

**University of Calgary**  
**Department of Communication, Media and Film**  
**COMS 643 (S01): Methods in Film Studies**  
**Winter 2022: January 11 to April 12 (excluding Feb. 21-25)**  
**Lecture: Th 12:30 to 15:15**  
Lab Tues 12:30 to 15:15

**IMPORTANT NOTE FOR IN-PERSON COURSE DELIVERY**

*Note: This course will be delivered in-person.* If you are unable to participate in-class owing to time differences or geographical location, please arrange to take this course in a future term

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Charles Tepperman
<b>Office:</b>	SS 320
<b>Email:</b>	c.tepperman@ucalgary.ca
<b>Web Page:</b>	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Tuesday, 3:15-4:15 in person; Fridays, 1:00-2:00 via zoom

### **Course Description**

*An examination of key approaches to studying film, including its aesthetic, historical, and theoretical dimensions.*

### **Topic: Amateur Film, Participatory Media, and Media Historiography**

This course explores the place of the amateur in film history and contemporary media culture. Despite their well-chronicled history as a popular, commercial medium, motion pictures were understood from their invention as an amateur medium as well. This course will examine the rise of amateur movies, home movies, and movie clubs; it will also situate developments in motion pictures alongside amateur activities in still photography, radio, theatre, as well as more recent participatory media making. We will consider the histories of media that amateurs intersect with, and the historiographic implications of this intersection.

### **Additional Information**

Attendance at both lectures and labs, and informed participation are essential components of this course and will help determine your final grade. Students must come to class prepared to discuss the films and required reading.

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.

Some of the materials and topics presented in class may include explicit content (sex, violence or language). If these materials make you uncomfortable, you are encouraged to speak with the professor. You will not be exempt from any class assignments but we will work together to accommodate your concerns. This class respects difference and diversity while welcoming thoughtful, critical discussions about their representations and discourses in film and popular culture.

## **Objectives of the Course**

The course objectives are:

- To introduce a range of historical, theoretical, and analytic tools for a consideration of amateur media.
- To develop the necessary skills and critical approaches for determining which of methods and theories are most salient or productive in researching amateur film and media. Successful students in this course will learn not only how to synthesize and analyze these different approaches, but also how to put them into practice in self-directed research projects.
- To develop an understanding of the historiography of film and media

## **Textbooks and Readings**

Motrescu-Mayes, A., & Aasman, S, *Amateur Media and Participatory Cultures: Film, Video, and Digital Media*

Lisa Gitelman, *Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture*

Additional course readings will be available via the course website on Blackboard.

## **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 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**

Laptops and tablets are not permitted during screenings, but they will help be for other in-class tasks and assignments. Laptops, tablets, and mobile phones may be used in class 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.

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
10%	<p><i>Class Participation</i></p> <p>In-class discussion is an essential component of the course. Students must come to class prepared to discuss the readings and screenings. Class participation grades will be evaluated based on the quality of your contributions to in-class discussions. In practical terms, this means noting specific passages from required readings that you found interesting, confusing, or problematic, and raising these for discussion; identifying interesting moments, formal techniques, or points of connection among the films screened, and raising these for discussion; responding in a thoughtful, respectful, and productive way to the comments of your peers and instructor in class discussions.</p>	ongoing
20%	<p><i>Seminar Presentation on an assigned topic (30 minutes)</i></p> <p>Each student will be expected present on and lead class discussion on one of the assigned readings during the term. In addition to providing a close reading of the article, the presenter should thoroughly research the reading and be able to explain its scholarly and theoretical context. The use of specific media examples for analysis and illustration is encouraged but the presentation will be substantially oral.</p>	ongoing
20%	<p><i>Film Introduction and Program Notes</i></p> <p>Each student will introduce and provide program notes for a film at one of our regular weekly screening labs (sign-up sheet distributed in Week 1). To prepare for the screening, the student will have to preview the film selected. The program notes will include a 2-3 page analysis of the work, its production context, and its relation to the week's readings. The introduction will be a 5-10 minute oral synopsis of the program notes.</p>	ongoing
10%	<p><i>Essay Proposal/Annotated Bibliography</i></p> <p>3-4 pages, total, which includes a brief (300 words) description of your topic and argument, which outlines the shape your final essay will take; AND a 2-3 page annotated bibliography that lists the primary and scholarly sources that you will use and provides a brief (2-3 sentence paragraph) explanation of the relevance of each. Proposal presented in-class and handed in April 12.</p>	April 12
40%	<p><i>Final Research Project</i></p> <p>An 15-20 page research essay on an approved topic of the student's choice and related to the course themes and materials. Full details will be provided in Week 8.</p>	April 22

### Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

If your class is held in the evening, the Registrar's Office will attempt to schedule the final exam in the evening, but there is no guarantee that the exam will NOT be scheduled during the day.

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

## **Submission of Assignments**

Please submit all assignments by uploading them to the designated D2L dropbox. Include your name and ID number on all assignments. Be sure to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to submit the proper version.

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 recording 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/](http://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. Whenever possible, students should provide supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require a medical note. For information on the use of a statutory declaration, see the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>

## **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

Work in this course will be graded using letter grades. The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Faculty of Graduate Studies:

Grade	Grade Point Value	Graduate Description
A+	4.00	Outstanding performance
A	4.00	Excellent performance
A-	3.70	Very good performance
B+	3.30	Good performance
B	3.00	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	Minimum pass
C+	2.30	All grades of "C+" or lower are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements. Individual programs may require a higher passing grade.
C	2.00	
C-	1.70	
D+	1.30	
D	1.00	
F	0.00	

### 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](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 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 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/desire2learn/home/students>. (Find the topic menu under the icon to the left of the ELEARN banner.)

## **Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings**

Will be posted on D2L.