

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Communications Studies COMS 381, L01
COMMUNICATIONS HISTORY

SPRING 2016

Mon., May 9 - Wed., June 29 (excluding May 23, May 26-June 05)

(MW 12:00-13:45 Lab MW 14:00-14:50)

Instructor: Dr. Shawn J. Mueller
Office: SS307 (shared office space)
Office Phone: N/A
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Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: Immediately prior to and after class, or by appointment.

Course Description

A general survey of how various communication systems and practices developed through history, and of the social contexts within which they emerged, transformed, and adapted through time. Within this framework, the course examines major technological developments in the history of human communication and uses theory to understand their origins and impacts on social organization and everyday life.

Additional Information

Labs: Lab periods are not optional, and are not solely intended to give extra support to students requiring assistance. Lab periods will be largely devoted to Assignment No. 4, the McLuhan Project. Students will need to bring a simple video recording device of some kind (phone, laptop, pad, camera or other) to the lab sessions. Students who do not possess any such item should advise the instructor as far in advance as possible so that arrangements can be made.

Objectives of the Course

Students who successfully complete this course should be able to:

- Understand media against a larger context of social and cognitive effects;
- Understand some of the classical and contemporary communications philosophers;
- Relate the technology and theories discussed in this course to their work in other courses and to their lives;
- Write accurately and persuasively about their own view of the course content and its media context in their lives.

Textbooks and Readings

1. Crowley, David & Paul Heyer, eds. (2010) *Communication in History*, 6th Edition (If you find a fifth edition floating around, it will likely do the job although you may find the different page numbers inconvenient).

2. Ong, Walter. (1982) *Orality and Literacy*
This is available as an e-book through the University of Calgary Library; you may, of course, purchase a hard copy if you prefer.
3. McLuhan, Marshall. (1964) *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*.
Any edition/version is acceptable.

Internet and electronic communication device information

No restriction on the use of laptops (iPads, netbooks, etc.) in class if they are used to take notes or find information relevant to the class, and if there is no disturbance of other students or the instructor. Phones must be turned off during class time unless you are a health care or law enforcement professional with appropriate ID.

Assignments and Evaluation

A total of 4 assignments will be completed for this course:

Weight	Course components	Due
20%	In-class writing assignment based on assigned readings. This assignment will be an in-class, closed-book, written (2-4 pages in length) response to a question set by the instructor at least one week before the writing assignment and will be based on the assigned course readings.	May 16
20%	In-class writing assignment based on assigned readings. This assignment will be an in-class, closed-book, written (2-4 pages in length) response to a question set by the instructor at least one week before the writing assignment and will be based on the assigned course readings.	June 6
20%	In-class writing assignment based on assigned readings. This assignment will be an in-class, closed-book, written (2-4 pages in length) response to a question set by the instructor at least one week before the writing assignment and will be based on the assigned course readings.	June 20
30% (20% on the planning document, 10% on the video)	<p>The McLuhan Project. Marshall McLuhan is one of the acknowledged “big thinkers” about modern communications and media. This project is intended to allow students an opportunity to more fully encounter and understand his ideas. Working individually or in small groups of up to 3 members, students will create a short (2-3 minute) video presentation on a chapter of the McLuhan text, <i>Understanding Media</i>. As part of the video development process, each group will collaborate to produce a written (6-8 page) planning document that addresses an assigned chapter as source material for the video. This document must demonstrate relevance to the McLuhan text as well as connectivity amongst other assigned readings and student experience.</p> <p>The first two lab sessions will be devoted group formation (if desired) and topic/chapter assignment. Remaining lab sessions will be largely devoted to video planning and production. The final meeting of the class will be devoted to screening student productions, and students will contribute to the evaluation of these productions as part of their participation grade in the course.</p>	June 27 (and June 29 if needed)
10%	Participation in class discussions and exercises, and feedback of the McLuhan Projects.	N/A

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

You do not need to complete all assignments to receive a passing grade in the course. However, failure to complete any assignment will significantly impact your final grade. Any

request for late submission of any assignment should be made in advance and MUST be accompanied by appropriate documentation.

Submission of Assignments: All assignments will be submitted electronically via Desire2Learn. Assignment submission procedures will be discussed in depth during the introductory lab session on May 9.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission). Including a version date in your file name may be useful.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a 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 will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework 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) should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should advise their instructors in advance if they will be missing quizzes, presentations, in-class assignments, or group meetings.
- When accommodations are granted, they may take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test.
- For information on Deferrals of Final Exams and Term Work, see sections G.6 and G.7 of the *University Calendar* at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html> and <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will 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. Sources used in 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 & Grade Scale of the Department of Communication, Media and Film

Final grades are reported as letter grades. In this course, each assignment will be allotted points reflecting their weight on the final grade (e.g. an assignment worth 10% of the final

grade will be marked out of 10. These scores will be combined to arrive at a final percentage score which will be converted to a letter grade according to the chart below.

The following chart outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. In calculating final grades in this course, letter grades will be converted to the midpoint of the percentage range, as shown in the final column of the table below.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations* **
4.00	Outstanding	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent—superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70		A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30		B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good--clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70		B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30		C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory—basic understanding of the subject matter.	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70		C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Minimal pass—marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00		D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.	F	0- 49.99%	0%

* If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades.

** 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.

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. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436> . If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor TFDL, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

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 (e.g., surveys, interviews, or observations) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/resources/ethics>

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 artsads@ucalgary.ca
CAMPUS SECURITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calgary Police Service • Emergency Text Messaging • Emergency Evacuation & Assembly • Safewalk Program 	http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333 403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911 http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort (220-5333). For more information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/
DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students 403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca
STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	http://ucalgary.ca/ssc http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents
STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps 	https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Ombudsman 	http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds
<p>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	<p>403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</p> <p>403-266-HELP (4357)</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthy-campus</p> <p>If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.</p>

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

This is a provisional schedule only, and is subject to change with notice via D2L.

Week	Dates	Topic/Reading	Assignments/Notes
1	May 9, 11	Introduction to course Outline and syllabus, assignments <u>Reading:</u> <i>Crowley/Heyer</i> - Part 1 (Ch 1-4) <i>Ong</i> - Ch 1	
2	May 16, 18	Deep Background <u>Reading:</u> <i>Crowley/Heyer</i> - Parts 2 & 3 (Ch 5-13) <i>Ong</i> - Ch 2	Writing Assignment #1 (May 18, 2016)
3	May 25	The Shrinking World <u>Reading:</u> <i>Crowley/Heyer</i> - Part 4 (Ch 14-17) <i>Ong</i> - Ch 5	NB: No lecture May 23, 2016 due to Victoria Day
4	May 30, June 1	No classes due to Congress of the Humanities & Social Sciences (I urge you to attend/volunteer if possible)	
5	June 6, 8	Mass Media <u>Reading:</u> <i>Crowley/Heyer</i> - Part 5 (Ch 18-24)	Writing Assignment #2 (June 6, 2016)
6	June 13, 15	Voice Precedes Vision <u>Reading:</u> <i>Crowley/Heyer</i> - Part 6 (Ch 25-30) <i>Ong</i> - Ch 6	
7	June 20, 22	Hypermedia <u>Reading:</u> <i>Crowley/Heyer</i> - Parts 7 & 8 (Ch 31-41) <i>Ong</i> - Ch 7	Writing Assignment #3 (June 20, 2016)
8	June 27, 29	Looking Forward/Looking Back Closing remarks	McLuhan Project Presentations (June 27 and 29)