

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film
Communication and Media Studies (COMS) 591 – Seminar 02
Senior Seminar in Communication and Media
Winter 2017
Wed., January 11 – Wed., April 12, 2017
W 1500-1745

Instructor: Dr. Tania S. Smith
Office: Social Sciences 302
Office Phone: 403-220-7774
E-Mail: smit@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: Tues 12:00-14:00
OR View calendar at <http://ucalgary.ca/smit/about/appointment-calendar>
and email the instructor to request an appointment.

Course Description

With reference to a special topic, this course explores the variety of ways in which communication builds social and cultural values. Students will undertake a major project that will integrate their understanding of communication theory, history and methodology. See individual course outlines for current topics. Course Hours: 3 units; H(3S-0). Prerequisite(s): Communications Studies 369, 371, 381, and Communication and Culture 313 or Communications Studies 313 and admission to the BA with a Major in Communications Studies.

Additional Information

Professional Ethics in Communication is the special topic for this section. The seminar will encourage students to synthesize their learning during their COMS degree by focusing on the theme of Professional Ethics in Communication. We will focus on professional ethics in the fields of academic communication research & criticism, journalism, advertising, and public relations. We will consider various ideas, discourses and advice regarding "the ethical communication professional," which encompasses their professional identity or ethos as well as what they say, write, create, and do. Of course, we cannot perform such an examination of professional ethics without also considering the potential and real effects of the communication they produce.

Students enrolled in the course will be required to post some of their assignments to the course's semi-public WordPress.com blog titled "COMS 591: Professional Ethics in Communication" at <https://ethicsincomm.wordpress.com/>. Students will be required to obtain a free WordPress user account to give them "author" status on the blog. This enables them to control the status of their own posts. They can also edit other people's comments on their posts, if any. After the course is over, students have the freedom to change the status of their posts to "private" or delete their own posts, change their display username, leave the blog, or delete their WordPress.com account.

Objectives of the Course

- To integrate communication knowledge and skills gained from formal and informal learning throughout one's postsecondary degree
- To understand theories, practices, and debates on professional ethics in communication
- To research and analyze communication artifacts and history using the theories we learn
- To learn how to design and write articles for the public and use images ethically online
- To develop advanced writing skills in logic and argumentation, structure, style, sentence correctness, academic citation ethics, and APA citation style
- To build skill and insight through oral presentations, class discussion and activities, peer reviews, revision and reflection

Textbooks and Readings

Bivins, T. (2009). *Mixed media: Moral distinctions in advertising, public relations, and journalism* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

NOTE: Buy ONLY the Second Edition.

ISBN: 0-203-87488-9.

Print, approx. \$72

Ebook \$52 on [Google](#) or [Kindle](#)



The cover images shown are both for the 2nd edition.

Additional FREE online readings and samples will be provided via links on D2L.

Internet and electronic communication device information

During student presentations, all electronic devices must be put away and laptop screens must be closed. At other times, students may use electronic devices for course-related functions only. Show professional courtesy and attentiveness to the instructor and fellow students by using technology silently and discreetly, minimizing distraction.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Course components	Due
20%	<p>Blog post collection A: Past learning of professional ethics in communication</p> <p>Draft: At least 700 words in two separate blog posts, including drafted titles, headings, and at least a plan for image. If the draft is incomplete or late, there may be up to 5% grade penalty on the final version.</p> <p>FINAL: 1500 words total, in 1-2 blog posts, plus at least 1 borrowed image per post, plus references and image captions. Employing Thomas Bivins' text as a lens, discuss how you have</p>	<p>DRAFT: Fri. Jan. 27, on D2L</p> <p>FINAL: Fri. Feb. 3 submitted on D2L in .docx format, and published on the 591 blog.</p>

