

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Communications Studies COMS 471 Lecture 01
Audience & Reception
Winter 2016
Tuesdays 12:30 – 15:15

Instructor: Cassandra Dam
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Office Phone: N/A
E-Mail: scdam@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: By appointment, or Thursday 1.00-2.00pm

Course Description

This course approaches the communications process from the point of view of the audience. Students will be introduced to the history of media research dealing with the public and the audience, and consider the changes in theoretical and research paradigms from administrative approaches to those paradigms centred on fan practices and subcultures. Topics may include public opinion, uses and gratifications, reception theory, constructivism, shopping, consumption and subjectivity, fan cultures, experiential marketing, and culture jamming.

Additional Information

Some assignments in this course may require research involving human subjects. Students should be aware of information contained in the notes on “Ethics” below. Some course content may contain material that is sexually explicit, violent or otherwise offensive. If you have concerns about this please make them known to the instructor in advance. Lecture notes will not be made available for electronic distribution: it is the student’s responsibility to make notes on lecture material during the lecture. Use of recording technologies in class is prohibited. Laptops may be used in the classroom for note-taking purposes only. No cell phone use is permitted.

Objectives of the Course

Students should through this course be able to understand the rationales for qualitative and quantitative research focused on media audiences, become familiar with historical changes in the role and practice of audiences and develop an awareness of changes in how the audience’s role has been understood in Communications Studies, as well as the ability to conceptualize an audience-centred research project.

Textbooks and Readings

Brooker, W., & Jermyn, D. (Eds.). (2002). *The Audience Studies Reader* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Other course readings will be available via a document with digital links available on D2L two weeks prior to class beginning. Students are expected to keep copies of the

readings for the entire term. The instructor does not redistribute or re-post readings that have been taken off D2L.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Lecture notes will not be made available for electronic distribution: it is the student's responsibility to make notes on lecture material during the lecture. Use of recording technologies in class is prohibited. Laptops may be used in the classroom for note-taking purposes only. No cell phone use is permitted.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weekly reading responses	Submitted in class Feb 2, Mar 8, Apr 5	30%
Midterm Exam	Mar 1 in-class midterm; closed book	20%
Collaborative Paper Proposal with annotated bibliography	Feb 9 submitted in-class	5%
Collaborative Research Paper	Submit in class Mar 29	25%
Final Exam	By Registrar	20%
Total		100%

Weekly Reading Responses (30%): Students prepare weekly responses to selective required readings to ensure that course material is being comprehended and prepare for class discussion. These reading responses also help to practice with summarizing others' ideas, an important skill in academic discourse. Responses are submitted 3 times over the semester. Each submission is worth 10% for a total of 30%.

Midterm Exam (20%): On March 1st contains short answer and short essay questions. It covers the material in assigned readings of the required text, lecture material and all other material covered to that point in the course.

Collaborative Annotated Bibliography and Proposal Outline: (5%): Due Feb. 9. In small groups (of 3-4 students) students prepare a collaborative Annotated Bibliography (min. 3 academic sources per team member) and a 500-750 word Proposal Outline for their group research paper (see below) and must include any ethics paperwork required. Note: Groups will be formed on Jan. 19, and new groups or changes to groups will not be allowed after Jan. 26. These groups will work collaboratively on this assignment and the Research Paper.

Collaborative Research Paper (25%): Due March. 29
In the same small groups, as above, students collaboratively prepare a researched paper of 2500-3000 words, about audience reception research & theories discussed in class. Students may conduct primary research in the form of surveys, interviews or small-scale field observation but they are also expected to go beyond the readings covered in the course material in order to develop a fuller understanding of a particular audience reception theory. All sources must be properly cited using APA format, and the research paper must be well organized and edited. Note: Each group member will

peer review the other members of the group on their contributions to the group assignments. In consultation with the group individual marks may be adjusted.

Final Exam (20%): Registrar Scheduled

The final exam is cumulative, and comprises of both short answer questions and shorter style essay questions.

Please note: Detailed descriptions of the requirements and expectations for each assignment will be developed in class and then posted on the course's D2L site.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: Yes

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 and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at final exams in SS 320 after classes have ended. 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/secretariat/privacy>

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment. For courses in which assignments are submitted electronically, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the correct copy of the assignment is submitted. (Including the version date or version number in your file name may help you avoid submitting the wrong version of your written assignments.)

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_0.pdf .

Please note:

1. Students seeking accommodations for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) should contact their instructors directly. Whenever possible, students should advise their instructors in advance if they will be missing quizzes, presentations, in-class assignments, or group meetings.
2. 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.
3. 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. For details see <http://comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. 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 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. However, assignments, exams, and other work in this course will be graded using percentage grades. The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Department. If letter grades are used for an assignment or other course component, the percentage equivalent in the final column will be used for calculating the final grade:

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Department 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	00 - 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.

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 (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of 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

<p>CAMPUS SECURITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calgary Police Service • Emergency Text Messaging • Emergency Evacuation & Assembly • Safewalk Program 	<p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333</p> <p>403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911</p> <p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage</p> <p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints</p> <p>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/</p>
<p>DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	<p>http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students</p> <p>403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca</p>
<p>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	<p>http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</p> <p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</p>
<p>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	<p>https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/</p> <p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds</p>
<p>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	<p>403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</p> <p>403-266-HELP (4357)</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</p> <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 Lectures and Readings

Will be posted on D2L two weeks prior to the start of course.