

Communications Studies COM 475 – L01
Media and Cultural Industries
Winter 2014
Mon., 14:00-16:45

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Office Hours: M, 12:30-1:30 pm or by appointment

Course Description

This course considers the role and nature of media and cultural industries, offering students an understanding of their role in the production, distribution and consumption of cultural products. Among those industries that could be examined are television, radio, newspapers and other print media, film, sound recording, book publishing, advertising, new media and videogames.

Additional Information

- Pre-requisite for this course: COMS 371. This course assumes basic familiarity with critical media theories.
- The course takes a seminar format, where students lead the discussion and engage with the assigned readings.
- This is a reading and writing intensive course.

Objectives of the Course

How is culture being produced, distributed and consumed today? Starting from this question, this course will explore the current landscape of the cultural industries, as well as their historical context. The course will deal with issues such as: the rise of the ‘creative economies’ discourse; trends in ownership and convergence; new ways of imagining and engaging audiences; cultural policies; the challenges faced by cultural labour. The goal of this course is to familiarize students with the various aspects of cultural industries, and with the theoretical debates on this problematic. By the end of the course, students should:

- Be able to assess the key thinkers, concepts and discourses on cultural industries;
- Be able to critically assess the production, distribution and consumption of culture.
- Gain knowledge of the historical development of cultural industries.
- Be aware of current developments within the cultural industries on the local, national and global levels.
- Be able to use academic, policy and media sources to present the results of your thinking and research.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Lecture notes will not be made available for electronic distribution: it is the student’s responsibility to make notes on lecture material during the lecture. Use of recording technologies in class is prohibited. Laptops may be used in the classroom for note-taking purposes only. No cell phone use is permitted.

Textbooks and Readings:

David Hesmondhalgh (2012). *The Cultural Industries*. 3rd Edition. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Other journal articles or chapters from electronic books in the University of Calgary library may be assigned and will be made available on the first day of class. Students are expected to keep copies of the readings for the entire term. The instructor does not redistribute or re-post readings that have been taken off Blackboard.

Assignments and Evaluation

Students will be graded on four components:

- Reading response and news analysis (35%): – *February 3 – April 7, 2014*
- Group report (25%): – *March 31, 2014*
- Final project (30%)
 - Proposal (5%) – *February 10, 2014*
 - Final paper (25%) – *April 14, 2014*
- Participation (10%)

Please note:

- Detailed descriptions of the requirements and expectations for each assignment will be developed in class and posted on the course's Blackboard site.
- All assignments are expected to follow APA format and citation requirements.
- All assignments must be completed or a grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

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: No

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.

Description of Assignments

Reading response and news analysis (35%): – *February 3 – April 7, 2014* This individual assignment helps students engage with the required readings and relate them to current events pertinent to the cultural industries. This assignment has two sections:

- Five (5) reading responses: Students choose five required readings and provide written essays due on the day the required reading is scheduled, providing a summary of thesis and arguments as well as significance and applications of topic discussed in the respective reading. Approx. 300-500 words each, worth 5% each for a total of 25% of final grade.
- A news story analysis: a discussion of a recent news story about cultural industries, using one of the reading responses' scheduled required reading. As part of the participation grade, students summarize their chosen news story in class. Approx. 2000 words, 10% of final grade.

Group report (25%): – *March 31, 2014* This group assignment helps students learn about city-based cultural industry initiatives around the world. In groups of 4, you will research the development of cultural policies and the state of specific cultural industries clusters in the chosen city. The group completes a written report; approximately 2500-3000 words worth 25% of the final grade. Note: Each group member will peer review the other members of the group on their contributions to the group assignments. In consultation with the group individual marks may be adjusted.

Final project (30%):

Proposal (5%) – *February 10, 2014*; **Research paper (25%)** – *April 14, 2014*

This individual assignment tests students' abilities to make use of the theories discussed in this course to evaluate a cultural industry. They research the relationships between and the conditions of production, distribution and consumption for the chosen cultural industry. The proposal details the chosen cultural industry, making use of at least two (2) academic sources. The research paper makes an argument about the production, distribution and consumption of the chosen cultural industry, relying on the questions and theoretical debates discussed in the required readings.

- Proposal: 300-500 words, 5% of final grade.
- Research paper: 3000-4000 words, 25% of final grade.

Participation (10%):

Students are expected to make relevant contributions to class discussion. Be mindful that the grade does not depend simply on the volume of contribution, but the quality of it. Participation in group discussions and in-class exercises should demonstrate that students are engaging critically with the material and asking probing questions. In-class exercises are individual and group in-class activities that either develop understandings about the readings/topic for the class and/or help develop assignments.

A schedule of readings, assignments and in-class exercises will be posted on Blackboard two weeks prior to the first class.

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://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: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Grading System

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

	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 (3rd Floor Taylor Family Digital Library, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) 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 Student Accessibility Services (220-8237,

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) 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.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

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/ethics/cfreb>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

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