

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE
(formerly Faculty of General Studies)

COMMUNICATIONS STUDIES 441 L.02
CULTURAL STUDIES IN COMMUNICATIONS
Fall 2000
Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30 - 10:45 a.m.

Instructor: Dr. Timothy J. Buell

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Office Hours: MWF 11:00 - 12:00 p.m., or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Through this course we will provide you with a comprehensive survey of the principal approaches to the study of human communication in the cultural and critical traditions, including semiotic models of communications processes and interpretive methods of research. The course considers the historical, cultural and intellectual context in which these research traditions emerge and are applied.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

This course has three main objectives:

- To provide you with an understanding of what communication theorists mean by the term “culture” and “cultural studies,” and to help you gain an understanding of where your own ideas of “culture” fit into this milieu
- To give you a comprehensive introduction to the principal cultural theorists of the 20th century who have contributed to the establishment of the field of cultural studies. While we will look at the major European and American theorists in this area, we will also study the important contribution made by Canadians, including McLuhan, Grant, Innis, Kroker, Nelson and others.
- To provide you with practical knowledge of the information literacy skills necessary to carry out research in this discipline.

TEXTBOOKS/READINGS

Gray, Ann, and McGuigan, Jim, eds. 1997. *Studying Culture: An Introductory Reader*. 2nd edition, London: Arnold

Strinati, Dominic. 1995. *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*. London: Routledge.

ASSIGNMENTS, EVALUATION AND DUE DATES

Critical Analysis of Article	20%	October 24
Term Paper Proposal	10%	November 16
Term Paper	30%	December 5
Lab Assignments	3 @ 5% = 15%	October 10, November 2 & 23
Final Examination	25%	Registrar-Scheduled

Critical analysis of article: This will be a short critical essay (4 - 5 pages) based on an article selected from the Gray & McGuigan reader.

Term paper proposal: This proposal will be developed in consultation with the instructor. It will be about 2 pages long, and will include an outline of the topic to be covered as well as a preliminary bibliography.

Term Paper: This is a research paper, between 8-10 pages (double-spaced) long. Individual topic proposals will be developed in consultation with the instructor (see above). Topics of the term paper will involve the application of one of the theories studied in class to a cultural artifact/event of the student's choosing.

Lab Assignments: Students will be expected to prepare short, informal assignments for discussion in class. Typical assignments might include locating a short newspaper article on a particular subject, clipping a magazine ad for discussion in class, or making notes on a tv, radio or other entertainment event for discussion in class. The full 5% is assigned for preparation of the material.

Final Exam: The exam will be essay format, based on the material covered in lectures and assigned readings.

Please note: the quality of your writing will be a factor in the grading of all your assignments and exams. If you have trouble with sentence structure, grammar, organization, etc., I encourage you to visit the Effective Writing Centre. Appointments can be booked in SS 301, or by calling 220-3277.

At the discretion of the instructor, assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

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 this course.

Plagiarism:

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. (For details see 2000-01 Calendar p. 49,

http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/How/HOW_LB.htm) 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 formats. Please consult your instructor if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

The Faculty of Communication and Culture uses the following scale when converting percentages to letter grades:

A (92-100); **A-** (86-91); **B+** (81-85); **B** (77-80); **B-** (71-76);
C+ (65-70); **C** (62-64); **C-** (59-61); **D+** (55-58); **D** (50-54); **F** (0-49)

"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 pay booths.

Communications Studies 441 (L.02 -- T. Buell)
Fall 2000 -- Course Schedule and Syllabus

Course web page (available September 19): <http://www.ucalgary/~buell/441/COMS441.htm>

Date	Topic	Reading
Tuesday, September 12	Introduction	SC = <i>Studying Culture</i> PC = <i>Popular Culture</i>
Thursday, September 14	Communication as Culture	In-class notes only
Tuesday, September 19	Denotation and Connotation	SC: Section 1 (pp. 5-79)
Thursday, September 21	Semiotics	PC: Ch. 3 (pp. 87 – 123)
Tuesday, September 26	Power and ideology	PC: 129 - 171
Thursday, September 28	Power and ideology	SC: pp 188-191; 306-318
Tuesday, October 3	Film	
Thursday, October 5	Film & Discussion	
Tuesday, October 10	Consumerism and Mass Culture Lab Assignment #1 DUE	PC: pp. 1 – 86
Thursday, October 12	Consumerism and Mass Culture	SC: pp. 104-121
Tuesday, October 17	Postmodernism	PC: Ch. 6 (pp221-246)
Thursday, October 19	Postmodernism (concluded)	SC: pp. 192-205
Tuesday, October 24	Images of race and gender Critical Analysis DUE	PC: Ch. 5 (177 – 219)
Thursday, October 26	Race & Gender (concluded)	SC: pp. 122-133
Tuesday, October 31	Cultural Policy	SC: pp. 306 – 318
Thursday, November 2	Film Lab Assignment #2 DUE	
Tuesday, November 7	Film & Discussion	
Thursday, November 9	Selected topics for review	
Tuesday, November 14	Reading Day – no lecture	
Thursday, November 16	Technology and Technological Determinism Term Paper Proposal DUE	SC: pp. 319 – 332; 346- 364
Tuesday, November 21	Technology and the Global Village	handout
Thursday, November 23	Technology as “Culture” Lab Assignment #3 DUE	
Tuesday, November 28	Film	
Thursday, November 30	Film & Discussion	
Tuesday, December 5	Term paper DUE Tying things together	SC: pp. 80-94 PC: pp. 247 - 261
Thursday, December 7	Review for Final Exam	
Registrar-Scheduled	Final Exam	