

**Advertising and the Consumer Culture**  
**COMS 370**  
**Department of Communication Studies, Concordia University**  
**Fall 2018**

**Professor:** Erik Chevrier

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**E-mail:** [professor@erikchevrier.ca](mailto:professor@erikchevrier.ca)

**Day/Time:** Thursday – 6:00PM - 8:45PM

**Classroom:** CJ 4.240 Loyola Campus

**Office Hours:** 8:45 – 10:45PM

**Professor's Office:** H-1125.12 (We can meet after class at Loyola campus)

### **Course Description**

Advertising has become a dominant social, economic and political force. It takes shape in many forms and has become ubiquitous in modern capitalist societies. For example, advertising is a product whose purpose is to sell other products/and or ideas. Advertising provides a source of revenue to media companies and is a form of media itself. Advertising is a creation of artistic expression, but one controlled by commercial interests. Advertising reflects and creates culture simultaneously – it is designed to reflect social interactions but, in the process, it influences social behaviour. Advertising is loved and hated by people – advertisers are always trying to find new ways to capture the attention of their audience and at the same time, people also watch ads for pleasure, like Super Bowl ads. Many people don't believe that they are personally affected by advertising, yet, they insist that it affects everyone else – this is known as the 3<sup>rd</sup> person effect. Advertising is pervasive in industrialized nations and consists of a plethora of commercial signs and symbols that communicate ideas and meaning – mainly to sell products and services and/or political ideas.

The goal of this course is to provide students with a critical examination of advertising and consumer culture in contemporary society. To accomplish this, we take a multidimensional approach by looking at advertising agencies, producers, and technologies; codes, texts, and forms; audiences and readings; and political socio-economic environments.

Students learn about advertising and consumer culture by looking at the changing structure of advertisements over the course of history. For example, we explore six advertising strategies and their historical context: utility-based ads in the 1800 - 1920s, product symbol based ads from the 1920s - 1950s, personification ads from the 1950s - 1970s, lifestyle ads from the 1970s - 1990s, demassifying ads from the 1990s - 2000s, and the mise-en-scène ads in the 2000s until now.

Furthermore, we juxtapose these strategies, within their historical contexts, with political and economic trends that helped pave the way for modern-day consumerism. For example, we look at the history of capitalism, industrialization, Fordism, liberalism, neoliberalism, financialization, and globalization, among other topics. We also explore what an economy is by looking at how commodities are produced, processed, distributed, and how current economic practices are affecting the biosphere.

In the course, students critically analyze their own economic practices to encourage them to become engaged, socially and environmentally responsible, ethical citizens of the world.

Topics covered in this course include but are not limited to: semiology, ideology, mythology, culture, consumerism, political economy, commodity fetishism, advertising agencies, structure of advertisements, culture jamming, materialism, resistance movements, modernism, post-modernism, digital advertising, social media, privacy, priming, feminism, racism, Marxism, among others.

## **Learning Objectives**

- To develop a critical understanding of advertising and consumer culture:
  - By exploring the interrelation between cultural codes, forms, and texts; reception and readings of audiences; political and socio-economic environments; and productive organizations and technologies.
  - By examining the history of advertising, advertising agencies, commodities, and new industrialized production methods.
  - By investigating new media forms and their impact on consumerism, privacy, political systems and social systems.
- To develop a critical understanding of political economy:
  - By exploring power dynamics of those who produce, transform, distribute, and consume products – especially advertising agencies and audiences.
  - By analyzing different types of political and economic arrangements focusing on the interaction between three main actors: states, corporations, and civil society.
  - By understanding the history of capitalism, market economies, industrialization, mass production, consumerism and advertising.
  - By evaluating other types of ‘post-capitalist’ political arrangements.
  - By reviewing Marx’s theory of commodity fetishism (the perception of social relations being about a relationship between commodities instead of a relationship between people) and Lukács’s theory of reification (the act of transforming human properties, relations and actions into properties, relations and actions of human-produced things which have become independent from their creators).
- To learn how to ‘read’ advertisements:
  - By analyzing the influence of media forms, contexts, and meanings.
  - By introducing semiotics, mythology and ideology.
  - By examining social media forms, like Facebook, Youtube, and Twitter, etc.
- To learn how advertisers encode meaning:
  - By exploring the various technologies used to create advertisements.
  - By evaluating advertising as a product of art and research.
  - By understanding social influence and conformity tactics.

