

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Communication and Media Studies COMS 401, L01
DRUGS IN POPULAR CULTURE

SUMMER 2017

Tue., July 4 – Tue., August 15

TR 09:00-11:45

Instructor: Shane Halasz
Office: SS 301
Office Phone: N/A
E-Mail: sdhalasz@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: TR after class by appointment

Course Description

Over the past century and a half, authority figures have defined the social problem of drugs in a manner characterized by sickness, moral weakness, and criminality. Moreover, these constructions often rest upon assumptions about race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and social class. This course will explore how notions of drugs and addiction have been created, recreated, and contested in various media, including news reports, literature, music, and film.

By tracing the historical development of modern dialogues about drugs, drug use, and drug users, this class will ask students to unpack and critique the dominant discourses of drug issues and explore creative alternatives to these seemingly “commonsense” constructions. In-class exercises and activities will augment our discussion of drug cultures and representations thereof and seek to engage students via experiential learning and personal reflection.

Additional Information

This course will employ a team-based learning strategy in which students work together in groups of 5 or 6 in order to unpack, discuss, and make sense of the assigned readings. Groups will be determined in the first class and will remain intact for the semester. Therefore, it is essential that students not only complete the readings prior to class but also attend class regularly and fully participate during in-class exercises and assignments. Students will be held personally accountable for their level of preparedness and contributions to group discussion and exercises by way of a peer evaluation form to be completed at the end of the term. Group assignment scores will be adjusted according to these peer evaluations (see Assignments and Evaluation section below).

Objectives of the Course

By the end of this class students will:

- Be exposed to a variety of historical and contemporary debates about drugs

- Develop analytic tools that enable an informed, critical discussion of drug issues
- Be able to discuss the relationship between representations and cultural discourses
- Refine critical thinking and research skills
- Strengthen collaboration and problem solving skills via ongoing team discussions, debates, and class exercises

Textbooks and Readings

De Quincey, T. (2009). *Confessions of an English opium eater*. J. Faflak (Ed.). Peterborough, ON: Broadview.

Huxley, A. (2009). *The doors of perception and Heaven and hell*. New York: Harper Perennial.

Wolfe, T. (1968). *The electric Kool-Aid acid test*. New York: Picador.

Additional readings will be made available on Desire2Learn.

Internet and Electronic Communication Device Information

From the time the iRATs are distributed to the time all completed gRATs have been collected, accessing any kind of electronic device will result in an automatic zero on the quiz (this grade will not be dropped as lowest quiz score). After RAT process is complete and the instructor has given the all clear, no restrictions on use of laptops during class if they are used to take notes or perform sanctioned research and if there is no disturbance of other students by visiting inappropriate web sites.

Assignments and Evaluation

1. Reading Quizzes (Individual) 20% (best 8/9 scores) See schedule below

At the beginning of each module (refer to schedule below) students will complete a brief readiness assessment test based on that day's assigned readings. The format will include some mix of multiple choice, true/false, and quotation identification. The goal with these quizzes is to ensure that students have completed the assigned readings and are coming prepared to participate in whatever group activities and class discussion are planned for that day. The quizzes will take place in the first 10-15 minutes. They cannot be written at another time nor made up for any reason, so please ensure that you attend class regularly and arrive on time. Arriving more than 5 minutes late for the beginning of class will result in a penalty on that day's quiz. Students arriving 15 minutes late or more will not normally be permitted to write that day's quiz. There are 9 quizzes scheduled, but only your 8 best scores will be counted.

2. Reading Quizzes (Team) 15% (best 8/9 scores) See schedule below

As soon as students submit their individual reading quizzes, they will receive another copy of the same quiz to be completed collaboratively by their group. The intention here is that students will learn from hearing each other support their arguments as to which is the correct answer, and thereby enrich their understanding of the material covered that class. These group quizzes will be collected, scored, and immediately returned along with the individual quizzes. The instructor will then address by way of mini-lecture or discussion

areas that need clarification or elaboration before moving to scheduled activities. As with the individual quizzes, your lowest group quiz score will be dropped.

3. Presentation (Team) 15% August 8 & 10

Near the end of the semester, student groups will distill and briefly present (10 minutes) what they feel is the most important thing that they have learned based on assigned readings, class discussions and activities. Particular attention should be paid to where individual differences of opinion existed, the extent to which consensus could be reached, and where and why differences persisted following the discussion. More information will be provided in class and on Desire2Learn.

4. Reading Response (Individual) 15% See schedule below

Students will submit a two page single-spaced reflection on one of the three books assigned this semester. Reflections are due at the beginning of class on the day the readings are assigned. More details will be provided in class and on D2L.

5. Research Paper (Individual) 35% August 15 (on D2L)

For the major assignment, students will research and write an 8- to 10-page double-spaced term paper in which they explore some aspect of drug discourse or drug culture that they find important and interesting. Papers must be rooted in an appropriate theoretical framework, reflect a significant amount of outside scholarly research, and provide some form of primary textual analysis. More details will be provided in class and on Desire2Learn. Fully referenced papers must be submitted to D2L no later than 11:59pm on August 15.

