

**University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film**

COMS 581: Senior Project in BCMS/BFS

WINTER 2022: January 10 to April 12 (excluding Feb. 20-26)

Lecture: T 14:00 to 14:50

Lab: 15:00 to 16:50

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR IN-PERSON COURSE DELIVERY

Note: This course will be delivered in-person. If you are unable to participate in-class owing to time differences or geographical location, please arrange to take this course in a future term

Instructor:	Dr. Samantha Thrift
Office:	SS 210
Email:	samantha.thrift@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	W 3:00-5:00pm (via Zoom)

Course Description

An advanced research and experiential project incorporating academic research and media production. The project will be produced in a medium appropriate to the student's specialization: print, radio, television, video, film or digital media.

Additional Information

This capstone course supports students' development of independent research and media projects grounded in communication, media and/or film scholarship. Students will remediate their well-researched, written essay as a media project, based on their chosen specialization. Students will also present their final projects to the class.

The weekly schedule of topics can be found on D2L.

Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline.

Objectives of the Course

The course objectives are to:

- Design, plan, and execute an independent essay and media project;
- Integrate research and applied practice in media production;
- Increase understanding of theoretical constructs, methodological approaches and research skills while reflecting upon their value in application to specific productions;
- Collaborate and share ideas and experiences during the creation process in ways that broaden understanding of the field of media production.

Textbooks and Readings

No textbooks are required, however students will be required to conduct research and read scholarly materials for their individual essay projects. Supplementary reading and/or screening materials will be posted to D2L.

Learning Technologies and Requirements

In order to complete courses, University of Calgary students are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security and malware updates, with current antivirus software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection, and a current and updated web browser;
- A webcam (built-in or external), and a microphone and speaker (built-in or external) or headset with microphone (for online courses only).

If you need access to other software programs to complete assignments, your instructor will provide relevant information and links.

If you have technical difficulties, contact IT support services.

See <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/student-campus-services-information-technologies-it.html>

Policy on the Use of Electronic Communication Devices

Laptops, tablets, and mobile phones may be used in class and tutorials only:

- for course-related purposes;
- if their use is not distracting others;
- if their use does not negatively impact the learning environment.

No audio or video recording is allowed in any class without the instructor's explicit permission.

Please familiarize yourself with the University's policy on the recording of lectures, which is outlined at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html>, and carefully review the section on Instructor Copyright at the end of this outline.

Email

When corresponding with the instructor via email, students should include the course name (COMS 581) in the subject line. If you do not include the course name in your email's subject line, your message may get overlooked in the instructor's inbox and go unread.

Please maintain a professional tone in your correspondence with the instructor.

Email is most useful for specific inquiries. If you have more detailed questions about the course material, assignments, or grades, please schedule an appointment to speak with the instructor (via Zoom) during office hours. The instructor will respond to emails during the week, usually on a first-come, first-served basis. Emails sent in the evening or on weekends will not be read (or replied to) until the next working day.

Respect and Diversity in the Classroom: This course is built around student participation. Our classes will often contain opportunity for student contributions and I welcome your insightful comments (based on course materials) and questions. During these discussion periods, I ask that students be respectful of diverse viewpoints; however, racist, sexist,

trans/homophobic, Islamophobic, and other types of discriminatory comments are not permitted in the classroom. Comments of this nature will be dealt with at the professor's discretion on an individual basis.

On pronouns: I respect all students' choice of pronouns. Please alert me to your pronoun and I am happy to oblige.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed Components	Due
10%	Argument Essay Proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-2 page written description of the essay topic and argument Annotated bibliography: 5 scholarly sources (300-500 words each) 	Jan. 25 (11:59pm)
25%	Argument Essay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5-6 pages in length Students will be provided with a list of topics and will engage in independent research in order to write an informed, well-evidenced essay that clearly and persuasively makes an argument about that topic Correctly formatted (APA/MLA), including complete bibliography 	Feb. 15 (11:59pm)
25%	Remediation Project: Media Composition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will convert their argument essay essays into a media composition, such as a blog (using a service like WordPress or wix.com), three-minute video (using iMovie or MovieMaker), podcast, or <i>any other medium if you clear it with the instructor.</i> Students will need to convey the thesis and main supporting elements from their researched argument essay into the new medium. The purpose is to turn your textual essay into a media composition that communicates your ideas in a compelling manner. 	Mar. 8 (11:59pm)
15%	Critical Reflection Essay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4-5 pages in length Students will submit a critical reflection in which you explain how they revised your researched argument essay into a new medium and what they learned in the process. 	Mar. 22
13%	Remediation Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10-minute in-class presentation of final project Students will (1) give the context of their essay, and (2) explain the choices they made to change their textual essay into a different medium. The presentation must include the multimedia composition (or an excerpt) and should be (max.) ten minutes in length, with a minute or two for questions <i>after</i> those ten minutes. 	Schedule TBA (Mar. 29; Apr. 5; Apr. 12)