- To identify oppressive power relations in advertising and consumer culture:
  - By exploring perspectives from feminists, Marxists, the LGBTQ community, Indigenous peoples, and from people of colour.
  - By evaluating criticisms of advertising from a multidisciplinary approach, i.e. psychologists against advertising to children, women's rights groups advocating against unrealistic representations in advertising, etc.
  - By understanding the extent of data collection and surveillance technologies in modern society.
- To learn about cultural resistance movements:
  - By exploring art forms of cultural resistance, like culture jamming, and 'detournement' from the French situationists.
  - By encouraging communications students to be critical of their own consumption habits and participate in creating a more just society.

## **Course Evaluation**

Exam 1		11-Oct		30%
Exam 2		Final Exam Period		30%
Project 1 Proposal		4-Oct		5%
Project 1		25-Oct		10%
Project 2 Proposal		8-Nov		5%
Project 2		29-Nov		15%
Class Participation (classroom assignments)				5%
		Total		100%

## **Course Assignments**

Students are expected to complete two assignments, two exams and participate in classroom activities. The two assignments are designed to complement the material provided in the readings and recommended readings section below. Advertising and consumer culture are large topics, these assignments allow students to explore areas not covered in the readings. Final projects can be submitted in written form and/or other media forms if approved by me. For example, students can produce a video and/or website or other media form that best conveys their ideas. Students are encouraged to work in groups, however they are still expected to submit an original version (not a copy of a group member's project) of their project report, individually. Students may request to submit their projects in groups, however this must also be approved by me.

Both assignments are broken into two parts, a proposal and a final project. The purpose of the proposal is to provide a draft of the final project so that I can give students feedback. The proposal is a clear and concise description of the project that includes the specific topic chosen, a summary of the project, the purpose of the project, the structure and format of the final report, sources cited and/or methodology used to gather research, and other relevant information about the project. The proposals should be no more than a page and a half long.

<b>Grading of Proposal</b>					
Quality of idea - Was your idea well developed?					2
Clarity of report - Was your idea clear and concise?					1
Formatting - Was the report structured well?					1
Sources/Method - How will you gather information for the project?					1
			Total		5

### *Assignment 1 – What is your role in consumer culture?*

The goal of the first assignment is for students to reflect on their participation in consumer culture. Students are asked to provide a critical, introspective account of the way they participate in consumerism. Topics can include, labour practices, consumption habits, ecological footprint, social justice work, or any other related topic approved by me. Students can choose to do an in-depth report about one of the practices listed above or can choose to write more broadly about their participation in consumer culture. The paper should be no more than three pages long. If a student requests to submit the assignment in another form, we will discuss the parameters of the assignment together once I approve the project.

### **Grading of Project 1**

Quality of idea - Was your idea well developed?	6
Clarity of report - Was your idea clear and concise?	2
Formatting - Was the report well structured?	1
Feedback - Did you address the concerns from your proposal?	1
Total	10

### *Assignment 2 – Critical Analysis of Advertising*

The goal of the second assignment is to allow students to explore critical topics related to advertising that weren't addressed in the assigned and recommended readings. These topics can include: advertising and desire; advertising and body image; feminist perspectives in advertising; Indigenous perspectives in advertising; race and advertising; new media and advertising; political advertising; data mining; future of advertising; technology and advertising; product placement; and mise-en-scène advertising. Students can propose other topics, but these must be approved by me. The paper should be no more than three pages long. If a student requests to submit the assignment in another form, we will discuss the parameters of the assignment together once I approve the project.

