

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Communication Studies (COMS) 503 - L02/COMS 717 - S01
Advanced Special Topics in Communication and Media Studies/Selected Topics
in Communication:
Telecommunication Policy
Fall 2019

Thursday, Sept. 5 – Thursday, Dec 6 (excluding Nov 14)

Thursday 12:30-15:15

Instructor: Gregory Taylor / Richard Hawkins

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Office Hours: Taylor - Tuesdays 1:00pm – 3:00pm or by appointment

Hawkins - Thursday 9:30am-11:30am

Course Description

The internet is a physical, economic and political construct. It is the product of material objects (cables, towers, internet exchange centres), high tech national and multi-national industries (Bell, Microsoft, Ericsson), as well as government policies, and laws. This essential means of communication of contemporary life also remains firmly rooted in foundations established more than a century ago.

Through lectures, discussions and workshops, students will engage with the physical, legislative and regulatory environment for telecommunication and the Internet. Students will explore social, legal, political and economic theories of regulated industries, focusing primarily upon wired and wireless telecommunications.

Students will then apply this knowledge to topical communication issues that currently are under consideration or review in the Canadian regulatory system, as centered in the Department of Innovation, Science, and Economic Development (ISED) and the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).

Students will prepare individual papers and will also engage in intensive group work. Teams will prepare, present and argue regulatory interventions on specific issues in front of an expert panel in a moot CRTC hearing. Teams will work in conditions that mirror those of an actual regulatory intervention.

The first weeks of the course will be devoted to an intensive examination of the essential theories, instruments, institutional structures, and practices of communication regulation, coupled with an exploration of how regulatory processes respond to evolution in technologies. The latter part of the course situates these materials in their Canadian contexts. The last part focuses on practice: acquiring and applying the research and professional skills necessary in order to prepare effective regulatory interventions.

Given that this class has graduate and undergraduate students, there will be additional readings, some longer assignments, and a different midterm exam for graduate students in COMS 717.

Objectives of the Course

In this course students will:

- Gain knowledge of the history, theory and practice of regulation as applied to communication infrastructures;
- Understand the technological, political and industrial components of the communications infrastructure, how they work and how they interact;
- Acquire specialized research skills involving government and public documents;
- Experience the tactics and strategy of engaging in the regulatory process;
- Analyze, develop and argue regulatory positions under conditions akin to what they would encounter in actual regulatory proceedings.

Textbooks and Readings

Required textbook:

Nuechterlein, J. E. & P. J. Weiser (2013) *Digital Crossroads: Telecommunications Law and Policy in the Internet Age*, (Second Edition), Cambridge MA: MIT Press.

Fully accessible online via the University Library.

Additional required readings:

Babe, R. E. (1990) *Telecommunications in Canada: Technology, Industry and Government*, Part One pp. 3-29. Available on D2L.

Beaudry, P. (2010) Wireline deregulation: The Canadian experience, *Telecommunications Policy*, 34, 606-615. Available on D2L.

Clement, Andrew ; Obar, Jonathan A. *Chapter I. Canadian Internet “Boomerang” Traffic and Mass NSA Surveillance: Responding to Privacy and Network Sovereignty Challenges* In: *Law, Privacy and Surveillance in Canada in the Post-Snowden Era* [online]. Ottawa: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa | University of Ottawa Press, 2015 open access <https://books.openedition.org/uop/929?lang=en>

Crawford, Susan (August 11, 2016) "The Next Generation of Wireless — “5G” — Is All Hype." *Wired*. Available online <https://www.wired.com/2016/08/the-next-generation-of-wireless-5g-is-all-hype/>

Crawford, S. (2019) *Fiber: The Coming Tech Revolution--And Why America Might Miss It*: Yale University Press.

Ekos Research Associates Inc. (2016) Let's Talk Broadband Findings Report (section 3: Internet Services for Rural Canadians) <http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pwgsc-tpsgc/por-ef/crtc/2016/030-15-e/report.pdf>

Iacobucci, E., Trebilcock, M., & Winter, R. (2006). The Canadian experience with deregulation. *University of Toronto Law Journal*, 56(1), 1–74. (Students are responsible only for p- 1-29). Available on D2L.

Jackson, S. J., Edwards, P. N., , Bowker, G. C., & Knobel, C. P. (2007) Understanding Infrastructure: History, Heuristics, and Cyberinfrastructure Policy, *First Monday* 12(6) (on-line journal) Available on D2L.

McNally, Michael B., Dinesh Rathi, Kris Joseph, Jennifer Evaniew, and Amy Adkisson. (2018) "Ongoing Policy, Regulatory, and Competitive Challenges Facing Canada's Small Internet Service Providers." *Journal of Information Policy* 8:167-198. (available online)

Middleton, C. (2011). Canada's Telecommunications Policy Environment. *Telecommunications Journal of Australia*. (61:4). pp. 69.1-69.14. <https://digital.library.ryerson.ca/islandora/object/RULA%3A5258/datastream/OBJ/view>

Mueller, M. (1993) Universal service in telephone history: a reconstruction, *Telecommunications Policy*, 17 (5), 352-369. Available on D2L.

