

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

COMS 485 L01: ENVIRONMENTAL MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

FALL 2019: Sept. 5 to Dec. 6 (excluding Nov. 10-16)

Lecture: TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS 11AM-12:15PM

Instructor:	MÉL HOGAN
Office:	SS 301
Office Phone:	(403)-220-3248
Email:	mhogan@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours:	Thursdays 2:00 to 4:00 pm. Please make an email appointment.

Course Description

Environmental Media engages an array of media texts, discourses, and objects, to understand the mutual entanglements of media and environment. The course content is divided into 3 parts:

1- *Representations of the Environment* - we look at documentary films, media campaigns, advertisements, etc., to understand and analyse how 'nature,' 'wilderness' and 'the outdoors' are created and sustained as important concepts (in relation to, for example, the technological sublime, environmental justice, racialized/privileged spaces, and historical understandings of Nature/Culture).

2 - *Materialities & Infrastructures* - we look at the lifecycle of our current global communications infrastructures, from mining rare earth minerals for electronic devices, to e-waste disposal, to cell towers, data centers, and everything that connects the wired world.

3- *The Environment as Medium* - we look globally at how 'natural disasters', climate change, and air pollution become inscribed into the environment, and how nature itself becomes medium and message.

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.

The objectives of the course are:

- to demonstrate an ability to read and interpret texts in the field
- to describe how communication plays a significant role in the framing and discussion of environmental problems and solutions historically
- to survey and compare a wide variety of media (podcasts, print ads, documentaries, websites, etc.) for the way they tell a story about the environment
- to produce written and oral discourse appropriate to the field
- to further develop your analytical, writing, and communication skills

Textbooks and Readings

On D2L or linked in syllabus.

Policy on the use of Electronic Communication Devices

Laptops, tablets, and mobile phones may be used in class and tutorials only for course-related purposes and only if their use is not distracting others or negatively impacting the learning environment. No audio or video recording is allowed in any class without the instructor's permission.

Assignments and Evaluation

The assignments for this class include weekly writing prompts (there are 5 in total), a group presentation, and a multiple choice midterm. Details for each of these will be provided in class.

Weight	Assessed Components	Due
40% (*all must be completed - your lowest grade will be dropped - **except for those not completed)	WRITING PROMPTS: 10% (4 best = 40%) Week 2 (Sept. 12) *this one is due on <u>Thursday</u>) Self-reflection essay: 500 words on your own carbon footprint and its political implications Week 3 (Sept. 17) - Podcast review: write a 700-word summary of the two podcasts Week 5 (Oct. 1) - In-class zine assignment about plastic. Week 7 (Oct. 15) - Question: Does storing data on the 'cloud' help the environment? Write a 500-word response to assigned article and bring to class to share. Cite 2 news sources and 2 academic articles. Week 12 (Nov. 26) - The premise is that overnight, all of the planet's resources have been restored; there is no more pollution or inequality. Write a 750 word description of how your day unfolds. Be specific about who and where you are.	Due Tuesdays, unless otherwise noted. Always due in <u>hard copy</u> , unless otherwise indicated. Label with your name and prompt #.
30%	MULTIPLE CHOICE EXAM: Week 11 – 75 minutes, in class, closed book. This exam covers everything up to this point (including podcasts and films screened). You will not have access to your notes or to the readings. The midterm will be all multiple-choice questions.	Nov 19
30%	GROUP PRESENTATIONS: Sign up for dates and readings. You will sign up for a group presentation based on one of the readings during the first week of class. You will be asked to do a 20-minute presentation and facilitate a 10-minute question and answer period relating to the presentation and theme of the week.	Thursdays, ongoing. Sign-up during Week 1 and 2.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

You do not have to complete all the assignments and exams in order to receive a passing grade in this course. But you must complete all 5 of the Writing Prompts. If you miss a required course component, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.

Submission of Assignments

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments and hand in your essays directly to your instructor or tutor. If you are unable to do so, please use the drop box 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. **Note:** It is your responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment, and to ensure that you submit the proper version (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission).

Be prepared to provide photo ID to pick up assignments in SS 320. 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 recorded 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/. Students who require accommodations 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.pdf>.

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should provide supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require that a medical note be presented. For the policy on supporting documentation the use of a statutory declaration, see Section M.1 of the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>. Also see FAQs for Students: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals/student-faq>

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, numerical scores 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

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, please consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, 3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success?utm_source=ssc&utm_medium=redirect&utm_campaign=redirect

Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation

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. 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.

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). 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 deferrals of exams and course work, requests for reappraisals, and other matters, please see the relevant sections in the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html>

Student Support Services and Resources

Please visit <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, visit <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students>. IT support is available at itsupport@ucalgary.ca or by calling 403-220.5555.

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

WEEK 1: INTRO TO ENVIRONMENTAL MEDIA

→ Thu Sept 5

Syllabus, course introductions and presentation sign up. If you miss the first class, it's your responsibility to sign up for a presentation asap, and get notes from a classmate.

