

**University of Calgary**  
**Department of Communication, Media and Film**  
**COMS 401.52 L02: Special Topics in Communication and Media Studies -**  
**Surveillance**

**WINTER 2023: January 9 to April 12 (excluding February 19-25 and April 10)**

**Lecture: MW 15:30-16:45**  
**Location: EDC 284**

**This course will be delivered in person.**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Julia Chan
<b>Office:</b>	SS 306
<b>Email:</b>	julia.chan@ucalgary.ca
<b>Web Page:</b>	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Thursdays, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

### **Course Description**

Critical study of contemporary topics or issues related to communications media, technology, culture, or discourse.

This course will engage with the questions: in what ways does surveillance manifest in our contemporary, mediated lives? How does the media make use of surveillance? How do surveillant interests make use of media? What roles do intersecting factors of race, gender, class, ability, age, and sexuality play in how surveillance is conceived, enacted, and received? Beginning with the premise that we currently live in a culture of intensifying surveillance—particularly for non-normative subjectivities—we will investigate a range of examples and students will complete practice-based assignments that encourage critical engagement with surveillance culture.

### **Additional Information**

The weekly schedule of topics and readings can be found at the end of this outline or on D2L.

Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline.

### **Objectives of the Course**

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

- Recognize and explain many of the ways in which surveillance manifests in both everyday life and in larger social, political, and economic structures
- Critically analyze and apply surveillance theory to various manifestations of surveillance, including media technologies, representations/discourses, and practices
- Begin to formulate their own critical and ethical positions on questions of surveillance
- Create a media project that interrogates surveillance logics

### **Textbooks and Readings**

All readings are available via D2L.

## Learning Technologies and Requirements

In order 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 synchronous 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

Out of respect for everyone in class, please refrain from using any unnecessary electronic communication devices during class (emergencies excepted). Recording of classes and lectures is not allowed unless authorized by the instructor.

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 section on Instructor Copyright at the end of this outline.

## Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed Components	Due
10%	<b>Short Paper</b> Write a short paper (750-1000 words) summarizing Week Two's theoretical readings, and apply them to one form of surveillance of your choice.	Jan 27
10%	<b>Reading Response</b> Submit one reading response (approx. 750 words) summarizing and analyzing the week's required reading(s). Each student will be assigned a week.	Varies. Check D2L for assigned week
30%	<b>Mapping Project and Presentation (Group Assignment)</b> Create a digital presentation mapping all of the different forms of public surveillance that each group member encounters in one day. Each member will choose one form of surveillance to research and elaborate on within the presentation. (Note: Group members will receive the same grade on the assignment; however, the instructor reserves the right to award differential grades based on group peer reviews or information indicating significantly uneven contributions by group members.)	Varies. Presentations begin Week 5; check D2L for assigned week

35%	<p><b>Final Media Project</b></p> <p>Create a short media project that utilizes EITHER a creative format OR a traditional essay format and that critically engages with questions of surveillance.</p>	Apr 12
15%	<p><b>Participation</b></p> <p>Your engagement with the course will be assessed on (a) preparedness for class (such as completing the readings); (b) meaningful contributions to in-class activities and discussions; and (c) demonstrating thoughtful analysis and synthesis of class material throughout the course. You will also complete a self-assessment that will be taken into account.</p>	

**Registrar-scheduled Final Examination:** No

**Note:** You do not have to complete all the assignments in order to receive a passing grade in this course.

**Submission of Assignments**

Please submit all assignments by uploading them to the designated D2L dropbox. Include your name and ID number on all assignments. Be sure to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to submit the proper version.

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 recording 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.

**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/](http://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.

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.

### 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](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html)

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, consult 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>

### **Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation**

Course materials created by the instructor (including lectures, 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.

To ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes & electronic versions of textbooks), 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 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 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\*

\*Your learning is my priority. To that end, this schedule may be subject to change if necessary. For a detailed schedule of activities and readings, please see the schedule posted in D2L.

DATE	TOPIC	TASKS AND ASSIGNMENTS
Jan 9 & 11	<b>Week 1: What is surveillance?</b>	
Jan 16 & 18	<b>Week 2: Surveillance theories</b>	
Jan 23 & 25	<b>Week 3: Surveillance logics</b>	Reading Responses begin
Jan 30 & Feb 1	<b>Week 4: Social media</b>	Short Paper due Jan 27
Feb 6 & 8	<b>Week 5: Surveillance imaginaries</b>	Presentations in Wednesday's class
Feb 13 & 15	<b>Week 6: Surveillance as entertainment</b>	Presentations in Wednesday's class
<b>READING WEEK: FEBRUARY 19-25 NO CLASS THIS WEEK</b>		
Feb 27 & Mar 1	<b>Week 7: Biometrics</b>	Presentations in Wednesday's class
Mar 6 & 8	<b>Week 8: Queer surveillance</b>	Presentations in Wednesday's class

Mar 13 & 15	<b>Week 9: Exhibitionism</b>	Presentations in Wednesday's class
Mar 20 & 22	<b>Week 10: Resistance</b>	Presentations in Wednesday's class
Mar 27 & 29	<b>Week 11: Surveillance capitalism</b>	
Apr 3 & 5	<b>Week 12: Art</b>	
Apr 10 & 12*	<b>Week 13</b> *Independent project work (no formal class this week).	Final Media Project due Apr 12