

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Communications Studies COMS 393, LEC01
Critical Perspectives on Health and Science

SPRING 2016

May 9 to June 29, 2016 (excluding May 26-June 05)

Mondays & Wednesdays, 9:00-11:45

Instructor: Kirsten Ellison
Office: Social Science Building, Room 240
E-Mail: klelliso@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal or <https://d2l.ucalgary.ca/>
Office Hours: Wednesdays from 1pm to 3pm, or by appointment

Course Description

This course examines the construction and communication of health and science as socio-cultural phenomena and interrogates the ways in which health and science issues are communicated, defined, represented, and framed, particularly within contemporary media. The aim of this course is to provide students with the critical resources to take up and challenge concepts of health and science through a communications lens.

Objectives of the Course

- To familiarize students with some of the key critical approaches to the communication of health and science
- To critically examine contemporary issues and representations of health and science by drawing on the concepts and critical frameworks outlined in the course readings
- To equip students with the resources to critically interrogate social constructions of health, medicine, and scientific knowledge and their representations in and outside of the classroom
- To provide students with the opportunity to develop and improve skills in analytic and critical thinking, academic research, effective writing and synthesis of ideas.

Textbooks and Readings

All readings, including book chapters, are available either online through the UofC library database: <https://library.ucalgary.ca> or under D2L course content.

Internet and electronic communication device information

No cell phone use during class. Laptops or other tablet devices are permitted for note taking purposes only.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Course components (with hypothetical examples only)	Due	Method of Submission
5%	Weekly In-Class Participation		
5%	Group Presentation	TBD	In Class
15%	Weekly Online Reading Responses (min. one per week – graded on 6 total)	Day of assigned reading, 9am	D2L discussion board
20%	Critical Reflection	June 3, 8pm	D2L Assignment Dropbox
5%	Paper Proposal	June 13, 9am	In Class
25%	Final Paper	June 26, 8pm	D2L Assignment Dropbox
25%	Take Home Exam (handed out June 29, in class)	July 6, 8pm	D2L Assignment Dropbox

Weekly In-Class Participation 5%

In addition to attending all classes prepared (all assigned readings for that day must be read **in advance** of class), you will be expected and encouraged to participate in class discussions, activities, group work, and presentation of work. Activities will include abstract summaries, concept mapping, health and science ‘object’ analyses, writing and research workshops, and proposal presentations.

Group Presentation 5%

In groups of **two**, students will be responsible for presenting a **five-minute** analysis of a chosen ‘communications object’ that relates to the course topic. A ‘communications object’ is used here to refer to any representation of a health or science issue. Examples include advertisements, press releases, news reports (print, online, radio, or TV), film clips, film trailers, television clips, magazine articles, covers, editorials, and so on. You will be required to critique your object within the context of the course topics or concepts discussed in class. A sign-up sheet will be circulated on the first day of class.

Weekly Online Reading Responses 15%

Each week a discussion prompt will be posted on the D2L discussion board corresponding to each of the following week’s readings. You are to respond to a minimum of one discussion question per week, to be posted no later than 9am on the day of the scheduled reading. You may (and are encouraged to!) post more than six responses, and can choose which posts you would like graded. Late submissions will not be graded.

Prompts will range from asking you to reflect on a specific claim, concept, or topic of the assigned reading to posting a ‘communications object’ that exemplifies the key claims, concepts or topics discussed in the reading.

A selection of posts will be taken up and discussed in class.

Critical Reflection: *Pink Ribbons Inc* 20%

You will be required to watch the documentary, *Pink Ribbons Inc* (2011), and write a 4-5 page, double-spaced (Times New Roman, Standard Margins, 1450-1550 words) critical reflection essay that does the following:

- 1 Identifies and describes 2 to 3 key themes that were brought up in Pink Ribbons Inc. or in any of the course readings that touch on this topic
- 2 Elaborates and reflects on these themes by drawing on other examples from class or your own experiences.
- 3 Discusses how/whether the film and/or readings have changed the way you think about cause-related consumption and fundraisers, or about the communication of health more generally.
- 4 Situates your discussion and reflection within the context of the course as a whole.

The paper must be written in the style of an academic essay, with a clear thesis statement and introductory paragraph that organizes the structure of the argument that follows. All references must be cited using APA – consult the *Canadian Journal of Communication* as a guide.

Citations for the course materials can be found on the course syllabus. Make sure to include a title page.

Essays are to be submitted to the corresponding D2L Assignment Dropbox no later than **8pm on Friday, June 3rd**. Late penalties will be applied from 8:01 pm forward, at a deduction of 5% per 24hrs (if it is one minute late, 5% will be deducted from your final grade - so make sure you do not submit at the last minute!)