WEEK 2: PRESERVATION / DISRUPTION

→ Tu Sept 10

READ: Naomi Klein (2014) Introduction: "One Way or Another Everything Changes"
This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs the Climate pp.1-28

[we will read this in class together]

Questions: How can we think of climate change (lived, mediated, etc.)? How do we know what we know? Who is responsible for environmental disasters? What is "natural"? How is the environmental political?

→ Thu Sept 12

WRITING PROMPT 1 DUE Self-reflection essay: write 500 words on your own carbon footprint and its political implications. Use the Kate Black article (linked below) as an example/for inspiration. NB: You do not have to agree with or counter those claims. Write about your own politics, values, and way of being in relation to environmental concerns. Prepare to discuss in class.

READ: Kate Black "Awkward Cause" *Maisonneuve* July 30, 2019

<https://maisonneuve.org/article/2019/06/20/awkward-cause/>

WEEK 3: INFERIOR / SUPERIOR

→ Tu Sept 17

WRITING PROMPT 2 DUE Podcast review: write a 700-word summary of the two podcasts. Prepare to discuss in class.

READ: Saini, Angela (2019) "The long reach of race science" *New Scientist*, 5/18/2019, Vol. 242, Issue 3230

<http://ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rch&AN=136773803&site=ehost-live>

LISTEN: Saini, Angela *Science Focus Podcast* "Is racism creeping into science?" *Superior*. (June 12, 2019) <https://www.sciencefocus.com/science/is-science-racist-angela-saini/>

LISTEN: Saini, Angela *Scientists not the Science - Inferior: Angela Saini* (episode 48) <https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/scientists-not-the-science/id963903285?i=1000394707960>

→ Thu Sept 19

READ: Mock, Brentin (2014) "Yes, black people talk about climate change" *Grist* Jun 11, 2014 <https://grist.org/climate-energy/its-time-for-all-the-press-black-and-white-to-connect-the-dots-on-climate-change/>

WEEK 4: SOCIETY / NATURE

→ Tu Sept 24

Screening of *Grizzly Man* (2005) Dir. Werner Herzog

→ Thu Sept 26

READ: Cronon, William (1995) "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature" (William Cronon, ed., *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1995, 69-90)

https://www.williamcronon.net/writing/Cronon_Trouble_with_Wilderness_1995.pdf

GROUP PRESENTATION: Cronon
1. Last Name, Name
2. Last Name, Name
3. Last Name, Name
4. Last Name, Name
5. Last Name, Name

WEEK 5: PLASTIC

→ Tu Oct 1

WRITING PROMPT 3 DUE In-class zine assignment: “Humans have made 8.3bn tons of plastic since 1950. This is the illustrated story of where it’s gone”:
<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/jun/23/all-the-plastic-ever-made-study-comic>
Come prepared with ideas for making a zine in-class. Can be done in groups of 2 or 3.

READ: Lerner, Sharon (2019) “WASTE ONLY: How the Plastics Industry Is Fighting to Keep Polluting the World” *The Intercept* July 20 2019, 5:30 a.m.

<https://theintercept.com/2019/07/20/plastics-industry-plastic-recycling/>

READ: Liboiron, Max (2018) “How Plastic Is a Function of Colonialism” in *Teen Vogue* (December 21, 2018) <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/how-plastic-is-a-function-of-colonialism?verso=true>

→ Thu Oct 3

Davis, Heather (2014) “Life & Death in the Anthropocene: A Short History of Plastic” pp. 347 <http://heathermdavis.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Life-and-Death-in-the-Anthropocene.pdf>

GROUP PRESENTATION: Davis
6. Last Name, Name
7. Last Name, Name
8. Last Name, Name
9. Last Name, Name
10. Last Name, Name

Optional - LISTEN: (start at 10:41) Interview with Heather Davis
<http://culturesofenergy.com/182-heather-davis/>

WEEK 6: OIL

→ Tu Oct 8

LISTEN: Drilled, Season 1 (skip bonus episodes)

<https://www.criticalfrequency.org/drilled/> / <http://drilled.libsyn.com/>

LISTEN: Crude #1 (episodes 1-7) <https://www.canadalandshow.com/shows/commons/> / <http://canadalandcommons.libsyn.com/rss>

→ Thu Oct 10

READ: Davidson, Debra J. (2017): Evaluating the effects of living with contamination from the lens of trauma: a case study of fracking development in Alberta, Canada, *Environmental Sociology*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23251042.2017.1349638>

GROUP PRESENTATION: Davidson
11. Last Name, Name
12. Last Name, Name
13. Last Name, Name
14. Last Name, Name
15. Last Name, Name

WEEK 7: INTERNET

→ Tu Oct 15

WRITING PROMPT 4 DUE Question: Does storing data on the 'cloud' help the environment? <https://www.sciencefocus.com/planet-earth/does-storing-data-on-the-cloud-help-the-environment/> Write a 500 to 700-word response and bring it to class to share. Cite 2 news sources and 2 academic articles.

