

**Communications Studies COMS 475 – L01**  
**Media and Cultural Industries**  
**Winter 2013**  
**Monday, 14:00 – 16:50**

**Instructor:** Dr. Delia Dumitrica

**Office  
Location:** SS344

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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays, 10:00 – 12:00 or Wednesday, 14:00 – 16:00

**Calendar Description**

Considers the role and nature of media and cultural industries, offering students an understanding of their role in the production, distribution and consumption of cultural products. Among those industries that could be examined are television, radio, newspapers and other print media, film, sound recording, book publishing, advertising, new media and videogames.

**Additional Information**

- ⤴ Pre-requisite for this course: COMS 371. This course assumes basic familiarity with critical media theories.
- ⤴ The course takes a seminar format, where students lead the discussion and engage with the assigned readings.
- ⤴ This is a reading and writing intensive course.

**Objectives of the Course**

How is culture being produced, distributed and consumed today? Starting from this question, this course will explore the current landscape of the cultural industries, as well as their historical context. The course will deal with issues such as: the rise of the ‘creative economies’ discourse; trends in ownership and convergence; new ways of imagining and engaging audiences; cultural policies; the challenges faced by cultural labour.

The goal of this course is to familiarize students with the various aspects of cultural industries, and with the theoretical debates on this problematic. By the end of the course, you should:

- ⤴ Be able to assess the key thinkers, concepts and discourses on cultural industries;
- ⤴ Be able to critically assess the production, distribution and consumption of culture.
- ⤴ Gain knowledge of the historical development of cultural industries.
- ⤴ Be aware of current developments within the cultural industries on the local, national and global levels.

- ^ Be able to use academic, policy and media sources to present the results of your thinking and research.

### **Internet and electronic communication device information**

All cell phones should be silenced for the entire duration of the class. Laptops, smartphones and tablets can only be used for taking notes.

### **Textbooks and Readings:**

David Hemondhalgh (2012). *The Cultural Industries*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Other journal articles or chapters from electronic books in the University of Calgary library may be assigned and will be made available on the first day of class.

### **Assignments and Evaluation:**

You will be graded on four components:

- Participation (10%)
- Group presentation and report (30%) – *March 11 – April 8, 2013*
- Reading response and news analysis (30%) – *January 28 – April 8, 2013*
- Final project (30%)
  - Proposal (5%) – *March 4, 2013*
  - Final paper (25%) – *April 15, 2013*

All assignments must be completed or a grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Note: 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.

**Registrar-scheduled Final Examination:** No.

### **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.

### **Description of assignments**

#### **1. Participation (10%)**

Students are expected to be present for all classes, read assigned readings prior to class, and actively participate in class discussions.

## **2. Group presentation and report (30%) – March 11 – April 8, 2013**

This group assignment helps you learn about city-based cultural industry initiatives around the world. In groups of 4, you will research the development of cultural policies and the state of specific cultural industries clusters in the chosen city. You will develop:

- An oral presentation, detailing the case: 20 minutes, worth 15% of the final grade.
- A written report: approximately 10 pages, 15% of the final grade.

## **3. Reading response and news analysis (30%) – January 28 – April 8, 2013**

This individual assignment helps you engage with the required readings and relate them to current events pertinent to the cultural industries. This assignment has two sections:

- A reading response: a written essay on the required reading for the day, providing a summary and an assessment of the main points discussed in the respective reading. Approx. 10 pages, 20% of final grade.
- A news story analysis: a discussion of a recent news story about cultural industries, using the required reading for the day. As part of your participation grade, you will summarize your chosen news story in class. Approx. 5 pages, 10% of final grade.

## **4. Final project (30%): Proposal (5%) – March 4, 2013; Research paper (25%) – April 15, 2013.**

This individual assignment tests your ability to make use of the theories discussed in this course to evaluate a cultural item or a media text. You will do research on the conditions of production, distribution and consumption for your chosen cultural item/ media text. The proposal will detail the chosen cultural item/ media text, making use of at least 2 academic sources. The research paper makes an argument about the production, distribution and consumption of your chosen cultural item/ media text, relying on the questions and theoretical debates discussed in the required readings.

- Proposal: 1 page, 5% of final grade.
- Research paper: 15-20 pages, 25% of final grade.

## **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, **students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.**

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

## **Writing Skills Statement**

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. 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 System**

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

	Grading Scale
A+	96-100
A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99
B	75-79.99
B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99
C-	55-59.99
D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

Where a grade on a particular assignment is expressed as a letter grade, it will normally be converted to a number using the midpoint of the scale. That is, A- would be converted to 87.5 for calculation purposes. F will be converted to zero.

## **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. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Taylor Family Digital Library, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

## **Academic Misconduct**

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link;  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

## **Students with Disabilities**

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

### **Students' Union**

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

### **Student Ombudsman**

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

### **Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points**

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

### **"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333**

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

### **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

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site:  
<http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics>

or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site:  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/ethics/cfreb>

### **Schedule of Lectures and Readings**

A detailed schedule of lectures and readings will be provided on the first day of class and uploaded on Blackboard.