

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

COMS 591: Capstone Seminar in Communication and Media Studies

“Everything is on the table”: Canadian Communications in 2023

Winter 2023: Jan 9, 2023 - Apr 10, 2023 (excluding Feb 20-24 and April 10)

Seminars: Monday, 11 am – 13:45 pm

Instructor:	Dr. Gregory Taylor
Email:	gregory.taylor2@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	Thursday 2:00 – 4:00 pm. Please email to set appointment.
Office	SS 308

Course Description

Explores the variety of ways in which communication builds social and cultural values with reference to a special topic. Completion of a major project that will integrate understanding of communication theory, history and methodology.

Topic: Canadian Communications in 2023

In 2016, then Heritage Minister Melanie Joly repeatedly said that “everything is on the table” when it comes to the future of Canadian media policy. She has been good to her word. In the last year, the federal Liberal government has tabled Bill C-11, *An Act to amend the Broadcasting Act*; Bill C-18, *An Act respecting online communications platforms that make news content available to persons in Canada*; and announced plans to introduce an online harms bill in 2023. These three bills will likely set the legal parameters in Canadian communications for decades to come. Whatever the focus of your study, these bills will have an impact.

This course considers this unique moment in Canadian communications in order to critically interrogate each of these bills, assessing their strengths and weaknesses, and designing recommendations for improvement. To this end, the course readings include important recent scholarship which informs the debates manifested in the three bills, as well as recent studies such as the Yale Report and Shattered Mirror Report. The class utilizes the seminar format to encourage open and critical discussion on how these bills will impact Canadians.

Additional Information

The weekly schedule of topics and readings can be found on D2L

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

Objectives of the Course

Through readings, class discussions, lectures, and course assignments, students will:

- Explore contemporary policy while recognizing historical roots of key issues.
- Synthesize work from the debates around these three bills with the focus of their own work.
- Examine how policy choices are reflected in our daily media usage.
- Compare Canadian policy with those in other jurisdictions around the world.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of current policy proposals to achieve desired social goals.

Textbooks and Readings

There is no required text. Readings are posted to D2L.

Students are expected to have all readings completed prior to scheduled class times in order to contribute effectively during class discussions and activities.

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

Cell phones should not be out in class and laptops should be used only for note taking during class time.

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
2 X 10 = 20 %	<p>Quiz (Numeric grade)</p> <p>Two online quizzes available via D2L. These quizzes will be available for 24 hours beginning at 2:00 pm of the dates listed. All quizzes are scheduled for one hour (60 minutes). The quiz is closed book and based upon the readings and lectures up to that day or since the previous quiz in the case of the second. Students are not to be in contact with each other regarding the quiz. Each</p>	<p>Feb 6 & March 20</p>

	quiz will be 25 multiple choice questions. Class time will be given for completion of these quizzes.	
2 X 10 = 20%	<p>Short Writing Assignments (Numeric grade)</p> <p>Students will be required to write a total of two (2) responses to a course reading. The first assignment must be completed within the first four weeks of class (by Jan 30). This assignment is about your ideas – therefore the responses are due <u>before</u> the class in which the reading will be discussed. Assignments will not be accepted after the class begins and the readings are discussed. The class on April 3 is the final class to submit the second short writing assignment. Please note these can be submitted at any time before the due date and it is recommended you finish early. Each submission should be based on one reading.</p> <p>Each response must be between 500 and 750 words, equivalent to two (2) or three (3) pages double-spaced. What is the author’s key point? Do you agree? This assignment seeks to synthesize course material with experience from students’ personal media engagement. Responses must demonstrate sound analysis of the ideas from course readings and include specific quotes (this is primary, your personal reflections may be used to underscore the points raised in the readings). Other sources may be used if formally cited but are not required.</p> <p>These assignments are to be uploaded to D2L.</p>	
20 %	<p>Group presentations (Letter grade)</p> <p>We know what you think, now to look through other’s eyes. Working in small groups, students will present on one of the bills in question from the role of a group or organization to be chosen at random. This is an oral presentation made before a mock Parliamentary Committee discussing one of the three bills. Expect questions from the Committee.</p> <p>Presentations should be approximately 15 minutes in length, involve visuals and research data to support your position. Though it is fair to research the position taken by the actual organization, you must be careful <u>not</u> to quote their work verbatim.</p>	March 20
25 %	<p>Final Research Paper (Letter grade)</p> <p>Students will submit a 2500-word (7-8 pages, excluding bibliography) research essay. The final essay must be printed in a double-spaced format (12 font), paginated, and with your name, course & professor, a title and a properly cited</p>	April 3

	<p>bibliography. Essays must have a clear thesis statement to be argued throughout the body of the text. Essays must demonstrate strong research in support of the thesis.</p> <p>The purpose of this paper is to synthesize what you had learned from this course with your previous work during your undergraduate degree. As such, this paper asks you to choose any one paper you have written during your undergraduate work at University of Calgary and use that as your lens with which to explore one of the three bills studied in this class. For example, if you wrote a term paper in second year concerning online influencers, you may wish to explore if the Online Harms Bill addresses concerns you had in your earlier work. Any paper from any course is acceptable if you think there are connections. While you may quote your previous work, no more than 400 words of the submitted paper should be from your earlier writing.</p> <p>You must show new research by drawing from at least six (6) academic sources beyond those in your earlier writing. Sources outside the six scholarly works required may be used to support your thesis but must be from a credible source (if uncertain, ask Dr. Taylor).</p> <p>All references must be properly and fully cited in a consistent format (APA or Chicago preferred).</p>	
15%	<p>Class participation (Numeric grade).</p> <p>Mark will be based upon class contributions and engagement with course readings. Your work questioning group presentations will also be considered for this mark.</p>	ongoing

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Note: You must complete all assignments and quizzes or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

If you miss a required course component, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.

Submission of Assignments

Please submit all assignments electronically by uploading them to the designated D2L dropbox (unless instructed otherwise in the assignment guidelines). Include your name and ID number on all assignments. 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).

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 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 the final research paper and group presentation, while percentage or numerical grades will be used for the short writing assignments, class participation, and quizzes.

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, 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 copy-right 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 and Readings

The weekly schedule of topics and assigned readings will be posted on D2L.