<b>Grading of Project 2</b>					
Quality of idea - Was your idea well developed?					6
Clarity of report - Was your idea clear and concise?					3
Reliability and validity of sources - Do your sources back up your arguments?					3
Formatting - Was the report structured well?					2
Feedback - Did you address the concerns from your proposal?			Total		1
					15

## **Course Materials and Text:**

Students are expected to complete **ALL** the designated readings and watch **ALL** of the assigned videos **BEFORE EACH CLASS**. Students are also expected to attend **ALL** classes and participate in class discussions.

### ***Required Books:***

Holm, N. (2017) Advertising and Consumer Society: A Critical Introduction, Palgrave Macmillan.

Leiss, W., Kline, S., Jhally, S., Botterill, J., Asquith, K. (2018) Social Communication in Advertising 4th Edition, Routledge.

The power-point ***lecture notes*** are posted on the course site on a weekly basis before each class.

**Recommended readings:** URLs and other electronic sources are posted on the course website from time to time. Please visit the course website to get this material. These are only for interest and are not required.

## **Course Format**

This course consists of a variety of pedagogical styles including lectures, discussions, guest speakers, and/or community service learning (if requested as part of a project). Students are expected to read the required text and/or watch the assigned movie before coming to class. In class, students participate in interactive activities, discussions and have occasional visits from people who work: in advertising, culture jamming, with alternative economic practices and/or other related domains. At times, the class participates in fieldtrips on and off campus. Students are notified in advance by e-mail and in class prior to these events.

## **Course Schedule and Readings**

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus during the semester as necessary, with the goal of fully addressing class needs and improving your learning experience.

### **September 6 – Introduction to the Course**

### **September 13 – Introduction to Advertising and Consumer Culture**

#### **Required Readings:**

Excerpts from:

Chapter 1 – Introduction: Why study advertising? Holm, N. (2017) Advertising and Consumer Society: A Critical Introduction, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 1 – 12.

Chapter 1 – Introduction, Leiss, W., Kline, S., Jhally, S., Botterill, J., Asquith, K. (2018) Social Communication in Advertising, 4th Edition, Routledge, pp. 1 – 25.

**Documentary to Watch:**

The Century of Self: Part 1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJ3RzGoQC4s>

**Recommended Readings:**

Chapter 12 – The Structure of Advertisements, Leiss, W., Kline, S., Jhally, S., Botterill, J., Asquith, K. (2018) Social Communication in Advertising, 4th Edition, Routledge, pp. 120 – 169.

Johnson, R. (1986) What Is Cultural Studies Anyway? Social Text, 16 (Winter, 1986 -1987), pp. 38-80.

<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-artslaw/history/cccc/stencilled-occasional-papers/56to87/SOP74.pdf>

O'Barr, William. (2005) What is Advertising? Advertising and Society Review, Vol. 5, No. 3.

## **September 20 – Analyzing Advertisements**

**Required Reading:**

Chapter 3 – Analyzing Advertisements: Form, Semiotics, and Ideology, Holm, N. (2017) Advertising and Consumer Society: A Critical Introduction, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 35 – 61.

**Documentary to Watch:**

The Century of Self: Part 2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJ3RzGoQC4s>

**Recommended Readings:**

Leiss, W., Kline, S., Jhally, S., Botterill, J., Asquith, K. (2018) Social Communication in Advertising, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Routledge. Chapter 7, & 11.

Jhally, S. Advertising as Religion: The Dialectic of Technology and Magic. In Cultural Politics in Contemporary America, edited by Ian Angus and Sut Jhally. New York: Routledge, 1989, pp. 217-229

Fowles, J (1996) The Dynamics Behind the Advertisement. In Advertising and Popular Culture. Foundations of Popular Culture, edited by Garth St. Jowett, Vol. 5. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996, pp. 77-102.

Williamson, J. (1978) Decoding Advertisements: Ideology and Meaning in Advertising, Marion Boyars.

