

Communications Studies (COMS) 471 - Lecture 01
Audience and Reception
Fall 2011
Fr 9:00-11:50

Instructor: Brenda McDermott

Office
Location: SS 209

E-Mail: bemcderm@ucalgary.ca

Web Page: Blackboard

Office Hours: By appointment as to allow the maximum availability and least amount of waiting. I'll generally be available before and after class.

Course Description

This course approaches the communications process from the point of view of the audience. Students will be introduced to the history of media research dealing with the public and the audience, and consider the changes in theoretical and research paradigms from administrative approaches to those paradigms centred on fan practices and subcultures. Topics may include public opinion, uses and gratifications, reception theory, constructivism, shopping, consumption and subjectivity, fan cultures, experiential marketing, and culture jamming.

Objectives of the Course

Students should through this course be able to understand the rationales for qualitative and quantitative research focused on media audiences, become familiar with historical changes in the role and practice of audiences and an awareness of changes in how the audience's role has been understood in Communications Studies.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptops may be used in the classroom, but should be for note-taking purposes only. No cell phone use is permitted.

Textbooks and Readings:

Staiger, J. (2005) *Media reception studies*. New York: New York University Press.

Other course readings are available in PDF format through Blackboard. There may be some delay in posting all readings, and past readings may be removed to make room for new ones, but they will be available at least two weeks before and two weeks after the lecture for which they are assigned. Students are expected to keep copies of the readings for the entire term. The professor will not redistribute or re-post readings that have been taken off Blackboard

Assignments and Evaluation

Reading Reports (1pg single spaced)	4 reports worth 5% throughout the term. Two completed prior to midterm, and two completed after the midterm.	20%
Mid Term Exam	October 28 in class	20%
Paper Proposal (1 pg single spaced)	October 21 in-class	5%
Research Paper (8-10 pg. double spaced)	December 9 in-class	30%
Final Exam	By Registrar	25%
Total		100%

A detail assignment description and marking schema (when appropriate) will be posted on blackboard before the first day of classes.

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Note: 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.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: Yes

Please note: If your class is held in the evening, the Registrar's Office will make every attempt to schedule the final exam during the evening; however, there is NO guarantee that the exam will NOT be scheduled during the day.

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.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, **students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.**

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. 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: www.efwr.ucalgary.ca

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

(Revised, effective September 2008)

	Grading Scale
A+	96-100
A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99
B	75-79.99
B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99
C-	55-59.99
D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

Where a grade on a particular assignment is expressed as a letter grade, it will normally be converted to a number using the midpoint of the scale. That is, A- would be converted to 87.5 for calculation purposes. F will be converted to zero.

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. Readers must be

able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (MacEwan Student Centre 4th floor, efwr.ucalgary.ca) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link;

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see

<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see

<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

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

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site:

<http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics>

or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/cfreb>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

Will be posted on blackboard two weeks prior to the start of course.