

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Communication and Media Studies COMS 393 L01

Critical Perspectives on Health & Science

Fall 2017

Tuesday, September 12 – Thursday, December 7th

Lecture: TR 9:30-10:45

Instructor: Ray op'tLand
Office: SS240
Office Phone: n/a
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Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: 8:30-9:30 a.m., Tuesday and Thursday, or by appointment

Course Description

Examines the construction and communication of health and science issues as a socio-cultural phenomenon and interrogates the ways in which health and science issues are communicated, defined, represented, and framed, particularly within contemporary media.

Additional Information

Selected topics in this course will be directed by student participation, research and work on the assigned readings. Group work will be a core component of the course, and will be included in an in-class evaluation. This group work will require the effective communication of the issues surrounding a current controversy in science and/or health to the students' peers, as a means of putting the course material into practice.

Objectives of the Course

- To introduce students to key concepts and critical approaches in the social construction and communication of health and science issues.
- To equip students with the resources needed to critically interrogate the discursive construction and framing of health and science issues in contemporary media and communication (e.g., news, policy, science).
- To provide students with the opportunity to improve their critical thinking, textual analysis, scholarly research, and effective writing skills.
- To allow for the students to engage in research of select topics in health and science communication, and engage in the practice of reporting that to their peers.

Textbooks and Readings

All required readings will be posted to D2L as PDF files, permalinks, or available online through the University of Calgary Library website. Students will be expected to bring of copy of assigned readings to class—as digital files or printouts.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Students are welcome to use laptops and other electronic note-taking devices in this course. Please be considerate of others during lectures, screenings, and discussions and switch off all iPods, cellphones, etc. whenever you enter the classroom.

Phone use, including sending/receiving text messages, taking calls in class or leaving the class to take calls is disruptive to the entire class and will not be tolerated.

Pictures of lecture materials or class activities is prohibited, unless explicit consent is given by the instructor.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Course components	Due
5%	Participation	ongoing
10%	Frame Analysis, 3-4 pages	Oct. 3
10%	Quiz #1 – closed book, 30 minutes	Oct. 12
10%	Quiz #2 – closed book, 30 minutes	Nov. 7
5%	Group Proposal/Bibliography	Oct. 24
20%	Group Presentation – 20-30 minutes, in class	Nov. 14-30
30%	Final paper – individual, 12-15 pages	Nov. 30
10%	Final quiz – note page allowed, 30 minutes	Dec.7

Frame Analysis

10%

Oct 3

Students will identify a current health or science issue (either discussed in class, or from a list available on D2L) and write a short (500-1000) word analysis of the communication framing. (???) Details will be provided in class and on D2L.

Quizzes

10% (x3)

Oct 12, Nov 7, Dec 7

There will be three quizzes for the class, worth 10% each. They will contain a number of multiple choice and short answer questions based on the course readings and the lectures and class discussions. The quizzes are not cumulative; each will cover the material reviewed *prior* to that date.

The final quiz will cover the readings that have been submitted to the class by the various groups, and the material discussed during those classes. So, while attendance is not mandatory for the group presentations, it should help you prepare for the final quiz.

Group Proposal / Bibliography

5%

Oct 24

A completed proposal and bibliography item needs to be submitted prior to conducting the group presentation. Both the group presentation and the final paper will be based off this, so submission of the proposal is mandatory for completion of the other assignments.

Group presentation

20%

Nov 14-30

Students will present in small groups (4-6 students) about the controversy around a science or health topic, and how it is communicated. Students will need to identify key elements of the controversy, as discussed in class, and relate that to key course concepts (Framing, Actor-Network Theory, Social Construction, etc.). About 15-20 minutes should be allotted for presentation; the remainder should be for students to lead discussion in the classroom.

Final Paper**30%****Nov 30**

Based on the same topic that they worked on for the group presentation, each student will write an essay of 12-15 pages (3-4000 words). The paper should be written in APA format according to the style (information provided at the Student Success Centre, D2L or online). The paper will outline the controversy, the frames, and the communication surrounding it, and investigate the major issues while relating them back to the themes of the course.

Participation**5%****ongoing**

Students are expected to make relevant contributions to class discussion on an ongoing basis. This will include individual comments, round-table discussions, and group-work activities. The grade is dependent on quality of the discussion, not simply quantity or volume.

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. 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. Accommodations may be made on a case-by-case basis; contact your instructor.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at marked final exams in SS 320. 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/legalservices/foip/foip-hia>

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 day late.

