

Communication Studies (COMS) 481- Lecture 60
Advanced Topics in New Media & Society
Summer 2011
M/W 11:00-13:45 SA145
(no class Monday, August 1: Heritage Day)

Instructor: Christine Mains
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Web Page: Blackboard
Office Hours: M/W 17:00-18:00

Course Description

This course examines the nature, origins and social implications of new media with a focus on the Internet. Evolving forms of interpersonal, group and public communication based on the Internet will be assessed in terms of the role they play in identity formation, cultural integration, learning, political participation, commerce and work. This course will focus primarily on the effects of what has been termed convergence culture, and its effects on communication and community in online environments, including discussion forums and communities, blogs, and social networking sites. Discussion will focus on issues such as social justice and copyright.

Objectives of the Course

This course aims to equip students with fundamental knowledge and skills to assess communication on the Internet and to participate in online communication effectively. Students will learn to:

- Think critically and read critically a variety of online documents
- Communicate effectively both through oral presentations and written documents
- Understand the conventions and strategies for online communication
- Produce written documents that are focused, coherent, and readable

Internet and electronic communication device information

Students may use laptops to take notes and facilitate class discussion, but not to do any personal work, such as Facebook or checking email, and may not use cell phones to make or receive calls.

Textbook and Readings

Jenkins, Henry. (2006). *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*.

Other online readings as assigned by the instructor through Blackboard postings.

Assignments and Evaluation

Blog Posts (4)	July 6-20	10%
Midterm Exam	July 25	15%
Proposal for Research Paper	July 11	5%
Research Paper	Aug. 3	25%
Small Group Presentations	Aug. 8-17	15%
Final Take-Home Exam	Aug. 19	20%
Attendance & Participation	throughout	10%

All written assignments will be submitted through Digital Dropbox on Blackboard. No assignments will be submitted in hardcopy, whether handed to the instructor, dropped at the main office, or slid under office doors. It is the student's responsibility to submit assignments in a form that can be opened and read by the instructor, to keep a copy of each submitted assignment, and to check email regularly for notices of missing assignments.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No.

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. Requests for extensions must be made in advance of the assignment due date, and are at the instructor's discretion.

Attendance and Participation

Because summer term classes are so intensive, it is essential that all students attend all classes; occasional absence for reasons of illness or emergency can be accommodated, but regular absence because of conflicts with work schedules or personal issues cannot. Students are expected to contribute to the class by completing all readings before the class, participating in class discussions both in the classroom and through the class blog, and serving as audience for group presentations.

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

Faculty 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 according to a recognized citation style (in this class either APA or MLA). 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

In this class, you will receive grades in the 4-point scale (2.7, 3.0, 3.3) *rather than* percentages.

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:
(Revised, effective September 2008)

Letter Grade	Grading Scale	Grade Point Value (see U of C Calendar: Academic Standing)
A+	96-100	4
A	90-95.99	4
A -	85-89.99	3.7
B+	80-84.99	3.3
B	75-79.99	3
B-	70-74.99	2.7
C+	65-69.99	2.3
C	60-64.99	2
C-	55-59.99	1.7
D+	53-54.99	1.3
D	50-52.99	1
F	0-49	0

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

The reading schedule will be posted throughout the term through Blackboard announcements. Students are responsible for checking the Blackboard site at least twice a week, well before each class, in order to keep up to date.