Paper Proposal/Outline 5%

After choosing one of the choices below, you are to prepare a two-page proposal that outlines the communications object or research topic, thesis statement and corresponding structure of your paper. You are to include a minimum of two sources that will be used in your analysis/research. You are to submit a hard copy of your proposal **in class at 9am on Monday, June 13th**. Be prepared to talk about your paper and outline with the class.

Final Paper 25%

Choose **one** of the following options:

Critical Analysis: Drawing on key terms and concepts from the course, critically analyze a chosen 'communications object' (see explanation above) in its representation of health and/or science. In addition to at least 2 relevant readings from the course, you are required to use at least 2 other peer-reviewed secondary sources in order to support your analysis. Make sure to include a link to your object if available online, or a copy of it if possible as an appendix in your paper.

Research Paper: Drawing on key terms and concepts from the course, build an argument that critically interrogates a health or science issue from a *communications* perspective. In addition to at least one relevant source from the course reading list, you are required to use at least 5 other peer-reviewed secondary sources in order to support your claims.

Page length: 6-7 pages (1700-1800 words), double-spaced, Times New Roman, standard margin width. All sources (including the object) must be cited correctly.

The paper must be written in the style of an academic essay, with a clear thesis statement and introductory paragraph that organizes the structure of the argument that follows. All references must be cited using APA – consult the *Canadian Journal of Communication* as a guide.

Essays are to be submitted to the corresponding D2L Assignment Dropbox no later than **8pm on Sunday, June 26th**. Late penalties will be applied from 8:01 pm forward, at a deduction of 5% per 24hrs (if it is one minute late, 5% will be deducted from your grade - so make sure you do not submit at the last minute!)

Take Home Exam 25%

Exam questions will be distributed on the last day of class (June 29th) and you will be given a week to complete the exam. The exam will evaluate your analytic comprehension of the course materials (readings and lectures). No outside research is required. We will discuss the exam in more detail in class.

Students **may not** collaborate on this assignment.

The exam is due at **8pm on Wednesday, July 6th** and is to be submitted via the D2L Assignment Dropbox. **No late submissions will be accepted.**

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Note: All assignments and exams must be completed or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

Submission of Assignments: With the exception of paper proposals, all assignments are to be submitted via D2L. If this is not possible, alternative arrangements can be made prior to the due date. Only one submission per assignment will be allowed via the D2L Assignment Dropbox. If you need to re-submit **prior to the due date**, you may email the assignment to me directly (klelliso@ucalgary.ca).

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 a deduction of 5% per day from the final grade.

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 for the course will be reported as percentages. Participation, assignments, and the final exam will be graded using raw point scores, corresponding to the weight of each grade in the course. For example, proposals will be graded out of 5, final papers out of 25, and final exams out of 25.

The following chart outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film.

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 • Student Ombudsman 	https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/ http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds
SU WELLNESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health 403-266-HELP (4357) http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus 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.

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings:

Monday, May 9: Introduction; Mapping the critical terrain

No required readings

Wednesday, May 11: Framing health: A communications perspective

Required readings:

Metzl, J. (2010). Introduction: Why against health? In J.M. Metzl & A. Kirkland (eds.) *Against health: How health became the new morality* (pp. 1-11). New York: New York University Press.

Elliott, C. D. (2014). Communication and health: An interrogation. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 39(2), 249–261.

Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communications*, 43(4). **Only read pp. 51-55.**

Monday, May 16: Health promotion and the pursuit of good health

Required readings:

Lupton, D. (1994). Consumerism, commodity culture and health promotion. *Health Promotion International*, 9(2): 111-118.

Conrad, P. (1994). Wellness as virtue: Morality and the pursuit of health. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*, 18(3), 385–401.

Klein, R. (2010). What is health and how do you get it? In J.M. Metzl & A. Kirkland (eds.) *Against health: How health became the new morality* (pp. 15-25). New York: New York University Press.

Wednesday, May 18: Governing the unruly body: Risk, responsibility and moral panic

Required readings:

Nettleton, S. (1997). Governing the risky self: How to become healthy, wealthy and wise. In R. Bunton & A. Peterson (Eds.) *Foucault, health and medicine* (pp. 207-222). London: Routledge.

Crawford, R. (1994) The boundaries of the self and the unhealthy other: reflections on health, culture and AIDS. *Social Science and Medicine*, 38(10), 1347-65.

Monday, May 23: **NO CLASS: Victoria Day**

Wednesday, May 25: “It’s for a good cause”: Corporate philanthropy and the commodification of breast cancer

Required readings:

King, S. (2001). An all-consuming cause: Breast cancer, corporate philanthropy, and the market for generosity. *Social Text*, 69. 115-143.

