

## The University of Calgary

### Sociology 345 (Weekend University)

#### Mass Communications

Winter 2010

Instructor: Dr. Nancy Doetzel

Classroom: **(PF 114)**

Saturday, 1-4:50 PM

Office: SS 952

Office Hours: Saturday before class 12 p.m. (by appointment is ideal)

Office Phone: 220-6501

E-mail: [ndoetzel@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ndoetzel@ucalgary.ca)

#### Course Description:

Your course reader “Media Scapes” suggests that regarding communication solely as “mass communication” is reductionist and that within mass media the channeling of meanings is done with the audience in mind. This course will commence with a review of the hand book: How to Avoid Misunderstandings, which will assist students in the process of critical thinking, from a micro perspective.

From a Macro perspective, mass communication can be defined in terms of 3 types of activities: centralized production with wide dissemination (e.g. broadcast communication, newspapers); decentralized production with wide dissemination primarily by public access to the internet and individuals interacting with one another on a wide scale, within the world, nation or widespread community by means of public access to communication channels (e.g. cell phone, email) .... as pointed out in your Lorimer and Gasher text.

With a focus on the main types of mass communication, this course will examine the key social processes associated with them. In particular, it will examine the interaction between society and culture and the mass communication; the content and audiences of mass communication and the way in which the modern globalized and digitized world has been shaped by mass communications and the ways in which these aspects of modern societies shape mass communication. The course will examine these key elements of mass communication from a Canadian perspective. Additionally, the course will give students opportunities to demonstrate individual and group approaches to various means of communication.

Required Text, Reader & Book:

Attallah, P. and Shade, L. R. ( 2006) *Mediascapes*. Toronto: Thompson/Nelson. (**READER**)

Lorimer, R. and Gasher, M.(2008) *Mass Communication in Canada* (6<sup>th</sup> Addition). Oxford University Press: Don Mills, Ontario. (**TEXT**)

Paris, J. Small, R. , Heyman, R (2007) *How to Avoid Misunderstandings & Hurt Feelings in Everyday Life*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications (**BOOK**)

### **Course Requirements for student assessment:**

1. **Mid-Term** multiple choice/ true and false questions scheduled for Feb. 27, 2010.

**30%**

2. **Term Group Assignment** ( based on text/reader chapters assigned to your group) due on assigned week; **10%** for group presentation); presentation, about 45 minutes-one hour time slot per group, which includes a class participation exercise for about 15 minutes, and five minutes for your (summaries of your papers.)

In the group portion, you can present in a creative way agreed upon by your group members. This could range from drama, music, video clips, power point, commercials, talk show, game show, etc. (Use

your imagination!!). You must provide some form of notes on your assigned chapters, to be posted on Blackboard for your fellow students. These notes should be in the form of summarizing the chapter in typed notes or power point slides. The notes must be submitted to the professor (ideally **on a CD or memory stick**) for part of your group mark, following your presentations.

\* You will be given an evaluation form to evaluate the participation of each group member.

\* Each student within the group will also do a **one minute** summary of their individual papers, profiling a media mentor. This will be done before your group does the group portion of the presentation. Your individual papers are then due the (class) or week after **your group work has been presented.**

**\*Late papers will not be accepted for marking unless the professor has been given a legitimate reason for the lateness.**

### **3. Individual paper ( 18 marks for written; 2 marks for oral ) (20%)**

Paper should be four to five pages double spaced; for your paper, you are to select a representative of mass media, whom you admire and may have been mentored by , such as an (author, actor, actress, film producer, journalist, musician, sports figure, etc... who has greatly influenced how you view the world and has also influenced their audiences in the construction of meaning of their worlds.) Apply **(a chapter or chapters from your reader and or text book)** as your primary sources that assist you to frame your paper in a Sociological context, related to the teachings in this Mass Communications course. For example: you can examine **how** your selected “mass media” representative has demonstrated ways our modern world has been shaped by their presence in mass communications 2/review aspects of modern societies that have been shaped by their influences within mass communication 3/explore some key social processes associated with them shaping mass communication 4/assess the range of influence they’ve had in mass communication and on the evolution of society and or the social construction of your identity 5/discern if your media representative is associated with centralized, decentralized and/or widespread community forms of mass communication 6/state what your preferred form of mass

communication is, in the context of your selected individual/mentor and why you prefer this for of mass communication.

\* You **do not** need to answer **all** the preceding questions; they are just examples of questions that can be used as guides to the framing of your paper into a Sociological and Mass Communications context.

