

**University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film**

**Communication and Media Studies COMS 367, L01
Visual Communication and Culture**

Spring 2019

Tue., May 07 – Thr., June 13

Lectures: Tuesdays and Thursdays 13:00- 15:45

Instructor: Maria Victoria Guglietti
Office: Social Sciences 254
E-Mail: mvguglie@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal.
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:00- 13:00 or by appointment

Course Description

This course introduces students to the critical study of images in society. Topics will include the relationship between images and culture, the role images play in the formation of identity, the status of images as evidence, the institutionalization of images to discipline subjects and the construction of audiences through visual culture. The class will introduce students to Canadian scholarly studies from a wide array of disciplines.

Objectives of the Course

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- think critically about images
- analyze images from multiple theoretical perspectives
- engage with multidisciplinary scholarly work in the area of visual culture

Textbooks and Readings

Finn, J. (2012). *Visual communication and culture. Images in action*. Don Mills, Canada.: Oxford.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptops or tablets are required in class for the completion of in-class discussion questionnaires and group activities. Students who have no access to an electronic communication device should arrange with classmates the sharing of a device during these assignments. Cell phones should be turned off during class.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Course components	Due
25%	<p>Critical Reading Assignment- approx. 2-3 pages- individual assignment Students will write a critical reading assignment based on the analysis of a visual culture studies text selected by the instructor. The goal of the assignment is to evaluate students' familiarity with the issues and readings discussed in class and their critical reading of a scholarly study of visual culture. Unlike a traditional paper, the assignment is structured as a questionnaire that will guide students in their critical reading and assessment of the academic text. Further instructions will be posted on D2L.</p>	May 21, midnight (D2L dropbox)
10%	<p>Case study presentations- 10 minutes each- all group members should present. In groups of four, students will plan and deliver an oral presentation that will consist in the visual analysis of visual artifact (image, audiovisual, multimedia, performance, etc.). The presentation will introduce the class to the case study and introduce at least three connections to key concepts and theories studied in class. Each group is responsible to bring at least two questions for in-class discussion. The presentations will receive a group mark. Further instructions will be posted on D2L.</p>	TBD by groups during the first week of class. Dates available: May 14 to June 11 (included)
28%	<p>In-class group activities: In groups of four, students will complete four open book assignments in class; each will require the theoretical analysis of a case study. Students will have two sessions of approx. 40 minutes to complete each group activity (the sessions will take place during time allocated in two consecutive lectures- see schedule below). Group activities are questionnaires that require the application of theories studied in class. Each group assignment is 7%. The themes and deadlines of the activities are the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The nature of the visual- May 14 2. Evidence and the visual- May 23 3. Institutionalized images- May 30 4. Images and audiences- June 11 	May 14, 23, 30 AND June 11 One submission per group by midnight the day it is due. D2L dropbox
7%	<p>Participation- This grade will be assessed based on each student's documented participation in at least seven in-class reading discussions. Reading discussions will take place every class, and will require students to form groups of max. six members to discuss and answer a question assigned by the instructor in connection with the mandatory reading due that day. Students will access the question via D2L, and sign in their names next to the question assigned as proof of participation.</p>	ongoing
30%	<p>Final take-home exam- individual assignment, cumulative, 3-4 pages This final exam will be an evaluation of a cultural artifact or phenomenon through the systematic application of the theories studied in class. Unlike a typical discussion paper, students will articulate their analysis as a series of answers to a list of questions provided by the instructor. The final exam will be posted on D2L on June 6.</p>	June 18, 1PM (D2L dropbox)

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

You do not need to complete all assignments and exams in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

Submission of Assignments: All assignments will be uploaded to D2L unless otherwise instructed.

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 will receive a 0.

Any medical condition that causes the student to miss a test or an assignment's deadline should be justified with a medical certificate. If a test is missed and the medical certificate is presented the student will arrange with the instructor the time and form of a make-up test.

