

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film
COMS 591 (S01): Senior Seminar in Communication and Media
Topic: Girls' Media Studies

WINTER 2021: January 11 to April 15 (excluding Feb. 14 - 20)

Lecture: Wednesdays 12:00PM to 1:45PM
(Lectures will be in synchronous on Zoom)

IMPORTANT NOTE ON COURSE DELIVERY FOR WINTER 2021:

This Winter 2021 course will be offered entirely online as part of the University's plan to ensure everyone's safety during the Covid-19 pandemic. Please read the outline carefully to see which course components will be offered synchronously (where you are expected to participate at the usual scheduled course time) and which components will be offered asynchronously (to be completed on your own time). Synchronous course sessions will normally be hosted on Zoom, a video-conferencing program. To access scheduled Zoom course sessions, go to D2L, click on the COMMUNICATION tab, and select Zoom 5 or 10 minutes before class is scheduled to begin.

If you will not be able to participate in scheduled synchronous class sessions owing to time differences, then you should arrange to take this course when it is offered in person in the future.

Note that the time indicated on course outlines for all timed quizzes and exams in CMCL, COMS, and FILM courses includes 50% extra time to allow for technical difficulties.

Professor:	Dr. Jessalynn Keller
Email:	Jessalynn.keller@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	Tuesdays, 10AM – 12PM

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.

The topic for this course is "Girls' Media Studies" and will explore the relationship between girls, girlhood, and North American media culture from a feminist cultural studies perspective. As a culturally constructed concept informed by historical, social, and geographic location, we will trace shifting representations of girlhood across various media forms, including film, television, magazines, celebrity culture, and social media. We will simultaneously learn how girls consume these media texts and respond to them as savvy media producers and cultural creators. As feminist scholars, we will be guided by an intersectional approach, paying attention to how gender, age, race, sexuality, ability and other identity markers shape mediated girlhoods within both popular and subcultural media. Topics will include: Bedroom culture, girls' fandom, riot grrrl zines, girl social media stars, and girls' media activism.

Additional Information

- The weekly schedule of topics and readings will be posted to D2L prior to the start of the course.
- Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline.

Objectives of the Course

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the history of girls' media studies as an evolving scholarly field
- Articulate key theoretical and methodological frameworks for studying girls' media cultures from a feminist cultural studies perspective
- Analyze the ways in which gendered, racialized and sexualized subjectivities are produced, circulated and consumed within girls' media cultures
- Engage in independent, original scholarly research and writing in the field of girls' media studies
- Develop both verbal and written analytic skills needed for undergraduate study

Textbooks and Readings

All required readings will be posted to D2L. Required screenings will be available for viewing on various streaming platforms and/or available for rental (for a small fee) via video on demand. Please notify professor if you have trouble accessing any of the material.

Learning Technologies and Requirements & Policy on the Use of Electronic Communication Devices

This is an online course. In order to complete online (or blended) 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);
- A microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone.

Most current laptops will have a built-in webcam, speaker and microphone. 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 the university's IT department. For more information, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/student-campus-services-information-technologies-it.html>

Instructors may arrange to record synchronous zoom class sessions for lesson capture; however, students are not to share recordings with others. Please carefully review the section on Instructor Copyright at the end of this outline.

Email policy

Before emailing me, please check that the answer to your question is not in the course syllabus! I aim to answer all email inquiries as soon as possible, but will not reply to emails in the evening or over the weekend. When sending me an email, please specify what course

you are in (COMS 591) and include a clear statement of purpose in the subject line. Always be professional and courteous in your emails.

If you want to discuss an assignment or a concern about the course I prefer to meet during office hours, as these meetings are often more fruitful than a lengthy email exchange. I encourage you to use my office hours, and hope to meet many of you there – virtually -- throughout the semester.

Respect and Diversity in the Classroom

Class periods will provide opportunity for student contributions and we 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, 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. I am suggesting that you include your pronoun in your Zoom name, for example: Jessalynn (she/her)

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed Components	Due
10%	<p style="text-align: center;">Attendance and participation</p> <p>Given that this is a senior seminar course, I expect students to attend class. Ideally, I'd like you to have your camera on – this allows for a much more productive discussion amongst classmates. Students are allowed two “free” absences before absences will negatively affect one’s grade (unless of course, there are extenuating circumstances). Participation will be graded based upon quality contributions (demonstrating an engagement with required readings and screenings) to class discussions (both full class and break-out room discussions). Participation can be verbal or using the chat function in Zoom. This will be discussed at length in the first class.</p>	Ongoing
15%	<p style="text-align: center;">Proposal for Final Research Paper/Creative Project (3 - 4 pages)</p> <p>Students will produce a proposal outlining the topic of their final paper/creative assignment. The proposal will include an introduction to the topic, research question, and short annotated bibliography. Detailed information about this assignment will be provided and discussed in class.</p>	Wednesday, February 24
15%	<p style="text-align: center;">Group Presentation</p> <p>In groups of five, students will give a brief (10-15 minute) presentation live on Zoom during an assigned class period. Topics and groups will be assigned during the first class and further information about expectations for this assignment will be discussed.</p>	As assigned (between January 27 & March 10)
25%	<p style="text-align: center;">Reflection journal (Choose 7 prompts out of 9)</p> <p>Throughout the term, students will reflect on course readings and media through a journal produced on the digital platform Padlet. Students are expected to complete seven prompts (found in syllabus) throughout the term. Answers to the prompt should demonstrate your understanding of course readings and an ability to critically respond to the reading, guided by the prompt. Detailed information about this</p>	Wednesday, April 7

	assignment will be provided and discussed in class.	
35%	<p align="center">Final research paper (12 - 15 pages) OR Creative assignment</p> <p>Students will produce a final research paper or creative assignment that will demonstrate a mastery of course concepts coupled within independent, original research. Detailed information about this project will be provided and discussed in class.</p>	<p>Wednesday, April 14</p>

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

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

If you miss a required course component, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.

Submission of Assignments

Please submit all assignments electronically by uploading them to the designated D2L dropbox (unless instructed otherwise in the assignment guidelines). Include your name and ID number on all assignments. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that you submit the proper version (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission).

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 recorded 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 a partial letter grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late. If you know you need to hand in something late, please speak to the professor as soon as possible so an alternative arrangement can be made.

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. 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) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should provide supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require that a medical note be presented. For the policy on supporting documentation the use of a statutory declaration, see Section M.1 of the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>. Also see FAQs for Students: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals/student-faq>

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 and attendance/participation evaluation.

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, please consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, 3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to <https://success.ucalgary.ca/home.htm>

Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation

Course materials created by the instructor (including 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.

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). 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 deferrals of exams and course work, requests for reappraisals, and other matters, please see the relevant sections in the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html>

Student Support Services and Resources

Please visit <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, visit <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students>. IT support is available at itsupport@ucalgary.ca or by calling 403-220.5555.

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

Posted to D2L prior to the start of class.