LISTEN: IRL The Internet's Carbon Footprint Season 5: Episode 3
<https://irlpodcast.org/season5/episode3/>

WATCH: <http://www.thepeoplescloud.org/> - a web-based six-part documentary series that gets to the bottom of the internet; investigating the ecology and impact of cloud computing on the lives of those who use it, the places it is physically located in and the people who work to maintain it.

READ: Climate Care: "Infographic: The Carbon Footprint of the Internet"
<https://climatecare.org/infographic-the-carbon-footprint-of-the-internet/>

READ: Mozilla Report: "The new investors in underwater sea cables" (2019)
<https://internethealthreport.org/2019/the-new-investors-in-underwater-sea-cables/>

→ Thu Oct 17

READ: Mattern, Shannon (2019) *Networked Dream Worlds Is 5G solving real, pressing problems or merely creating new ones?* (July 08, 2019)
<https://reallifemag.com/networked-dream-worlds/>

GROUP PRESENTATION: Mattern
16. Last Name, Name
17. Last Name, Name
18. Last Name, Name
19. Last Name, Name
20. Last Name, Name

WEEK 8: E-WASTE

→ Tu Oct 22

READ: The ICT Carbon Footprint is the amount of carbon generated by the Information and Communication Technology sector. <https://ictfootprint.eu/en/about/ict-carbon-footprint/ict-carbon-footprint>

READ: Rhiannon Hoyle (2019) "Cloud Computing Is Here. Cloud Recycling Is Next." *The Wall Street Journal* July 29, 2019 (in D2L)

→ Thu Oct 24

READ: Maxwell, Richard and Toby Miller (2011) "The Environment and Global Media and Communication Policy." In Robin Mansell and Marc Raboy, eds., *The Handbook of Global Media and Communication Policy*. Wiley-Blackwell: 467-485.

GROUP PRESENTATION: Maxwell and Miller
21. Last Name, Name
22. Last Name, Name
23. Last Name, Name
24. Last Name, Name
25. Last Name, Name

WEEK 9: FOOD

→ Tu Oct 29

READ: Patterson, Charles "The great divide: animals and the Holocaust." *Tikkun*. 18.3 (May-June 2003): p77+. <http://tikkun.dukejournals.org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/>

→ Thu Oct 31

READ: Blue, Gwendolyn (2009) "Branding Beef: Marketing, Food Safety, and the Governance of Risk" *Canadian Journal of Communication*, Vol 34 (2009) 229-244
<http://ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ufh&AN=42093776&site=ehost-live>

GROUP PRESENTATION: Blue
26. Last Name, Name
27. Last Name, Name
28. Last Name, Name
29. Last Name, Name
30. Last Name, Name

WEEK 10: EMF

→ Tu Nov 5

Screening in class *Safe* (1995) Directed by Todd Haynes

→ Thu Nov 7

READ: Mukherjee, R (2016) "'City Inside the Oven': Cell Tower Radiation Controversies and Mediated Technoscience Publics" *Television & New Media*, 1–18 <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/10.1177%2F1527476416649242>

GROUP PRESENTATION: Mukherjee
31. Last Name, Name
32. Last Name, Name
33. Last Name, Name
34. Last Name, Name
35. Last Name, Name

WEEK 11: WATER

→ Tu Nov 19

MULTIPLE CHOICE EXAM:

2 hours, in class, closed book. This will be a closed book in-class midterm. It will take up to 2 hours and will cover everything up to this point. You will not have access to your notes or readings. The midterm will be multiple-choice questions.

→ Thu Nov 21

READ: Bennett, Mia M. (2016) "Discursive, material, vertical, and extensive dimensions of post-Cold War Arctic resource extraction" *Polar Geography*, DOI:10.1080/1088937X.2016.1234517

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1088937X.2016.1234517>

GROUP PRESENTATION: Bennett

36. Last Name, Name

37. Last Name, Name

38. Last Name, Name

39. Last Name, Name

40. Last Name, Name

READ: Alexandra Shimo (2018) "While Nestlé extracts millions of litres from their land, residents have no drinking water" *The Guardian*, Oct 4, 2018,

<https://www.theguardian.com/global/2018/oct/04/ontario-six-nations-nestle-running-water>

WEEK 12: FUTURES

→ Tu Nov 26

WRITING PROMPT 5 DUE The premise is that overnight, all of the planet's resources have been restored - there is no more pollution or inequality. Write a 750 word description of how your day unfolds. Be specific about who and where you are.

→ Thu 28

WATCH: Screening in class BBC's *All Washed Over By Machines of Loving Grace, Part 2: The Use of Abuse of Vegetational Concepts* (2011) Adam Curtis

ONLINE LINK: <https://vimeo.com/groups/96331/videos/80799352>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/All_Watched_Over_by_Machines_of_Loving_Grace_\(TV_series\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/All_Watched_Over_by_Machines_of_Loving_Grace_(TV_series))

WEEK 13

→ Tu Dec 3 & Th Dec. 5

Summary and collection of any remaining assignments.
Present leftovers from Week 12. Discussion of Curtis film.