Mussio, L. (2001) *Telecom Nation: Telecommunications, Computers and Governments in Canada*, Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press. Chapter 4 (pp 89-116). Available on D2L.

Smythe, Dallas Walker. (1957) *The structure and policy of electronic communication, University of Illinois bulletin; v. 54, no. 75*. Urbana: University of Illinois. Chapter One available via D2L

Taylor, Gregory (2013) "Oil in the Ether: A Critical History of Spectrum Auctions in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Communication* 38 (1).

Telecommunications Policy Review Panel (2006), *Final Report*, Ottawa: Industry Canada. (Students are responsible for Chapters 1 and 9). Whole report available on D2L.

Winseck, D. (1995) A Social History of Canadian Telecommunications, *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 20 (2) (online journal). Available on D2L.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Students are welcome to bring laptops and other devices to class so long as these are used to aid student learning. During class, it is not acceptable to play games, answer email, surf the web, or engage in other non-class activities. Cell phone use is not permitted at any time. Inappropriate use of technology not only affects you, but it also

distracts other students and undermines our goal of creating a respectful learning environment.

Assignments and Evaluation

Students will be graded based on the following components:

Short Writing Assignment — (10%): Due date— any time before Oct 3

Students will be required to write an early response to a course reading. The assignment must be completed within any of the first five weeks of class (by Oct 3). This assignment is about your reflections on the reading – therefore the response is due before the class in which the reading will be discussed. Assignments will not be accepted after the class. Students should strengthen and develop their analysis by drawing upon their own experiences while demonstrating clear knowledge of the work cited. The class on Oct 3 is the final class to submit the short writing assignment. Each response must be between 600 and 800 words (COMS 503)/ 800 – 1000 words (COMS 717). Responses must critically interrogate the text and analyze its implications. Avoid excessive summary. Responses must demonstrate sound analysis of the ideas from assigned readings and include specific quotes. Other sources may be used if formally cited but are not required. This assignment is to be uploaded to D2L.

In Class Mid-Term Exam (25%) (Oct 31)

A 1.5 hour in-class quiz will test for comprehension of key concepts, definitions, legal and regulatory instruments, and readings as discussed in weeks one through nine.

Policy Briefing (30%) (Due Dec 5)

Each student will individually prepare a fully referenced policy briefing such as might be required by a government ministry, an NGO, a community group etc. Briefings will take a general subject or theme that is covered in the first eight weeks of the course, and discuss it critically with reference to the current situation in Canada relevant to this subject or theme. Papers will be minimum 8 pages (2000 words) and maximum 10 pages in length for COMS 503 / minimum 14 pages (3500 words) COMS 717, exclusive of references. A more detailed organizational outline will be provided in class.

Group project exercise (25%) (In class Nov 28)

Regulatory interventions on important topics are typically developed in teams that integrate several areas of expertise. Depending upon the subject matter, teams can require input on legal, economic, political, cultural, commercial and strategic matters.

The group exercise aims to reproduce this environment in real time and under realistic working conditions. Small teams (3-4 participants) will be formed around 4-5 specific topical issues that are currently on the Canadian regulatory agenda. Two teams will be assigned to each issue. One team will be assigned to argue in favor of a proposition or position, the other against it. Students will be assigned to teams, and teams to issues and positions by lottery.

Teams will allocate different responsibilities and research tasks to different group members. Each group will then research the issues and prepare their position with reference to the relevant legal and regulatory frameworks, and to CRTC decisions and rulings. In-class workshop sessions will assist teams in researching and developing their cases, and in formulating presentation and argumentation strategies.

The second last week of class (Nov 28) will take the form of a mock CRTC hearing in front of a panel of experts. Each group will have ten minutes to present their case, with an additional 10 minutes to respond to questions from the panel.

The hearing presentations will be backed up by written submissions from each team – maximum 2 pages – that summarize the key points and arguments of the presentation. These must be submitted by email to the instructor on or before Nov. 25, so that they can be distributed in advance of the mock hearing to members of the panel.

Exercises will be assessed on the adequacy of background preparation, the strength of the argumentation, the ability to respond to specific questions, and the overall persuasiveness of the presentation.

Participation (10%) Students are expected to complete all assigned readings ahead of class, and to participate actively by engaging with their fellow students and by offering thoughtful and constructive commentary during class discussions and in groups.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

All assignments and exams must be completed or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

Submission of Assignments:

Please hand in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor if possible with the exception of short papers due via D2L. 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.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at final exams in SS 320 after classes have ended. 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. For courses in which assignments are submitted electronically, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the correct copy of the assignment is submitted. (Including the version date or version number in your file name may help you avoid submitting the wrong version of your written assignments.)

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.

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

Final grades are reported as letter grades. The policy briefing assignment will be given a letter grade. All other components will receive percentage grades. The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Department. If letter grades are used for an assignment or other course component, the percentage equivalent in the final column will be used for calculating the final grade:

GPA	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculation*
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 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://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success?utm_source=ssc&utm_medium=redirect&utm_campaign=redirect).

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 (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 <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/resources/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.