12%	Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student progress reports will be delivered in-class (small groups) 4 times throughout the semester (3 points each) • The oral report should be approx. 10 minutes each and may include: status update, review of draft work, discussion of challenges/problems, collaboration to problem-solve • Progress report notes (ca. 1-2 pages) to be submitted to D2L Dropbox (2:00pm) 	Jan. 25 (2:00pm) Feb. 15 (2:00pm) Mar. 1 (2:00pm) Mar. 15 (2:00pm)
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Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

If your class is held in the evening, the Registrar's Office will attempt to schedule the final exam in the evening, but there is no guarantee that the exam will NOT be scheduled during the day.

Note: You must complete all assignments or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

Submission of Assignments

Please submit all assignments by uploading them to the designated D2L dropbox (unless instructed otherwise in the assignment guidelines). Include your name and ID number on all assignments. Be sure to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to submit the proper version.

Private information related to individual students is treated with the utmost regard by University of Calgary faculty. Student assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty, and personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. Please note that instructors may use audio or video recording for lesson capture, assessment of student learning, and self-assessment of teaching practices.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of 5% or a partial letter grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late. Late assignments will receive minimal written feedback.

NOTE: Assignments seven days or more (unexcused) late will not be accepted and will receive a grade of zero.

Student Accommodations

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS); SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. For the full policy on Student Accommodations, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-accommodation-policy>

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should provide supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require a medical note. For information on the use of a statutory declaration, see the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>

Expectations for Writing

Department policy directs that all written assignments and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses 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 and proper documentation of research sources. For further information, please refer to the *University of Calgary Calendar* section on writing across the curriculum:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html>

Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

The following table outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. Final grades are reported as letter grades. For components graded using percentages or numerical scores, those values will be used directly in calculating the final course grade, while for components graded using letter grades, the letter grades will be converted to the midpoint values listed in the final column of the table below in calculating the final course grade.

In this course, letter grades will be used for all assignments.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations*
4.00	Outstanding performance	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent performance	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70	Approaching excellent performance	A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30	Exceeding good performance	B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good performance	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70	Approaching good performance	B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance	C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory performance	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	F	0 - 49.99%	0%

* Column 4: If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades. Column 5: 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. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

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.

For information on citation and documentation styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, IEEE, etc.), visit the Student Success Centre resource links at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support> or the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) Research and Citation Resources at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support>

Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation

Course materials created by the instructor (including lectures, course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed, or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the same course section and term may be allowed under fair dealing. Check with the instructor if you have any questions about sharing materials with classmates.

To ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes & electronic versions of textbooks), all students are required to read the *University of Calgary Policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright* at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy> and the requirements of the *Copyright Act* (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

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, including surveys, interviews, or observations as part of your university studies, you are responsible for obtaining research ethics approval and for following university research ethics guidelines. In some cases, your instructors may apply for course-based research ethics approval for certain assignments, and in those cases, they must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, please see <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/arts-researchers/resources-researchers-and-instructors/ethics>

Deferrals of Course Work and Requests for Reappraisal

For university regulations and procedures related to deferral of term work, see

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

For information about deferrals of final examinations, see

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>

For information about requesting a reappraisal of course work or of a final grade, see

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

Student Support Services and Resources

Please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for information about student support services and resources, including Wellness and Mental Health Resources, Student Success programs and services, the Student Ombuds Office, the Student Union, and Safewalk. For resources on D2L, Zoom, Yuja, etc., see <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/resources-for-students/>. (Find the topic menu under the icon to the left of the ELEARN banner.)

Schedule of Meetings and Topics

Meeting schedule and topics will be posted to D2L in advance of the first day of classes.