

Science, Technology, and Society (STAS) 341 – Lecture 01
New Media, Technology, and Society
Fall 2013
Tues and Thur 15:30-16:45

Instructor: Dr. Patrick Feng
Office Location: SS 308
Office Phone: 220-6819
E-Mail: pfeng@ucalgary.ca
Office Hours: Thursdays 14:00-15:00
or by appointment

Course Description

This course examines the social, political, and cultural aspects of new media and information and communication technologies (ICTs) within contemporary societies. We will investigate what it means to live in “an information society” using a mix of theoretical approaches and concrete case studies.

Topics to be covered include: history of new media; theoretical approaches to new media; social networking; digital games; the knowledge economy; and Internet law and policy. Students will have the opportunity to work in groups and conduct research.

Objectives of the Course

By the end of the course students should:

1. Be familiar with a number of theories about technology and its relationship to society;
2. Think critically about the design, marketing, consumption, and use of new media and ICTs in modern societies;
3. Have developed some expertise on how new media and ICTs are being applied in a particular field (e.g., education, environment, health, politics).

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. Not only do such practices negatively affect you, they also distract other students and undermine our goal of creating a respectful learning environment.

Textbooks and Readings:

There is one required text for this course:

- Terry Flew and Richard Smith, *New Media: An Introduction* (Canadian ed.), Oxford University Press, 2011.

Additional readings will be made available online via Blackboard.

Assignments and Evaluation

Students will be graded based on the following components:

- Group project 40% *reports due Nov 26; presentations Nov 26-Dec 3*
- Tests (2 @ 25%) 50% *in class on Oct 8 and Nov 19*
- Class contributions 10% *ongoing*

Brief description of assignments

- **Group project:** Students will work in small groups researching a topic of their choice. Broadly speaking, the goal is to investigate an issue arising from the use of new media and to conceptualize ways of using new media to address social issues. Students are encouraged to focus their attention on a technology that is being used in the Calgary area. At the end of the course, groups will present their findings and submit a written report summarizing their work.

Students will form groups the second week of term. Groups will be graded on both process and outcome measures. A written report (20 pages) and in-class presentation are due in late November. Additional details about the group project will be provided on the first day of class.

- **Tests:** Two tests will be given in class: the first on Oct 8, the second on Nov 19. These will be based on lecture material and the textbook. Tests will be one hour in length and will be a mix of multiple choice and short answer questions.
- **Class contributions:** This class is based on an interactive learning environment, one in which students are active contributors to class discussions. Students will be assessed on their contributions in-class and on the class Blackboard site.

Note: All assignments must be completed or a grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Note: Please hand in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor if possible. 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.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO

Please note: If your class is held in the evening, the Registrar's Office will make every attempt to schedule the final exam during the evening; however, there is NO guarantee that the exam will NOT be scheduled during the day.

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.

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

Department 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://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.

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 System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

	Grading Scale
A+	96-100
A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99
B	75-79.99
B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99

C-	55-59.99
D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

Where a grade on a particular assignment is expressed as a letter grade, it will normally be converted to a number using the midpoint of the scale. That is, A- would be converted to 87.5 for calculation purposes. F will be converted to zero.

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 (3rd Floor Taylor Family Digital Library, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) 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 Student Accessibility Services (220-8237, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) 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.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

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/ethics/cfreb>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

A detailed schedule will be handed out on the first day of class.