

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film
Communication Studies (COMS) 401.40 L01
New Media in the German Context
Spring 2017

Class dates/Lectures, days and times:
May 1-4th, 2017 in Calgary
Depart Calgary May 4, 2017
Depart Berlin May 21, 2017

Instructor: Mark Wolfe
Office Location: TBA
E-Mail: mwolfe@ucalgary.ca
Office Hours: Upon request

Course Description

This course uses the work of Marshall McLuhan to help make sense of the use – and refusal – of New Media as played out German academic, institutional and everyday contexts. Pre-session lecture and assignment will introduce Marshall McLuhan and explain the importance of his work to media theorists everywhere but especially in Germany. Several seminars and lectures held in Berlin will be held jointly and/or hosted by Berlin-based lecturers on Media and McLuhan, including HTW Applied University and/or the Free University in Berlin, as well as New Media start-ups and incubator groups such as the ThoughtWorks group in Prenzlauerberg. Where possible, students will also work with their German counterparts on short assignments. The course is capstoned instructionally by *McLuminations* – a public event held annually in the Marshall McLuhan Salon at the Canadian Embassy in Berlin, where media experts gather once a year to discuss the relevance/implications of McLuhan’s work today. Quizzes and journal exercises based on everyday observation of media use in Germany by individual, institutional and commercial elements of society will deepen the overall appreciation of media study and provide a general contrast in the cultures of New Media use in Europe and North America. Institutional visits to Google in Berlin, the Bundestag and other venues underscore the manner and extent to which Germany is still adopting – and refusing – New Media in the 21st century.

Additional Information

- No prerequisites; all activities and guest lectures delivered in English
- The course takes a seminar format in which students are encouraged to lead and shape the discussion by engaging readings, guest lecturers and their German counterparts
- This is a thinking-intensive course

Objectives of the Course

To build awareness and appreciation of the issues and effects of New Media as informed by the influence Marshall McLuhan’s work continues to play in shaping the German perspective on this technology. Specifically, students will be able to:

- Articulate the key constructs and distinctions in McLuhan’s work, including “global vil-

lage,” “the medium is the message,” “hot and cold media” and the tribalization of contemporary society

- Where/when offered, gain experience working with German students in collaborative exercises that engage McLuhan’s core ideas;
- Become critical observers of media use in the everyday context by bringing McLuhan’s idea to bear;

Textbooks and readings

Required textbook:

McLuhan, Herbert Marshall. *Understanding Media: The extensions of man*. Gingko Pr Inc. 2003.

McLuhan, Herbert Marshall. *Understanding Me: Lectures and Interviews*. Stephanie McLuhan and David Staines, eds. McClelland & Stewart. 2003.

(Both available as inexpensive Kindle downloads)

Other readings and links to online resources will be posted to D2L as required.

Assignments and Evaluation

1. *Pre-session short paper (May 7, 2017)* (15%)
2. *In-class quiz #1 (May 12, 2017)* (15%)
3. *In-class quiz #2 (May 16, 2017)* (20%)
3. *Journal # 1 (May 14, 2017)* (10%)
4. *Journal # 2 (May 20, 2017)* (10%)
4. *Final project/paper (June 20, 2017)* (30%)

Pre-session short paper (15%): Assigned during first week of classes in Calgary and due May 7, 2017, students will complete a short paper assignment on one or more of the key concepts in Marshall McLuhan’s work.

Journals (in Germany; 20% altogether) – Students will maintain a record of on-going impressions and critical assessments of the culture, behaviour and attitudes around digital media as observed and engaged with while in Berlin and Leipzig.

Quizzes in Berlin (35% altogether) – Take-home quizzes will be based on guest lectures and collaborative working assignments and/or events such as the McLuhan Salon and McLuminations events.

Final project (30%) – This assignment, completed singly or in groups of 3 or 4 students, comprises a research paper that focuses on a New Media topic or technology (ie. social media; Netflix; remote sensing/surveillance, etc.), policy (ie. copyright; freedom of access; etc.) or issue (ie. privacy; impact on literacy) that addresses the key cultural and/or intellectual differences between German and non-German approaches to New Media study and practice.

Registrar-scheduled final examination: No

All assignments must be completed or a 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.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at final exams in SS 320 after classes have ended. 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. For courses in which assignments are submitted electronically, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the correct copy of the assignment is submitted. (Including the version date or version number in your file name may help you avoid submitting the wrong version of your written assignments.)

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_0.pdf.

Please note:

1. Students seeking accommodations for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) should contact their instructors directly. Whenever possible, students should advise their instructors in advance if they will be missing quizzes, presentations, in-class assignments, or group meetings.
2. 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.
3. 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. For details see <http://comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. 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. However, work in this course will be graded using letter grades. The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Department. If letter grades are used for an assignment or other course component, the percentage equivalent in the final column will be used for calculating the final grade:

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Department 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	00 - 49.99%	0%
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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 (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of 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 	<p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333</p> <p>403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911</p> <p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage</p> <p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints</p> <p>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/safewalk</p>
DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	<p>http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students</p> <p>403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca</p>
STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	<p>http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</p> <p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</p>
STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	<p>https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/</p> <p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds</p>
SU WELLNESS CENTRE <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/healthycampus</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

May 2, 2017:

Readings:

- McLuhan, M. *Understanding media: the extensions of man*. Introduction and Chapter 1.
- Watch video clip on D2L: McLuhan interview with ABC (Australia).

May 6, 2017:

Reading:

- McLuhan, M. *Environment and Anti-Environment*
- Video clips (D2L): Carter-Ford debate; McLuhan interview with Tom Brokaw

May 8, 2017:

Reading:

- Heim, M. *The Erotic Ontology of Cyberspace* (on D2L).
- Heim, M. *Bridging the Real* (on D2L).

May 9, 2017:

McLuminations event, Canadian Embassy, 3 - 5:30 pm

May 11, 2017:

Babelsberg studio tour and Virtual Reality cluster lecture/seminar

May 15, 2017:

Reading:

- McLuhan, M. "Violence as a quest for identity," in *Understanding Me*.
- Keen, A. *The Internet is NOT the Answer* (Chapter 8).