	learned “professional ethics in communication” during your COMS degree, giving specific, vivid examples.	
20%	<p>Group presentation A (15 minutes) in groups of 2-3 students, on COMS degree prior learning on the course theme.</p> <p>Requirements are similar to the Blog Post Collection A (described above), but it must be based on completely different examples from your past learning, 2 different image(s) and different concepts from secondary sources. Adapt your presentation to your classroom audience throughout.</p> <p>Each student submits a confidential 300-word memo describing their participation in the presentation. One-third of your grade is based on individual contributions to the presentation’s quality, and the quality of the memo itself.</p>	<p>Scheduled Jan 25-Mar 1</p> <p>Before class begins on the day of presentation, Post the PowerPoint file to the Discussion forum on D2L.</p> <p>Your memo is submitted to D2L dropbox within 5 days after the presentation.</p>
15%	<p>Group presentation B (12 minutes) in groups of 2-3 students, profile of a Canadian professional communicator’s ethics.</p> <p>The theme and requirements are similar to Blog Post Collection B (see description below), but in this presentation you must focus on an entirely different professional communicator or group of communicators than your Blog Post Collection. The communicator must also be based in Canada.</p> <p>Each student submits a confidential 300-word memo describing their participation in the presentation. One-third of your grade is based on individual contributions to the presentation’s quality, and the quality of the memo itself.</p>	<p>Scheduled Mar 8-Apr 5</p> <p>Before class begins on the day of presentation, Post the PowerPoint file to the Discussion forum on D2L.</p> <p>Your memo is submitted to D2L dropbox within 5 days after the presentation.</p>
25%	<p>Blog post collection B: A Communicator’s Professional Ethics</p> <p>Draft and peer review: At least 1500 words in two separate blog posts, including titles, headings, and at a plan for images. If the draft is incomplete or late, or peer review is not completed, there may be up to 5% grade penalty on the final version.</p> <p>Final: 2500-3000 words total, in at least 2 separate blog posts of 750 words minimum each, including at least 1 ethically borrowed image per post, plus references and image captions. Choose a specific theme of communication and a specific professional communicator: one journalist, one advertising company, one organization’s PR/communication professionals, or one academic in communications studies who publishes works on controversial themes. Examine ethical features of a collection of at least 2 thematically-related public, online artifacts they released over time during the past 5 years.</p>	<p>DRAFT: Friday, March 17 on D2L in .docx format.</p> <p>REVIEW: Wednesday, March 22. Bring 2 copies of your draft to class for peer review activity.</p> <p>FINAL: Friday, March 31 submitted on D2L in .docx format and published online on the 591 blog.</p>
20%	<p>In-class group activity portfolio (10% for overall quality; 10% for individual contributions)</p> <p>The class will be divided into activity groups of 5-6 students each. Each class will include time for a group activity based on assigned readings for the day. Groups will usually apply the textbook’s principles to a sample, scenario or question</p>	<p>Within 6 days after each activity, in your group area on D2L, post artifacts, images, and/or notes and edit your participation table row.</p>

	<p>provided in class. The group's designated "scribe" for the day will write the group's answer and submit it by the end of class.</p> <p>Each student is expected to participate actively in at least 7 (out of 10) group activities and will select 2 activities to take "notes" on during class and write about in their portfolio.</p> <p>Total length of the portfolio depends on the final group size. Each portfolio includes 1) a 500-word group-authored memo, 2) a table of activities, participants, and roles, followed by 3) featured activities in date order (300-400 words per activity plus an image, caption, and reference list for each activity).</p>	<p>DRAFT: Friday, April 7. Compile all your individual sections, images, and table.</p> <p>FINAL: Wed. April 12 Write opening memo and review & proofread each other's sections.</p>
--	--	--

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: **No**

Note: All assignments and exams weighted more than 10% must be completed in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

Submission of Assignments

Submit all assignments via D2L areas as instructed above. Assignment Files must be submitted by 11:59PM (23:59) on the date specified.

Assignment files must use the following file name format: *591-Assignment-Surname-Firstname.docx*, or for group files, *591-Assignment-Surname1-Surname2-Surname3-Surname4.docx*

Please include your name and ID number on all individual assignments, EXCEPT on materials shared with other students on D2L (i.e. peer review memos and presentation files), which should have your name only, no ID number. 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 and to ensure that the proper version is submitted (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission). Including a version date in your file name may be useful.

