

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

**Communications Studies COMS 475 – L01**  
**Media and Cultural Industries**  
**Winter 2015**  
**Thursday 14:00-16:45**  
**(January 15-April 9, 2015; excluding Feb 19)**

**Instructor:** S. Cassandra Dam, MSt (Oxon)  
**Office:** SS 240  
**E-Mail:** [scdam@ucalgary.ca](mailto:scdam@ucalgary.ca) or [lyonsarts@yahoo.ca](mailto:lyonsarts@yahoo.ca)  
**Office Hours:** Th 13:00-14:00 pm or by appointment

**Course Description**

This course 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, students 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.

**Textbooks and Readings:**

David Hesmondhalgh. (2012). *The Cultural Industries*. 3<sup>rd</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. 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 Desire 2 Learn.

### **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**

Students will be graded on four components:

- Reading responses and news analysis (30%): – *Feb 12-Apr 9, 2015*
- Group report (30%): – *April 2, 2015*
- Final project (30%)
  - Proposal (5%) – *Feb. 5, 2015*
  - Final paper (25%) – *April 9, 2015*
- Participation (10%)

### **Description of Assignments**

#### **Reading response and news analysis (30%): – Feb. 12- Apr. 9, 2015**

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

- Four (4) reading responses: Students choose four required readings and provide written essays due on the day the required reading is scheduled, providing a summary of the thesis and arguments as well as discussing the significance and applications of topic(s) discussed in the respective reading. Approximately 300-500 words each, worth 5% each for a total of 20% of final grade.
- A news story analysis: a discussion of a recent news story about cultural industries, using one of the reading responses' scheduled required reading. Approximately 2000 words, 10% of final grade.

#### **Group report (30%): – Apr. 2, 2015**

This group assignment helps students learn about city-based cultural industry initiatives around the world. In groups of 4, you research the development of cultural policies and the state of specific cultural industries clusters in the chosen city. The group completes a written report of 3500-4000 words worth 30% of the final grade. 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 project (30%): Proposal (5%) – Feb 5, 2015; Research paper (25%) – Apr 9, 2015**

This individual assignment tests students' abilities to make use of the theories discussed in this course to evaluate a cultural industry. They research the relationships between and the conditions of production, distribution and consumption for the chosen cultural industry. The proposal details the chosen cultural industry, making use of at least **three** credible academic sources plus relevant textbook chapters. The research paper makes an argument about the

production, distribution and consumption of the chosen cultural industry, relying on the questions and theoretical debates discussed in the required readings and making use of at least **three** credible academic sources plus relevant textbook chapters.

- Proposal: 300-500 words, 5% of final grade.
- Research paper: 3000-4000 words, 25% of final grade.

### **Participation (10%):**

Students are expected to make relevant contributions to class discussion. Be mindful that the grade does not depend simply on the volume of contribution, but the quality of it. Participation in group discussions and in-class exercises should demonstrate that students are engaging critically with the material and asking probing questions. In-class exercises are individual and group in-class activities that either develop understandings about the readings/topic for the class and/or help develop assignments.

### **Please note:**

- A schedule of readings, assignments and in-class exercises will be posted on D2L two weeks prior to the first class.
- Detailed descriptions of the requirements and expectations for each assignment will be developed in class and posted on the course's Desire 2 Learn site.
- All assignments are expected to follow APA format and citation requirements.

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

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 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.

## Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Student Accessibility Services (220-8237, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of the course.

## 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 System & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

Work in this course will be graded using percentage grades. The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film:

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 <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/node/208> . If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3<sup>rd</sup> 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/research/research-ethics>

## Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
<b>ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (PIC)</b>	SS 102 403-220-3580 <a href="mailto:picarts@ucalgary.ca">picarts@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>CAMPUS SECURITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Calgary Police Service</b></li><li>• <b>Emergency Text Messaging</b></li><li>• <b>Emergency Evacuation &amp; Assembly</b></li><li>• <b>Safewalk Program</b></li></ul>	<a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a> 403-220-5333 <b>403-266-1234      Emergency: call 911</b> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints</a> If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort ( <b>220-5333</b> ). For more

	information, see <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a>
<b>DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT help line</li> </ul>	<a href="http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students">http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students</a> 403-220-5555 or <a href="mailto:itsupport@ucalgary.ca">itsupport@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Support Services</li> <li>• Student Services Mobile App</li> </ul>	<a href="http://ucalgary.ca/ssc">http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support">http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</a> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents">http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</a>
<b>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty of Arts Reps</li> <li>• Student Ombudsman</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html">http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds">http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds</a>
<b>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling Services</li> <li>• Health Services</li> <li>• Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE</li> <li>• Online resources and tips</li> </ul>	<b>403-210-9355</b> (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</a> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</a> <b>403-266-HELP (4357)</b> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</a> 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 Lectures and Readings** will be posted on D2L