

**Science, Technology and Society (STAS) 341 L20  
New Media, Technology & Society  
Spring 2012**

**Monday and Wednesday 12:00 – 14:50**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Mark Wolfe
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	By Appointment

### **Course Description**

Explosive growth and diversification of information-sharing technologies, and the increased demands on our attention and our time they impose, are shaping the world (and especially the world of relations) faster than ever. Leveraging their learning from research-based assignments on New Media technologies, students in this course develop critical perspective on New Media in terms of trending, as well as issues in information technology design, development and diffusion in society.

### **Primary objectives of the Course**

Expanded knowledge and appreciation of how technology shapes changes in media design and deployment is critical to preparing students for both advanced communication study and careers in the workplace. The key goal of this course is to build on the student's theoretical and historical knowledge of communication technology in general by exploring current New Media applications and their development and use in society today.

### **Internet and electronic communication device policy**

While there is no restriction on the quiet/non-distracting use of digital equipment during class, students camping behind laptops and/or on cell phones for much of the semester will need to get real comfortable with the idea of losing ALL 15% of their final grade that participation accounts for.

## **Textbooks and Readings:**

*Here comes everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations.* Clay Shirky. Penguin, 2008.

*The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains.* Nicholas Carr. Norton, 2011.

Selected readings from the web or made available in class. Consult Blackboard for details and links to external documents.

## **Assignments and Evaluation\***

**Participation (15%)** – To be awarded ANY participation grading, students must actively engage course material (readings and lecture notes, etc.) through in-class discussion and/or Blackboard discussion board when/where offered. Grading is subjective but based on both the demonstrated effort over the entire term to engage material and the quality of that engagement. Students who routinely (every other class at least; a couple of times per class for 3/4-hour classes) asking informed/thoughtful questions and/or responding to in-class discussion in an informed way are looking at high participation grading. Students never or rarely engaging the material/discussion and/or camped on/behind digital devices are apt to receive 0/15 for participation. Attendance, therefore, is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for receiving ANY participation grading. NOTE: I always use participation grading to help students get to the next grade when close to a grade boundary (eg. going from a high B+ to a low A), except when a low grading (<7%) or 0/15 is warranted.

**Mid-term exam (20%)** – An in-class, closed-book, short-essay format exam (90 minutes) will be held May 30th; make-up exams are usually a short research paper.

**Student group lecture (25%)** – Working in groups of 3 or 4, students will prepare a 30-45 minute lecture (plus discussion) on a key reading and/or topic of relevance to the course. Students will be graded on the quality of the research effort (10%), their effort as a collaborative unit (5%), and the actual delivery of the lecture (10% – the extent to which a professional presentation was actually delivered).

**Final group project (40%)** – This major course assignment, also completed by groups of 3 or 4 students, comprises a short research proposal due May 23 (5%), a brief oral presentation to be made in class near the end of term (10%), and a final hand-in report/video/website/etc. (25%) due the last day of classes.

\*See Blackboard for detailed descriptions and course schedule.

NOTE: 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.

### **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 Scale**

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 Digital Family 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.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

### **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/cfreh>

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