NB: At the end of the semester all students will fill out a peer evaluation form in which they distribute 100 points among everybody in their group except themselves. Each student's scores for the team assignments will then be adjusted based on those tallied scores. For instance, suppose a team earns a total of 25/30 on the team assignments (gRATs + presentation = 30% of final grade). Those 25 points would then be adjusted for all team members based on their peer evaluation scores. A student who receives 100 points from the team would receive the full 25/30, but a student whose evaluations add up to only 85 points would receive 22.25/30. A student who receives 110 points from the team would score 27.5/30, and a student who receives 105 points from the team would score 26.25/30. Hence, a student's final grade may be affected for better or worse (or not at all).

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

All assignments and exams (except quizzes) must be completed or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

Submission of Assignments: Please hand in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox. Some assignments may specify to be submitted electronically to Desire2Learn.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at marked final exams in SS 320. 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/legalservices/foip/foip-hia>

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. Quizzes must be written at the scheduled time and cannot be made up for any reason.

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. All assignment grades will be reported as numerical grades. 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 • 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 	403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE 	403-266-HELP (4357)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online resources and tips 	http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus <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

Tuesday, July 4

Course Introduction

(No readings)

- Class structure: Team-Based Learning (TBL)
- Key Concepts
- Team formation

Thursday, July 6 (Module 1)

Talking the Talk: Constructing the Drug Problem Part I

To read:

- Dingelstad, D., Gosden, R., Martin, B., & Vakas, N. (1996). The social construction of drug debates. *Social Science & Medicine*, 43(12), 1829-1838.
- Reinerman, C. (2005). Addiction as accomplishment: The discursive construction of disease. *Addiction Research and Theory*, 13(4), 307-320.

Tuesday, July 11 (Module 2)

I Read The News Today, Oh Boy: Constructing the Drug Problem Part II

To read:

- Chermak, S. (1997). The presentation of drugs in the news media: The news sources involved in the construction of social problems. *Justice Quarterly*, 14(4), 687-718.
- Elliot, A. & Chapman, S. (2000). 'Heroin hell their own making': Construction of heroin users in the Australian press 1992-97. *Drugs and Alcohol Review*, 19, 191-201.

Thursday, July 13 (Module 3)

Trafficking Stereotypes: Unpacking Representations of Drugs

To read:

- Grist, L. (2007). Drugs, the family and recent American cinema. In P. Manning (Ed.), *Drugs and popular culture: Drugs, media and identity in contemporary society* (pp. 117-133). Cullompton, Devon, UK: Willan.
- Hickman, T. (2000). Drugs and race in American culture: Orientalism in the turn-of-the-century discourse of narcotic addiction. *American Studies* 40(1), 71-91.
- Poyntz, S. (1997). Homey, I shot the kids: Hollywood and the war on drugs. *Emergency Librarian*, 25(2), 8-13.

Tuesday, July 18 (Module 4)

Pleasure and Pain: Romanticism, Literature, Addiction

To read:

- De Quincey, T. (2009). *Confessions of an English opium eater*. J. Faflak (Ed.). Peterborough, ON: Broadview.

Thursday, July 20 (Module 5)

Opening the Doors of Perception: Huxley's Visionary Experience

To read:

- Huxley, A. (2007). *The doors of perception and Heaven and hell*. New York: Harper Perennial.

Tuesday, July 25 (Module 6)

The Revelation Revolution: Psychedelic Drugs and the Quest for Mystical Experience

To read:

- Hofmann, A. (2013). *LSD: My Problem Child* (chapter 5, From remedy to inebriant, pp. 46-75). Oxford, UK: Beckley Foundation.
- Leary, T. (1965). The religious experience: Its production and interpretation. In T. Leary, R. Metzner & G. M. Weil (Eds.), *The psychedelic reader: Classic selections from The Psychedelic Review* (pp. 191-213).

Thursday, July 27 (Module 7)

Further: LSD, Ken Kesey, and the San Francisco Scene in the 1960s

To read:

- Wolfe, T. (1968). *The electric Kool-Aid acid test*. New York: Picador.

Tuesday, August 1 (Module 8)

Rave On: MDMA, Techno-shamanism, and Re-enchanting a Disenchanted World

To read:

- Hutson, S. R. (1999). Technoshamanism: Spiritual healing in the rave subculture. *Popular Music and Society* 23(3), 53-77.
- Ott, B. & Herman, B. (2003). Mixed messages: Resistance and reappropriation in rave culture. *Western Journal of Communication*, 67(3), 249-270.
- Tramacchi, D. (2000). Field tripping: Psychedelic communitas and ritual in the Australian bush. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 15(2), 201-213.

Thursday, August 3 (Module 9)

Just Say Know: Ecstatic Pedagogy and Transformative Learning

To read:

- Anders, A. (2008). Castaneda's ecstatic pedagogy: *The Teachings of Don Juan*. *Configurations* 16, 245-267.
- Tupper, K. (2003). Entheogens & education: Exploring the potential of psychoactives as educational tools. *Journal of Drug Education and Awareness*, 1(2), 145-161.

Tuesday, August 8

(No readings)

- Group Presentations
- Paper Workshop

Thursday, August 10

(No readings)

- Group Presentations
- Paper Workshop

Tuesday, August 15

(No readings)

- Course Conclusion