Barthes, R. (1972). Mythologies. New York: Noonday Press. (MYTH Today to “The Signification”, 109 – 126)

Hall, S. (1997). The Work of Representation. In Stuart Hall (Ed.), Representation (15 – 26). London: Sage Publications. (until top of first para. 26)

Hall, S. (2008). Encoding/Decoding. In Neil Badminton & Julia Thomas (Eds.), The Routledge Critical and Cultural Theory Reader (234-244). London: Routledge.

## **September 27 – History of Advertising and Consumer Society**

### **Required Readings:**

Excerpts from:

Chapter 2 – The History of Advertising: Contexts, Transformations and Continuity, Holm, N. (2017) Advertising and Consumer Society: A Critical Introduction, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 14 – 32.

Chapter 4 – Advertising, Capitalism, and Ideology. Holm, N. (2017) Advertising and Consumer Society: A Critical Introduction, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 63 – 92.

### **Recommended Documentaries to Watch:**

The Century of Self: Part 3 and 4

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJ3RzGoQC4s>

### **Recommended Readings:**

Chapter 2, Chapter 3, and Chapter 4 –Leiss, W., Kline, S., Jhally, S., Botterill, J., Asquith, K. (2018) Social Communication in Advertising, 4th Edition, Routledge.

Raymond. W. (2009). Advertising: The Magic System. In Matthew P. McAllister & Joseph Turow (Eds.), The Advertising and Consumer Culture Reader (13-24). London: Routledge.

Susan, S. (2009). The Alien Past: Consumer Culture in Historical Perspective. In Matthew P. McAllister & Joseph Turow (Eds.), The Advertising and Consumer Culture Reader (25-38). London: Routledge.

## **October 4 – Advertising and the Economy**

### ***Proposal for Project 1 Due***

### **Required Reading:**

Chapter 9 – Late-Modern Consumer Society, Leiss, W., Kline, S., Jhally, S., Botterill, J., Asquith, K. (2018) Social Communication in Advertising, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Routledge, pp. 214 – 237.

### **Documentary to Watch:**

The Corporation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y888wVY5hzw>

### **Recommended Readings:**

Gibson-Graham, J.K., Cameron, J., Healy, S. (2013) Take Back the Economy: An Ethical Guide for Transforming Communities, University of Minnesota Press, Introduction – Take Back The Economy Why Now? Chapter 1 Reframing the Economy, Reframing Ourselves – Page 1 – 15.

Polanyi, K. (2001) The Great Transformation; The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time, Beacon Press, Chapter 4 – Societies and Economic Systems, Chapter 5 – The evolution of the Market Pattern

Olin Wright, E. (2010) Envisioning Real Utopias, Verso. Chapter 2 – The Task of Emancipatory Social Science – Page 10 – 29.

Pearce, J. (2009) Social Economy: Engaging as a third system. In, Ash Amin, (2009) The Social Economy: International Perspectives on Economic Solidarity. Page 22 – 34.

Christopher, H. (2002). The Panoptic Role of Advertising Agencies in the Production of Consumer Culture. *Consumption, Markets & Culture*, 5(3), 211-229.

Ohmann, R. M. (1996). Selling culture: Magazines, markets, and class at the turn of the century. London: Verso. (Ch. 6 Advertising: New Practices, New Relations, 106-117).

## **October 11 – Exam 1**

## **October 18 – Advertising and Commodities**

### **Required Readings:**

Excerpts from:

Chapter 5 – Advertising, Commodities and Commodity Fetishism, Holm, N. (2017) Advertising and Consumer Society: A Critical Introduction, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 93 – 114.

Chapter 6 – Audiences for Sale: Quantification, Segmentation, and Personalization, Holm, N. (2017) Advertising and Consumer Society: A Critical Introduction, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 117 – 137.