\*Apply critical thinking within your writing. Create an outline before beginning the research which would assist you to cluster ideas around your central subject. State your standpoint on why you selected the individual you have chosen..... within the first paragraph, and state what you plan to cover in the body of the paper. In the body of the paper, write about what you stated that you would cover by supporting the standpoint you have taken. In the final paragraph, write a conclusion, which is a summary of what you have covered in the paper.

Incorporate literature from at least **three** sources outside of your assigned course books, which are your primary sources. Use **APA** referencing. Your secondary sources can include: books, articles, interviews, reviews, newspaper clippings, etc. However, make sure you use correct referencing (APA) to avoid plagiarism. You need to respect other's intellectual property.

### **Suggested outline to get you started:**

*Choice of person:*

*Who, What, When, Where, Why?*

*Possible Focus:*

*\*What will the paper centre on?*

*Primary & Secondary Sources*

*Text book, reader ( primary) & outside literature from journals or other scholarly sources (secondary).*

3. **Summary of your paper** : On the date , your group does a group presentation, you will be expected to present an **30 second-to one minute oral summary** of your individual paper. This summary will be worth 2 marks. Thus, the written portion of your paper will be worth

18 marks, and the oral portion worth two marks. The paper is worth 10% of your final mark.

3. **Class participation assignments**: total of **5%**; You **must** attend the classes that these assignments are scheduled for in order to receive the **participation** marks for these assignments.

Group photo presentation : 1%

Individual talk : 1 %

Commercial: 1 %

Group response to video or guest speaker: 1 %

Group study exercise for midterm and for final 1 %

#### 4. **Final Assessment**

April 17, 2010 35%

The “final” will be made up of a common objective component  
...multiple choice and true and false questions

The major term assignments will constitute a group class presentation, individual summary of individual paper, associated with your assigned course reading material.

A proportion of each class will entail that students be involved in group discussions and deconstructing videos. Class discussions are meant to encourage students to elaborate on and/or apply the knowledge they are gaining from lectures and readings.

**Attendance** at lectures is important, as you are responsible for the material covered in your classes. If you miss **two** classes, without a legitimate reason, you may be advised to drop the course. Two classes amounts to almost **eight** hours of course time.

Summaries of lectures or Power Point lecture slides as well as other materials deemed useful to students will be posted on Blackboard after the classes.

The professor will give a **summary presentation** on the topics to be elaborated on the following week by the groups, and will also lecture



Participation Assignment due Jan 23: Select, or take a meaningful photo, related to your reader (How to Avoid Misunderstanding) and put your photo together with all the other group members' photos. Compose a short story, song, prose, poem or news item to express the meaning your group has constructed from the photos selected, in relationship to your readings. Present this photo assignment in the Jan. 23 class. The presentation should be about **five** minutes in length, per group.

### **Jan 23.**

Professor : Intro to Chapter 2 of Text Book:: Mass Communications in Canada

\* How to Avoid Misunderstandings ( continuation)

\* Ch. 7 Reader: Women and the Media (pg. 114)

Photo presentations

\* Film

\*Participation Assignment due Jan 30: Think of a product or idea you would like to sell, and with your group design a **60 second television** or radio commercial to be presented in class. You must keep it to 60 seconds.

### **Jan 30**

Professor: Intro to chapters 3 & 4 of text

Commercial presentations

Guest speaker or film

Group # 1: Text (Mass Communication in Canada), chapter # 1: Communication and Society

Reader (Mediascapes ), chapter 12: Advertising in Canada pg. 196

Group # 2: Text ( Mass Communication in Canada), chapter # 2: Mass Communication and Modern Society

Reader: (Mediascapes) chapter 10: Pirates, Peers and popular Music

Participation Assignment, due Feb. 7: Prepare a **one minute talk**, centering around how you think that your life would be without the modern means of mass communications, such as: television, radio, cell phone and the computer. Be prepared to present your one minute talk in class Feb 7. You will be given one mark if you do the talk in one minute and a half a mark if you talk is over time or under time. (You can compose the talk when you are in the class standing in front of your peers, if this is easier for you.)

### **February 7:**

Professor: Intro to ch. 5 & 6 of text.  
Student talks

Group # 3 Text Chapter # 3: Media, History, Culture and Politics  
Reader chapter # 20: Boundaries Blurred: The mass media and politics (pg. 332)

Group # 4: Text Chapter # 4: Theoretical Perspectives on Media Content  
Reader chapter # 4 : Sipping Starbucks: (pg. 62)

**(Participation Exercises:** Each group who presented can present a 5-10 minute exercise, such as a quiz...or game related to their chapters presented in class, to assist in studying for the midterm. (Participation mark 1%).