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 calendar day late.

Grace period: For all written assignments (except peer review memos), there is a 24-hour late submission grace period to accommodate any unforeseen circumstances or temporary illness (no late penalty, no student explanations needed). However, after the end of the 24-hour grace period, an assignment is considered TWO days late from the original deadline and will carry a late penalty.

Delayed or missed presentations or reviews: Students are responsible for signing up for presentation & peer review dates by the end of week 2, and the current schedule will be shown on our course's online calendar. Except in cases of documented valid excuses (such as illness), if you cannot be in class to present or review a presentation, if rescheduling occurs later than 6 calendar

days before your scheduled date, your presentation or review may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g. A- to B+) each time it must be rescheduled for a future date. Rescheduled presentations may or may not have peer reviewers.

Each student must review 2 presentations regardless of designated presenter rescheduling. If you are scheduled to review during the final 2 weeks of class, be prepared to review someone else just in case your designated presenter(s) on those days is unavailable to present.

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.pdf>.

- Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should advise their instructors in advance if they will be missing quizzes, presentations, in-class assignments, or group meetings.
- 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.
- 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. 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.

- All assignments will be graded with a letter grade and its numeric Letter grade % equivalent for calculations (e.g. B+ = 82.5).
- Borderline letter grades (C-/C or A/A+) may be awarded. The equivalent for calculation will be the whole number at the border between the two letter grades (e.g. A-/B+ = 85)

The following chart outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF 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	0- 49.99%	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. 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 (e.g., surveys, interviews, or observations) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve 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 	http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333 403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911 http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints 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/
DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students 403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca
STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	http://ucalgary.ca/ssc http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents
STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/ http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds
SU WELLNESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE 	403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health 403-266-HELP (4357)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online resources and tips 	http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus 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.
---	--

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

The official schedule is ONLINE on a Google Spreadsheet. It includes sign-up slots for presentations.

Date	Readings, topics	Deadlines
1/11/2017	Class overview & introductions. Go over Blog post collection A assignment, Group Activity Portfolio assignment. How to sign up for WordPress.	Buy textbook.
1/18/2017	Bevir, CH1, What is Media Ethics? Go over Presentation A assignment, and form groups. Practice group activity.	Form Presentation Groups, Activity groups. Sign up for presentations and WordPress by Friday.
1/25/2017	Bevir, CH2, Responsibility. Sample blog post. First official group activity	Presentation As: Jan 25 - March 1
2/1/2017	Bevir, CH3, Professionalism. How to post a blog post and insert an image.	>Fri Feb 3: DRAFT Blog Collection A
2/8/2017	Bevir, CH4a, Ethical Theory, draft revision tips.	>Fri Feb 10: FINAL blog collection A
2/15/2017	Bevir, CH4b, Ethical Theory, Presentation B tips	
	READING WEEK 2/20 to 2/24	
3/1/2017	Bevir, CH5 Ethical decision-making	
3/8/2017	Bevir, CH6 Meta-issues across media	Presentation Bs: March 8 - April 5
3/15/2017	Bevir, CH7 Meta-issues in PR and advertising	>Fri. Mar. 17 DRAFT Blog Collection B
3/22/2017	Bevir, CH8 Ethics and PR. In-class peer review	>Wed. Mar. 22 REVIEW Blog Collection B
3/29/2017	Bevir, CH9 Ethics and Advertising	>Fri Mar 31: FINAL Blog Collection B
4/5/2017	Bevir, CH10 Ethics in News Journalism, Class evaluations	>Fri Apr 7: DRAFT Group Portfolio
4/12/2017	Class review, portfolio learning discussion, time for final group memo writing & portfolio peer editing	>Wed Apr 12: FINAL Group Portfolio

Link to official schedule online: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1yOoXPIV3JzCwk-0fo2huyDZKXBNI8Wapen0iZFj7HJg/edit?usp=sharing>