digital games. Students should apply a concept from the course to their new media example.</p>	March 26, April 6, April 9
35%	<p><b>Final essay</b></p> <p>The final essay is due on April 19 via the D2L dropbox, with the option of handing it in early by April 13 for students who would like feedback in addition to their essay grade. The essay will be 3-4 pages (900-1200 words) in length, and will cite at least three academic sources – these can be textbook chapters, recommended scholarly readings, or books and journal articles that students locate independently. The essay will build from the presentation by comparing and contrasting two concepts from the course to the new media example used in the presentation. Detailed instructions for the essay will be provided on D2L by March 16.</p>	April 19

**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.  
If you miss a required course component, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.

**Submission of Assignments**

Please submit all assignments electronically via the D2L dropbox. Include your name and ID number on all assignments. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that you submit the proper version (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission).

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 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/](http://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 the presentation and final essay, while percentage grades will be used for the quizzes.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations*
<b>4.00</b>	Outstanding performance	<b>A+</b>	96 - 100%	98.0%
<b>4.00</b>	Excellent performance	<b>A</b>	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
<b>3.70</b>	Approaching excellent performance	<b>A -</b>	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
<b>3.30</b>	Exceeding good performance	<b>B+</b>	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
<b>3.00</b>	Good performance	<b>B</b>	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
<b>2.70</b>	Approaching good performance	<b>B-</b>	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
<b>2.30</b>	Exceeding satisfactory performance	<b>C+</b>	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
<b>2.00</b>	Satisfactory performance	<b>C</b>	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
<b>1.70</b>	Approaching satisfactory performance	<b>C-</b>	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
<b>1.30</b>	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	<b>D+</b>	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
<b>1.00</b>	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	<b>D</b>	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
<b>0.00</b>	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	<b>F</b>	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](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, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to <https://success.ucalgary.ca/home.htm>

## **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](http://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, 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](mailto:itsupport@ucalgary.ca) or by calling 403-220.5555.

## Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

<b>1</b>	<b>Jan 12</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
	Viewing:	<i>The Social Dilemma</i> (2020)
<b>2</b>	<b>Jan 19</b>	<b>Core concepts</b>
	Reading:	Textbook, Chapter 1, "Introduction to New Media" (pp. 1-33)
<b>3</b>	<b>Jan 26</b>	<b>History</b>
	Reading:	Textbook, Chapter 2, "History," & Chapter 3, "Approaches" (pp. 34-93)
<b>4</b>	<b>Feb 2</b>	<b>Infrastructure</b>
	Reading:	Bucher & Helmond, "Affordances" (on D2L)
<b>5</b>	<b>Feb 9</b>	<b>Users</b>
	Readings:	Textbook, Chapter 8, "Global Knowledge Economy" (pp. 226-259)
<b>6</b>	<b>Feb 16</b>	<b>Reading Week (no lecture or labs this week)</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Feb 23</b>	<b>Identity</b>
	Reading:	Hearn & Schoenhoff, "Influencers" (on D2L)
<b>8</b>	<b>Mar 2</b>	<b>Politics</b>
	Reading:	Pew Research, "Activism in the Social Media Age" (on D2L)
<b>9</b>	<b>Mar 9</b>	<b>Regulation</b>
	Reading:	Textbook, Chapter 9, "Internet Law, Policy, & Governance" (pp. 260-297)
<b>10</b>	<b>Mar 16</b>	<b>Independent work on presentations (no lecture)</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Mar 23</b>	<b>Social Media</b>
	Reading:	Textbook, Chapter 5, "Social Networks" (pp. 128-165)

<b>12</b>	<b>Mar 30</b>	<b>Mobile Technologies</b>
	Reading:	Textbook, Chapter 4, "Mobile New Media" (pp. 94-127)
<b>13</b>	<b>Apr 6</b>	<b>Digital Games</b>
	Reading:	Textbook, Chapter 6, "Games," & Ch. 7, "Creative Industries" (pp. 167-225)
<b>14</b>	<b>Apr 13</b>	<b>Wrap up</b>
	Reading:	Textbook, Chapter 10, "Conclusion" (pp. 299-311)