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. Course work will be graded using raw point scores. These will be converted to the letter-grade equivalent on D2L. A rubric for each assignment will be available on D2L.

The following chart outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. In calculating final grades in this course, letter grades will be converted to the midpoint of the percentage range, as shown in the final column of the table below.

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%
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* If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades.

** 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.

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 • Online resources and tips 	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) 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

All readings will be available on D2L or through the University of Calgary website. Presentation-based readings will be made available on D2L a minimum of one week prior to the presentation.

Month	Date	Topic / Readings	Events
Sept	12	Introduction	
	14	<p>Frames & Social Construction</p> <p>Entman,R. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. <i>Journal of Communication</i>, 43(4), 51-58.</p> <p>Leeds-Hurwitz, W. (2009). Social construction of reality. In S. Littlejohn & K. Foss (eds.), <i>Encyclopedia of Communication Theory</i>, Vol. 1. (pp. 891-894). London: Sage.</p>	
	19	<p>Communications, Health & Science</p> <p>Elliott, C. D. (2014). Communication and Health: An Interrogation. <i>Canadian Journal of Communication</i>, 39(2). https://doi.org/10.22230/cjc.2014v39n2a2779</p> <p>Nisbet, M. C., & Scheufele, D. A. (2009). What's next for science communication? Promising directions and lingering distractions. <i>American Journal of Botany</i>, 96(10), 1767–1778. https://doi.org/10.3732/ajb.0900041</p>	
	21	<p>Big Sugar</p> <p>Taubes, G. (2016). <i>The Case Against Sugar</i> (1 edition). New York: Knopf. Introduction and Chapter 1.</p>	
	26	<p>Big Agriculture</p> <p>Clark, L. F., Keet, M. J., & Ryan, C. D. (2015). Mediating the GM Foods Debate: Lessons from the Enduring Conflict Framework. <i>Journal of Food Law and Policy</i>, 11, 229.</p>	
	28	<p>Big Pharma</p> <p>Elliott, C. (2010) Pharmaceutical propaganda. In J.M. Metzl & A. Kirkland (eds.) <i>Against health: How health became the new morality</i> (pp. 15-29). New York: New York University Press.</p>	Frame Analysis Due
Oct	3	<p>Big Planet</p> <p>Foust, C. & Murphy, W. (2009). Revealing and reframing apocalyptic tragedy in global warming discourse. <i>Environmental Communication</i> 3(2), 151-167.</p>	
	5	<p>Big Bodies</p> <p>Elliott, C. D. (2007). Big persons, small voices: On governance, obesity, and the narrative of the failed citizen. <i>Journal of Canadian Studies</i>, 41(3), 134–149,206.</p>	

	10	Big Science Kuhn, T. (1996). <i>The structure of scientific revolutions</i> . Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.	
	12	Big Data Lupton, D. (2013). Quantifying the body: Monitoring and measuring health in the age of mHealth technologies. <i>Critical Public Health</i> , 23(4), 393–403.	Quiz #1
	17	Unit Review, Quiz #1 grading	
	19	Representation 1 Steinke, J., Lapinski, M. K., Crocker, N., Zietsman-Thomas, A., Williams, Y., Evergreen, S. H., & Kuchibhotla, S. (2007). Assessing Media Influences on Middle School–Aged Children’s Perceptions of Women in Science Using the Draw-A-Scientist Test (DAST). <i>Science Communication</i> , 29(1), 35–64. https://doi.org/10.1177/1075547007306508	
	24	Representation 2 Alexander, S. M. (2003). Stylish hard bodies: Branded masculinity in Men’s Health Magazine. <i>Sociological Perspectives</i> , 46(4), 535–554.	Group Proposal Due
	26	Narrative & Vaccination Biss, E. (2014). <i>On Immunity: An Inoculation</i> . Minneapolis, Minnesota: Graywolf Press. P. 3-22	
	31	Death	
Nov	2	Science Wars Hacking, I. (2000). <i>The Social Construction of What?</i> (Revised ed. edition). Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.	
	7	Is Science Broken: The Reproducibility Crisis Hilgard, J. and Jamieson, K. H., (2017). ‘Science as “Broken” versus Science as “Self Correcting”’ in <i>The Oxford Handbook of the Science of Science Communication</i> . Oxford University Press. (Chapter 8)	Quiz #2
	9	Unit Review, Quiz #2 grading	
	14	Start of Presentations	Presentations
	16		Presentations
	21		Presentations
	23		Presentations
	28		Presentations
	30		Presentations
Dec	5	Course Review	Final Papers Due
	7	Final Quiz	Final Quiz