### **Recommended Readings:**

Marx, Karl (1990). Capital: A critique of Political Economy:

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Capital-Volume-I.pdf>

Fromm, E. (1955) The Sane Society, Fawcett Publications, Chapter 5.

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon - What is Property?

<http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/economics/proudhon/property/>

Gibson-Graham, J.K., Cameron, J., Healy, S. (2013) Take Back the Economy: An Ethical Guide for Transforming Communities, University of Minnesota Press, Chapter 5 – Take Back Property.

Polanyi, K. (2001) The Great Transformation; The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time, Beacon Press. Chapter 6 – The Self-Regulating Market and the Fictitious Commodities: Land Labour, and Money

Klein, N. (2000) No Logo: Taking Aim at The Brand Name Bullies, Random House.

Berger, A. (2007) Ads, Fads, & Consumer Culture: Advertising's Impact on American Character and Society, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Roman and Littlefield Publishers Inc.

## **October 25 – Advertising Agencies**

### ***Project 1 Report Due***

#### **Required Reading:**

Chapter 7 – Advertising Agencies: Organization, Agency and Internal Conflict, Holm, N. (2017) Advertising and Consumer Society: A Critical Introduction, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 142 – 160.

#### **Documentary to Watch:**

The Persuaders by Douglas Rushkoff

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/showspersuaders/>

#### **Recommended Readings:**

Chapter 5 - The Development of Agencies in the Bonding of Advertising and Media. Leiss, W., Kline, S., Jhally, S., Botterill, J., Asquith, K. (2018) Social Communication in Advertising, 4th Edition, Routledge, pp. 92 – 119.

Chapter 11 – Full Service Agencies: Globalization and Unbundling. Leiss, W., Kline, S., Jhally, S., Botterill, J. (2005) Social Communication in Advertising, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Routledge, pp. 369 – 410.

## **November 1 – Advertising, the Internet, Social and Mobile Mediated Marketplaces**

#### **Required Reading:**

Chapter 12 – The Internet, Social and Mobile Mediated Marketplace, Leiss, W., Kline, S., Jhally, S., Botterill, J., Asquith, K. (2018) Social Communication in Advertising, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Routledge, pp. 313 – 344.

#### **Recommended Readings:**

Andrejevic, M. (2007) iSpy: Surveillance and Poser in an Interactive Era, University of Kansas Press

Fuchs C., Boersma, K, Albrechtslund, A, Sandoval M. (2011) Internet and Surveillance: The Challenges of Web 2.0 and Social Media, Routledge.

## **November 8 – Twenty-First-Century Promotional and Consumer Culture**

### ***Proposal for Project 2 Due***

#### **Required Reading:**

Chapter 13 – Twenty-First-Century Promotional and Consumer Culture, Leiss, W., Kline, S., Jhally, S., Botterill, J., Asquith, K. (2018) Social Communication in Advertising, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Routledge, pp. 345 – 372.

**Recommended Readings:**

Fuchs C. (2015) Culture and Economy in the Age of Social Media, Routledge.

**November 15 – Advertising as Art****Required Reading:**

Chapter 8 – Advertising as Art: From Creativity to Critique. Holm, N. (2017) Advertising and Consumer Society: A Critical Introduction, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 162 – 180.

**Recommended Documentary to Watch:**

Art & Copy: Inside Advertising's Creative Revolution by Doug Pray

**Recommended Readings:**

Williams, R. (2005) Culture and Materialism, Verso

Horrman, B. (2003) The Fine Art of Advertising, Harry N. Abrams

**November 22 – Culture Jamming and Resistance Culture****Required Readings:**

Excerpts from:

Chapter 9 – Empowering Consumers: Engagement, Interpretation, Interpretation and Resistance. Holm, N. (2017) Advertising and Consumer Society: A Critical Introduction, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 181 – 199.

Chapter 10 – The Politics of Advertising: Capitalism, Resistance, and Liberalism. Holm, N. (2017) Advertising and Consumer Society: A Critical Introduction, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 201 – 209.