***The Day of Grace:** One day of grace is available to all students to cover unforeseen problems that prevent them from meeting a deadline such as computer crashes, vehicle breakdowns, lack of printer ink or money, unexpected family obligations, etc. Students may use this day ONLY ONCE during the semester. Students using this day of grace must email the assignment by 4:30 pm the next calendar day to avoid a late penalty, and write "grace" on their subject line. It should be noted that assignments handed in this manner may be returned 1-2 classes later than those submitted on the due date

Student Accommodations and Deferrals:

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) or for 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, please see the following:

- Section N.1 of the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/n-1.html>
- FAQs for Students at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals/student-faq>

Note that 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 that of another assignment or test.

For information on deferrals, see the following sections in the *University Calendar*:

- Section G.7 Deferral of Term Work at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>
- Section G.6 Deferral of Final Exam at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>

Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

Final grades are reported as letter grades. All other assignments (critical analysis, group presentations, group activities and final take-home exam) will receive a percentage grade.

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 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%

* 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.

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 support services in the Student

Success Centre (3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library). Visit the website for more details:
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

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 at <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436>. Research and citation resources are also available on the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) website at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>. If you have questions about citing sources, please consult your instructor or visit the writing support services in the Student Success Centre (3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library, at <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, including 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

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 https://arts.ucalgary.ca/advising
CAMPUS SECURITY & Safewalk Program	http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333
• Calgary Police Service	403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911
• Emergency Text Messaging	http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage
• Emergency Evacuation & Assembly	http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints

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 • Events & Info for Students 	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 Ombuds 	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"> • Health Services • Mental Health Services • Distress entre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling 403-266-HELP (4357) http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthy-campus 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

	Tuesdays Room EDC280 13:00 – 15:45	Thursdays Room EDC280 13:00 – 15:45
Week 1 May 7 & 9	Topic: Introduction to readings and assignments; Visual knowledge. Reading: Arnheim, Vision in Education, pp. 16-29.	Topic: Images and Social Life Reading: Sontag, In Plato's Cave, pp. 30-39 Assignment: group activity 1 instructions
Week 2 May 14 & 16	Topic: Identity and the Visual Reading: Wagman, The Suspicious and the Self-Promotional, pp. 145-154 Assignment: group presentations, group activity 1 due	Topic: Identity and the Visual Reading: Roth, Flesh in Wax: Demystifying the Skin Colors of the Common Crayon. pp. 73-85. Assignment: group presentations,
Week 3 May 21 & 23	Topic: Images as Evidence Reading: Goodwin, Professional Vision, pp. 91-117.	Topic: Images as Evidence Reading: Schwartz, To Tell the Truth: Codes of Objectivity in

	<p>Assignment: group presentations, group activity 2 instructions critical reading due at midnight (D2L dropbox)</p>	<p>Photojournalism, pp. 222-232. Assignment: group presentations, group activity 2 due</p>
<p>Week 4 May 28 & 30</p>	<p>Topic: The institutionalized image Reading: Whitelaw “Whiffs of Balsam, Pine and Spruce”, pp. 281-291 Assignment: group presentations, group activity 3 instructions</p>	<p>Topic: The institutionalized Image Reading: Payne, Through a Canadian Lens, pp. 310-325 Assignment: group presentations, group activity 3 due</p>
<p>Week 5 June 4 & 6</p>	<p>Topic: The institutionalized image Reading: Kinahan, Votes for Stoves, pp. 326-339 Assignment: group presentations</p>	<p>Topic: Images and audiences Reading: Spigel, Television in the Family Circle, pp. 354-385 Assignment: group presentations, group activity 4 instructions</p>
<p>Week 6 June 11 & 13</p>	<p>Topic: Images and audiences Reading: Botterill & Kline, From Counting Calories to Fun Food, pp. 397-408 Assignment: group presentations, group activity 4 due</p>	<p>No lecture Time dedicated to final take-home preparation</p>
<p>Final Examination</p>	<p>Final Exam due June 18 @ 1PM (D2L dropbox)</p>	