### **\*Feb 13 & 20 ( no classes)**

### **Feb. 27 Midterm**

- Video
- Group work
- Professor: summary of chapters 6 & 9 of text

### **March 7:**



Professor: Intro to chapter 7 of text book

Group # 5: Text Chapter # 5: Theoretical Perspectives on Audiences  
Reader chapter # 3: The Audience (pg. 49).

Group # 6: Reader: Chapter # 6: Youth Violence, Moral Panic, and  
the Canadian Media; (pg. 95)

Text: Chapter # 9 Journalists as Content Producers

Video and discussion

### **March 13**

Professor: Non-violent Communication: A language of life  
Intro to ch. 8 of text.

Group # 7 , Ch.7 text: Cultural Industries, Law and Policy  
Reader: Ch. 13, Alternative media ( pg. 213)

Guest speaker or video

Participation assignment: (possibly a group perspective on video or  
Speaker)

( 1 %)

### **March 20**

Professor: Alternative forms of communication

Group # 8, Ch. 8 text: The Structure and role of Ownership  
Reader: Ch. 5: Good Kids/Bad kids: What a Culture can do (pg. 77)

Video

### **March 27 ( Optional attendance)**

\*Possibly a ***Field Trip*** to a “Self Publishing” breakfast, at the Danish Club, 727 11<sup>th</sup> Ave. S.W. from 8 a.m. till noon; Students will need to confirm

\* No formal class in the classroom

### **April 3**

#### **\*Review for final Video**

**Participation Exercises:** Each group who presented after the midterm can present a 5-10 minute exercise, such as a quiz...or game related to their chapters presented in class. (Participation mark 1%).

**\* Celebration of last class and opportunities to pick up bonus marks**

**April 18** Weekend university scheduled final exam, in classroom from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m.

**Note:** Time spent on topics and the order listed on the course outline above may be slightly altered over the semester to better respond to student needs, interests, and availability of speakers. Student group work, associated with the individual chapters will be presented in class. Ideally, appointments should to be booked to consult with the professor.

#### ***Emergency evacuations:***

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom/lab, please proceed to the assembly point by the Food Court in the Professional Faculties Building.

#### ***Deferrals:***

If at all possible you must provide *advance* notice to the instructor if you are unable to take a test or pass in an assignment or essay on time. All requests for deferral of a course component due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the

following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. Travel arrangements and misreading of the syllabus are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral. Deferrals will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

If you have missed a test for a legitimate reason, the instructor can require you to write a “make up” test as close in time to the original test as possible or can choose to transfer the percentage weight to another course component. If the instructor schedules a “make up” test for you, its date and location will be at the convenience of the Sociology Department.

Please note that requests to defer a final examination or to defer term work past the end of a term go through the Undergraduate Programs Office (UPO) and must be processed by the deadlines that are established in the U of C Calendar. You can find the forms you need online:

*Deferred Final Exam Application:*

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/Winter2008DEFERREDFINALEXAMINATIONS.pdf>

*Deferred Term Work Form:*

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/defTW.pdf>

You must submit these deferral forms to the Social Sciences Associate Dean (Students) through the UPO office: Undergraduate Programs Office, 4th Floor, MacEwan Student Centre. Only the Associate Dean approves requests for deferrals which extend beyond the end of a term. Instructors are not involved in such decisions. To make an appointment with the Associate Dean, phone (403) 220-8155.

***Ethics Research:*** Students are advised that any research with human subjects--including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation--must have the approval of the Departmental Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

***Academic Misconduct:*** Plagiarism, cheating and other academic misconduct are regarded as serious academic offences. Students are advised to consult the University Calendar which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

***The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP)*** legislation disallows the practice of having students

retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside an instructor's office or the Department main office. Written assignments must be returned to students individually, during class, or during the instructor's office hours; if a student is unable to pick up her/his assignment s/he may provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

**Safewalk:** The University of Calgary provides a "safe walk" service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the "Help" phones located around Campus.

**Academic Accommodation:** Students with a disability, who require academic accommodation, need to register with the Disability Resource Centre (MC 295, phone 220-8237). Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. **It is a student's responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre and to request academic accommodation, if required.**

***Handing in papers outside of class, return of final papers, and release of final grades:***

1. When students are unable to submit papers in class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor or teaching assistant. Papers will not be accepted in the main Sociology Department office.
2. Final papers will not be returned through the main Sociology Department office. The Freedom of Information and Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place (i.e. outside an instructor's office, the department office etc.) Students who want their final papers returned by mail must attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the paper. Otherwise final papers will be available for pick-up only during the instructor's office hours at the end of this term or at the beginning of the next term.
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are available only online.

