

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

COMS 201 (L01): Introduction to Communication and Media Studies

FALL 2020: September 9 to Dec. 9 (excluding Oct. 12th and Nov. 9-13)

Lecture: Tuesday 12:30 pm

(Lectures will be in asynchronous format and posted on D2L on Tuesdays by 12:30 pm)
Lab 1 F 9:00–9:50; Lab 2 F 10:00 –10:50; Lab 3 F 11:00-11:50; Lab 4 12:00-12:50; Lab
5 13:00-13:50; Lab 6 14:00-14:50
(Labs will be synchronous on Zoom)

IMPORTANT NOTE ON COURSE DELIVERY FOR FALL 2020:

This Fall 2020 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.

Instructor:	Dr. Gregory Taylor
Email:	gregory.taylor2@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	Available for email (or video) consultations Tuesday 12:30 – 2:30 pm. Please email to set appointment.

Course Description

In this course we will explore the question of what we are doing when we “communicate”. Are we simply transmitting information? Are we creating meaning? Are we participating in a social process? Are we persuading others? Are we supporting the social status quo? Are we voicing challenges to the ‘system’? Incorporating examples from popular culture, COMS 201 will facilitate your finding an answer to these questions for yourself.

The weekly schedule of topics and readings can be found on D2L. Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline.

Labs (i.e., tutorials) are not considered optional; they are an integral part of the course. Attendance via Zoom and active participation are expected.

Please be aware that much of this course deals with the artifacts, experiences, and products of popular culture. As such, some of the material we study may involve coarse language, sexuality and violence. If this is a problem for you, please inform the instructor or your TA.

Objectives of the Course

Through readings, lectures, written assignments and group discussions and activities, COMS 201 will introduce students to the interdisciplinary field of communications. Recognizing that communication is integral to all human activities and interactions, this course explores elements of communication studies that appeal to scholars from a variety of academic disciplines.

Through an overview of the key concepts, methodological traditions, and major theoretical currents of the field, students will have an opportunity to experience the cutting-edge diversity that defines communication studies. In addition, the course will seek to introduce students to the activity of scholarly communication itself by covering some of the basic principles of academic research: finding and using sources, developing original arguments based partly on those of others, and writing papers in the genre of academic research.

Textbooks and Readings

McQuail, D., and M. Deuze. 2020. *McQuail's Media and Mass Communication Theory*: SAGE Publications. 7th edition

Students may use either the print or electronic version of the textbook. It must be the 7th edition.

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.

When corresponding with the instructor via email, students should include the course name (COMS 201) in the subject line. If you do not include the course name in your email's subject line, your message may get overlooked in the instructor's inbox and go unread. Please maintain a respectful tone in your correspondence with the instructor.

Email is most useful for short, specific inquiries. If you have detailed questions on the course material, assignments, or grades, visit the instructor during office hours.

The instructor will respond to emails during the week, usually on a first-come, first-served basis. Emails sent in the evening or on weekends will not be read (or replied to) until the next working day.

Email inquiries will be responded to on a first-come, first-serve basis. If deemed appropriate by the course instructor, a virtual meeting (via Zoom or Skype) can be held with the student to address the issue.

NOTE: Email submissions of work will NOT be accepted unless otherwise specified.

Online submission of work is now standard, and specific methods of submission have been identified by your professor. Please review those instructions below ("Assignments and Evaluation").

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed Components	Due
30%	<p>2 X 15-mark quizzes</p> <p>Test 1 will be composed of multiple-choice questions designed to provide early feedback on your comprehension of the course material so far. All readings and lectures to this point of the course are potential quiz material.</p> <p>Test 2 will be composed of multiple-choice questions. Test material will be based upon readings and lectures since Oct 16.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quizzes will be administered on D2L• Quizzes will be timed. Once the quiz is opened, students have 60 minutes plus a 30-minute time buffer in case of technical problems• Quizzes will be available for a 24-hour period during which each quiz will be available beginning at 9 am on the scheduled day	<p>Quiz One: Oct 16</p> <p>Quiz Two: Nov 27</p>

10%	<p>Participation grades will be awarded on the basis of your active involvement in tutorial discussions and activities. Details of required tutorial activities will be provided in a Tutorial Outline, which will be posted to D2L. In order to receive participation grades, you are expected to be in attendance for tutorials, contribute to the discussions, and complete required group work and presentations.</p>	Weekly
10%	<p>Tutorial Presentations: upload your presentation PPT slides to the appropriate Discussion section. You should ensure that your slides are detailed (ex. add an additional slide or two based on your speaking notes, where necessary) or upload your speaking notes with the slides.</p> <p><i>OPTIONAL:</i> You are also welcome to upload a video version of your presentation or a PPT presentation with voice-over narration.</p> <p>Assessment of Tutorial Presentations: The marking rubric will be posted to your tutorial's module.</p>	As scheduled
25%	<p>The Research Essay for this course gives you an opportunity to combine out- of-class research with the topics explored in lectures and discussions. You will be given a choice of several essay topics, and expected to write a 1500-1750 word research paper on that topic. More information on the term paper will be provided in class and on D2L.</p> <p>Research Essays will be submitted via D2L Dropbox on December 8 by 12:30 pm.</p>	Dec 8
25%	<p>The Final Exam (registrar scheduled) will be multiple choice style questions administered online via the Quiz function on D2L. You will be responsible for all material covered in the assigned textbook readings and additional required readings posted on D2L, as well as the content of lectures. The exam is open book and scheduled for 90 minutes, but an additional 45 minutes will be allowed in case of technical problems.</p> <p>The final exam should be available for a period of 24 hours but, once opened, must be completed within the time allowed.</p>	

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: Yes

In Fall 2020, all scheduled final examinations will be online. If your class is held in the evening, the Registrar's Office will attempt to schedule the final exam during the evening; however, there is no guarantee that the exam will NOT be scheduled during the day.

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

Please note that tests and examinations will only be deferred in the case of documented illness, bereavement, or varsity team travel. **Tests and exams will not be rescheduled due to travel and vacation plans, work obligations, or other scheduling conflicts.**

Lecture slides, when used, will be posted to D2L.

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 5% or a partial letter grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Assignments submitted one week or more after the due date will not be accepted, unless accommodations have been arranged with the instructor.

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, final grades are reported as letter grades. In this course, percentage scores will be used for grading tests, essays, and tutorial presentations. In calculating final grades in this course, the calculated percentage grade will be translated to the corresponding letter grade according to the Department of CMF grade scale equivalents (ex. a calculated percentage score of 84% will receive a final letter grade of B+).

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%

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://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, 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

Weekly readings are posted to D2L