Ehrenreich, B. (2009). Smile or die. In *Bright-Sided: How the relentless promotion of positive thinking has undermined America* (pp. 15-44). New York: Metropolitan Books.

Elliott, C. (2007). Pink!: Community, contestation, and the colour of breast cancer. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 32(3/4), 521–536.

Monday, May 30: **NO CLASS: Congress**

Wednesday, June 1: **NO CLASS: Congress**

Critical Reflection DUE Friday, June 5, D2L Dropbox at 8pm

Monday, June 6: Fit, slim and toned: Commodifying the healthy body

Crawshaw, P. (2007). Governing the healthy male citizen: Men, masculinity and popular health in Men’s Health magazine. *Social Science & Medicine*, 65(8), 1606–1618.

Bazzini, D. G., Pepper, A., Swofford, R., & Cochran, K. (2015). How healthy are health magazines? A comparative content analysis of cover captions and images of Women’s and Men’s Health Magazine. *Sex Roles*, 72(5-6), 198.

Alexander, S. M. (2003). Stylish hard bodies: Branded masculinity in Men’s Health Magazine. *Sociological Perspectives*, 46(4), 535–554.

Wednesday, June 8: The obesity epidemic: Governing the ‘fat body’

Required readings:

Elliott, C. D. (2007). Big persons, small voices: On governance, obesity, and the narrative of the failed citizen. *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 41(3), 134–149,206.

LeBesco, K. (2010). Fat panic and the new morality. In J.M. MetzI & A. Kirkland (eds.) *Against health: How health became the new morality* (pp. 72-82). New York: New York University Press.

Saguy, A. C., & Gruys, K. (2010). Morality and health: News media constructions of overweight and eating disorders. *Social Problems*, 57(2), 231–250.

Workshop: How to write an academic paper

Monday, June 13: Spatializations: Visualization technologies and scientific grids of intelligibility

Required readings:

Foucault, M. (1973). Spaces and classes. In A.M. Sheridan (Transl.) *The birth of the clinic: An archaeology of medicine* (pp. 3-15). New York: Vintage Books.

Martin, E. (1999). The woman in the flexible body. In A. Clarke (Ed.) *Revisioning Women, Health and Healing* (pp. 97-115). NY: Routledge.

Johnson, D. (2008). “How Do You Know Unless You Look?”: Brain imaging, biopower and practical neuroscience. *Journal of Medical Humanities*, 29(3), 147–161.

Outlines DUE Monday, June 13, in class at 9am

Wednesday, June 15: Biomedicalization and the pharmaceutical commodification of health

Required readings:

Clarke, A.E., Shim, J.K., Mamo, L., Fosket, J.R. & Fishman, J.R. (2003) Biomedicalization: Technoscientific transformations of health, illness, and U.S. biomedicine.” *American Sociological Review*, 68 (2): 161– 94.

Elliott, C. (2010) Pharmaceutical propaganda. In J.M. MetzI & A. Kirkland (eds.) *Against health: How health became the new morality* (pp. 15-29). New York: New York University Press.

Documentary screening in class: *Orgasm Inc.*

Monday, June 20: Sexy seniors: Sexual fitness and functionality as new marker of youth

Required readings:

Marshall, B. L. (2009). Sexual medicine, sexual bodies and the “Pharmaceutical Imagination.” *Science as Culture*, 18(2), 133–149.

Coupland, J., & Williams, A. (2002). Conflicting discourses, shifting ideologies: Pharmaceutical, ‘alternative’ and feminist emancipatory texts on the menopause. *Discourse & Society*, 13(4), 419–445.

Wednesday, June 22: The walking dead: Alzheimer’s and the scientific construction of disease, personhood and humanity

Required readings:

Behuniak, S. M. (2011). The living dead? The construction of people with Alzheimer’s disease as zombies. *Ageing & Society*, 31(01), 70–92.

Gravagne, P.H. (2013). The cultural work of Alzheimer’s. In *The becoming of age: cinematic visions of mind, body and identity in later life* (pp. 131-157). Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company.

Åsberg, C., & Lum, J. (2009). PharmAD-ventures: A feminist analysis of the pharmacological imaginary of Alzheimer’s Disease. *Body & Society*, 15(4), 95–117.

Final Papers DUE, Sunday, June 26, D2L Dropbox at 8pm

Monday, June 27: Quantified health: Data doubles, mobile health and the rise of self-tracking technology

Required readings:

Lupton, D. (2013). Quantifying the body: Monitoring and measuring health in the age of mHealth technologies. *Critical Public Health*, 23(4), 393–403.

Lupton, D. (2015) Lively data, social fitness and biovalue: The intersections of health self-tracking and social media. Social Science Research Network (blog): http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2666324

Wednesday, June 29: Review

Take Home Exams handed out