

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film
COMS 393 (L01): Health, Science, and Media: Critical Perspectives
Winter 2023: January 9 to April 12 (excluding February 19-25, April 7 and 10)
Lecture: MW 14:00 to 15:15 (This is an in-person course.)

Instructor: Dr. Monique Solomon
Office: SS 254
Email: solomonm@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours: W 11am -1pm (office) or by appointment (office or Zoom)

Course Description

Students in this course will examine the construction and communication of health and science as socio-cultural phenomena and interrogate the ways in which health and science issues are communicated, defined, represented, and framed, particularly within contemporary media.

Additional Information

Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies presented in this outline. The course is inquiry-based and reading and writing intensive. Students should prepare for class by staying up to date on assigned readings. In this class, students engage with the topic by participating in discussions and in-class reading and writing activities. Regular attendance is strongly encouraged. The schedule of topics and readings will be available on the course D2L site.

Objectives of the Course

- To explore how health and science are influenced by and constructed in discourse across various social contexts and forms of media
- To examine medicalisation, representation, and framing as influence on attitudes and approaches to understanding health and science
- To learn and apply critical communications studies perspectives used by scholars to study the complex and contextual relationships between health, science, and media

Textbooks and Readings

There is no textbook required for the course. Required readings or links to readings will be available on D2L. Additional readings and screenings may be assigned in class. Please come to class having done the readings and be prepared to engage in discussion.

Email Policy

- **Include the course number in the subject line of email sent to your professor.** Include your name in the body of the email *as it appears* in your university registration.
- **Use emails for short, specific inquiries.** If you have detailed questions about the course material or assignments, please make an appointment during office hours.
- **Email will usually be answered M-F between 11am – 6pm.** You can usually expect an answer within 48 hours. Email will not be answered weekends or holidays. Check your @ucalgary.ca email to ensure messages are not in junk folders.
- Be courteous and professional communicating with your professor and fellow students.

Learning Technologies and Requirements

To complete 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), and a microphone and speaker (built-in or external) or headset with microphone (for online courses only).
- 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 IT support services. See <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/student-campus-services-information-technologies-it.html>

Policy on the Use of Electronic Communication Devices

Laptops, tablets, and mobile phones may be used in class for course-related purposes and only if their use is not distracting others or negatively impacting the learning environment. Close all electronics during presentations by your fellow students. Working on a laptop or device during student presentations may impact your participation grade.

No audio or video recording or photography in any class without the instructor's explicit permission. Please familiarize yourself with the University's policy on the recording of lectures, which is outlined at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html>, and carefully review the information in this outline.

Instructor Intellectual Copyright

All 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. You may NOT reproduce, redistribute or copy course materials without explicit consent of the instructor. Posting course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites is prohibited. Sharing extracts of 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 questions about sharing materials with classmates.

Students are not permitted to audio or video-record lectures and discussions or take pictures/screen shots during this class. All statements and interactions during class time are a matter of group privacy and cannot be publicized.

All students are required to read the *University of Calgary Policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright* at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy> and the requirements of the *Copyright Act* (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>). Students using material protected by copyright in violation of the policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignments will be discussed in class and instructions posted on D2L. Use APA style for all in-text citations, quotations, and referencing.

Participation (10%) Ongoing throughout term

Students take part in class discussions and activities to earn checkmarks indicating participation. To earn checkmarks, students add comments to D2L Discussion during in-class activities. One checkmark may be earned per class and posts must be made by end of the class day (11:59 pm). Students may miss four posts at any time in the term. Participation will be evaluated based on contributions during in-class activities and quality of posts. Using laptops/devices in a distracting manner will reduce participation grade.

Critical Commentary Paper (1200 words) (20%) Due February 1

Students write a 1200-word essay applying/demonstrating course concepts in discussion of a specific health, science, and media topic (suggestions provided and discussed in class).

Presentation (20%) (Group) Scheduled February 6 through April 12

In self-formed pairs, students present (7-9 minutes) about a weekly topic relating to assigned readings. Slides and script must be submitted to D2L by 11:59 pm the day before presenting. Partial grade deductions for late submissions. Note: Group members will receive the same grade on assignments; however, the instructor reserves the right to award differential grades based on group peer reviews or information indicating significantly uneven contributions by group members.

Reading Responses (2 x 5%= 10%) Due date depends on readings chosen.

Twice during the term, students write a reading response to a required reading (250-350 words). Students may hand in their responses at any time during the week that the reading is listed on the course readings schedule (posted on D2L). A list of reading response prompts for articles will be provided the second week of classes.

Proposal and Annotated Bibliography (10%) Due: March 15

Students prepare a 250-word proposal for their Term Paper and an annotated bibliography with five entries (three peer-reviewed academic journal articles; two open choice) that would be potential sources for the term paper (each annotation must be 125-150 words).

Term Paper (30%) Due April 12

Students write a 2300-2500-word research essay analysing a health, science, and media controversy drawing on course concepts. Paper prompts will be provided and reviewed in class. To prepare the paper, students will hand in a proposal and annotated bibliography by March 15 (see above).

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Submission of Assignments

Students must complete all assignments, or a course grade of 'F' may be assigned at the discretion of the professor.

Contact the professor asap if you miss a component. *Do not* email your assignments unless directed to by your professor.

Follow all assignment instructions carefully. All assignments are due via upload to D2L (.doc, .docx, or .pdf) on the due date stated on the assignment, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. Include your name and ID number on all assignments AND include your surname in the file name of assignments you upload to D2L. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that you submit the correct version.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after due dates may be penalized with the loss of a partial letter grade for each day late (e.g.: A- to B+ to B).

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. For the full policy on Student Accommodations, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-accommodation-policy>

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors.

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, letter grades will be used for all assignments except reading responses and participation, which will be reviewed with numeric points which will be converted to percentage.

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%

* Column 4: If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades. Column 5: These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

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>

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 (APA) 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 writing or have questions about citing sources, see your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support>

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 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 deferral of term work, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

For information about deferrals of final examinations, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>

For information about requesting a reappraisal of course work or of a final grade, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

Student Support Services and Resources

Please see <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, Zoom, Yuja, etc., see <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/resources-for-students/>. (Find the topic menu under the icon to the left of the ELEARN banner.)

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings: *A schedule of topics, readings and detailed assignment instructions will be available on D2L and discussed in class.*