

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Communication and Media Studies COMS 203 L01

New Media

Fall 2017

Mon. Sept. 11 – Mon. Dec. 4 (excluding Mon. Oct. 9 and Mon. Nov. 13)

Lecture: M 12:00-13:50

Tutorials: R 11:00-11:50; 12:00-12:50 (according to registration)

Instructor: Tamara Shepherd
Office: SS318
Office Phone: 403-220-6729
E-Mail: tamara.shepherd@ucalgary.ca -- emails will be responded to within 24 hours, M-F
Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: Mondays 14:00-15:00, or by appointment

Course Description

This course offers an introduction to the social, political, economic, and cultural aspects of new media. New media will first be situated historically and set up as manifestations of different kinds of power. Topics to be examined include the defining characteristics of new media in relation to networked infrastructure, visual culture and representation, identities, audiences, political engagement, and regulatory frameworks. Toward the conclusion of the course, these elements will be brought together through case studies of specific new media forms: social media platforms, mobile technologies, and digital games. The goal of the course is to provide students with the opportunity, through lectures and tutorials, to gain a broad understanding of new media as a terrain marked by diverse struggles for communication power.

Additional Information

Please be aware that much of this course deals with the artifacts, experiences, and products of new media culture. As such, some of the material we study manifests coarse language, sexuality, and violence. If this is a problem for you, please see the instructor, and think carefully about whether this particular course is the best fit for you.

This course involves both lectures and tutorials, where students will be responsible for participating in discussion and working in smaller groups. Regular attendance is expected and **participation in tutorials is crucial**. Readings must be completed before class, and students are expected to participate fully in group discussions of all assigned readings.

Objectives of the Course

COMS 203 has the following major objectives:

1. To provide you with the basis to identify, analyze and evaluate the social factors influencing the design and use of new media;
2. To encourage critical thinking about new media's historical development and its broader role in society, economics, politics, and culture;

3. To provide you with the opportunity to discuss how the course material relates to everyday new media cultures through written assignments as well as lab activities and group discussion;
4. To help prepare you for further undergraduate study.

Textbooks and Readings

The required textbook for the course is *New Media: An Introduction, Second Canadian Edition* by Terry Flew and Richard Smith (Oxford University Press, 2014). Copies are available for purchase at the campus bookstore, and there are also reserve copies held at the library.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptops are permitted for note taking only. **iPods, cellphones and gaming devices may not be used at all during class.** Please respect the instructor and your fellow students. Improper use of electronic devices will impact your participation grade.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Course components	Due
10%	<p>Participation</p> <p>Tutorials require active participation in both activities and group discussion. Participation is not measured solely by how often you speak up. Informed, thoughtful contributions to discussion are more important than frequent contributions. An ability to demonstrate familiarity with the required readings is also crucial. Attentive listening matters – students who interrupt others, distract their classmates, or use electronic devices in a way that distracts the instructor or their peers will see an impact on their participation grade. Students are also expected to participate by engaging with the presentations of fellow students by attending presentations, asking questions, and offering thoughtful and constructive commentary.</p>	Weekly in tutorial
20%	<p>Mid-term Test 1</p> <p>In the second half of lecture on October 2, students will complete a mid-term test that covers all course material up to and including that date. The test will feature a mix of multiple choice, short answer questions, and one long answer question. All of the questions will pertain to material from the required readings and lectures.</p>	Oct. 2
25%	<p>Mid-term Test 2</p> <p>In the first half of lecture on November 6, students will complete a mid-term test that covers all course material up to (but not including) that date. The test will feature a mix of multiple choice, short answer questions, and one long answer question. All of the questions will pertain to material from the required readings and lectures.</p>	Nov. 6
15%	<p>Ignite presentation</p> <p>In tutorial on November 16, 23, and 30, students will individually present on a particular new media example, according to the topic for the week: social media, mobile technologies, or digital games. A signup sheet for presentation slots will be available in tutorial on November 2 – those who do not sign up will be assigned to a slot. Students should prepare a four-minute Ignite-style talk that presents the example to class and highlights one specific problem or challenge related to the social, economic, political, or cultural aspects of that example. The presentations will be adapted from Ignite talks, where the four-minute talk will be accompanied by 16 slides that each automatically advance after 15 seconds. For more on Ignite talks and to view some examples, see: http://igniteshow.com/.</p>	Nov. 16, 23, 30

30%	<p>Final essay</p> <p>The final essay is due in hard copy on December 7 in tutorial, with the option of handing it in early on December 4 in lecture for students who would like feedback in addition to their essay grade. The essay will be 3-4 pages (900-1200 words) in length, and will cite at least three academic sources – these can be textbook chapters, recommended scholarly readings, or books and journal articles that students locate independently. The essay will build from the ignite presentation by applying two concepts from the course to the new media example used in the presentation. Detailed instructions for the essay will be provided in lecture on November 20.</p>	Dec. 4 or Dec. 7
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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.

Please include your name, ID number, and the instructor's name on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments 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 using APA style. 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. In this course, percentage grades will be used for tests and letter grades will be used for all other assignments.

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%

* 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	http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calgary Police Service • Emergency Text Messaging • Emergency Evacuation & Assembly • Safewalk Program 	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	http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	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 <p>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.</p>

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

+ additional recommended readings will be posted to D2L

Week 1: Sep 11 – Defining “new” media

Required reading:

Flew and Smith, Chapters 1 and 2: “Introduction to new media,” and “The history of new media” (pp. 1-55)

Week 2: Sep 18 – New media & power

Required reading:

Flew and Smith, Chapter 3: “Approaches to new media” (pp. 56-78)

Week 3: Sep 25 – Networks and infrastructure

Required reading:

Gina Neff, Tim Jordan, and Joshua McVeigh-Schultz. “Affordances, technical agency, and the politics of technologies of cultural production.” <http://culturedigitally.org/2012/01/affordances-technical-agency-and-the-politics-of-technologies-of-cultural-production-2/>

Week 4: Oct 2 – Visual culture and representation + Test 1

No readings

*** Mid-term Test 1 held in the second half of class ***

Week 5: Oct 9 – NO LECTURE (University closed)

*** Happy Thanksgiving! (note: there will be tutorials as usual on Thursday October 12) ***

Week 6: Oct 16 – Identities

Required reading:

Alison Hearn and Stephanie Schoenhoff. "From celebrity to influencer: tracing the diffusion of celebrity value across the data stream." (PDF Linked on D2L)

Week 7: Oct 23 – Users, Audiences, Consumers

Required reading:

Flew and Smith, Chapter 8: “The global knowledge economy” (pp. 188-214)

Week 8: Oct 30 – Politics and Policy

Required reading:

Flew and Smith, Chapter 9: “Internet law, policy and governance” (pp. 215-248)

Week 9: Nov 6 – Test 2 + Social media

***** Mid-term Test 2 held in the first half of class *****

Required reading:

Flew and Smith, Chapter 5: “Social networks and participatory culture” (pp. 106-134)

Week 10: Nov 13 – NO LECTURE (University closed)

***** Mid-term break (note: there will be tutorials as usual on Thursday November 16) *****

Week 11: Nov 20 – Mobile technologies

Required reading:

Flew and Smith, Chapter 4: “Mobile new media” (pp. 79-105)

Week 12: Nov 27 – Digital games

Required reading:

Flew and Smith, Chapters 6 and 7: “Games: Technology, industry, and culture,” and “Creative Industries” (pp. 135-187)

Week 13: Dec 4 – Last class wrap-up

Required reading:

Flew and Smith, Chapter 10: “Conclusion” (pp. 249-270)