**Recommended Reading:**

Lassen, Kalle (1999). Culture Jam: The Uncooling of America. New York. William Morrow and Company.

DeLaure, M, Fink, M, Dery, M. (2017) Culture Jamming: Activism and the Art of Cultural Resistance, New York University Press.

Debord, G. (1931 – 1996) La Société du Spectacle, Filio.

Debord, G. (1959) ‘Détournement as Negation and Prelude’, Bureau of Public Secrets.  
<http://www.bopsecrets.org/SI/3.detourn.htm>

Situationist Manifesto (1960) <http://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/manifesto.html>

Christine, H. (2004). Pranking rhetoric: “culture jamming” as media activism. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 21, 3, 189-211.

## November 29 – Presentations

### ***Project 2 Due***

#### **Department of Communication Studies, Concordia University (2018/2019)**

*We would like to begin by acknowledging that Concordia University is located on unceded Indigenous lands. The Kanien’kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we gather today. Tiohtiá:ke/Montreal is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, it is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. We respect the continued connections with the past, present and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community. (Indigenous Directions Leadership Group, Feb. 16, 2017)*

#### **A list of Student Services and Useful Resources**

1. Communication Studies Academic Advisor: Ms. Jennifer Botsford [Jennifer.Botsford@concordia.ca](mailto:Jennifer.Botsford@concordia.ca)
2. Counselling and Psychological Services: <http://concordia.ca/students/counselling-life-skills>
3. Concordia Library Citation and Style Guides: <http://library.concordia.ca/help/howto/citations>
4. Student Success Centre: <http://concordia.ca/students/success>
5. Health Services: <http://concordia.ca/students/health>
6. Financial Aid and Awards: <http://concordia.ca/offices/faao>
7. HOJO (Off Campus Housing and Job Bank): <http://csu.qc.ca/hojo>
8. Academic Integrity: <http://concordia.ca/students/academic-integrity>
9. Access Centre for Students with Disabilities: <http://concordia.ca/offices/acsd>
10. CSU Advocacy Centre: <http://csu.qc.ca/advocacy>
11. Dean of Students Office: <http://concordia.ca/offices/dean-students>
12. International Students Office: <http://concordia.ca/students/international>
13. Student Hub: <http://concordia.ca/students>

14. Department of Communication Studies: <http://www.concordia.ca/artsci/coms.html>

15. BA Coms announcement list: To subscribe, send an email to [majordomo@lists.concordia.ca](mailto:majordomo@lists.concordia.ca) with ‘subscribe bacoms’ (no quotes) as the only text in your message. *Save the reply for future reference as we cannot unsubscribe you!*

16. Postings for internships and paid work for students in the Department of Communication Studies only: <http://comsopps.concordia.ca> *BA students cannot take internships in their first two semesters.*

17. Sexual Assault Resource Centre: <http://concordia.ca/students/sexual-assault.html>

18. Indigenous Directions: <http://concordia.ca/about/indigenous.html>

## **University Rights and Responsibilities**

**Academic Integrity:** “The Academic Code of Conduct sets out for students, instructors and administrators both the process and the expectations involved when a charge of academic misconduct occurs. The regulations are presented within the context of an academic community which seeks to support student learning at Concordia University.” (From Article 1 of the Academic Code of Conduct). Full text:

<http://www.concordia.ca/students/academic-integrity/offences.html>

**Plagiarism:** The most common offense under the Academic Code of Conduct is plagiarism, which the Code defines as “the presentation of the work of another person as one’s own or without proper acknowledgement.” This includes material copied word for word from books, journals, Internet sites, professor’s course notes, etc. It refers to material that is paraphrased but closely resembles the original source. It also includes for example the work of a fellow student, an answer on a quiz, data for a lab report, a paper or assignment completed by another student. It might be a paper purchased from any source. Plagiarism does not refer to words alone –it can refer to copying images, graphs, tables and ideas. “Presentation” is not limited to written work. It includes oral presentations, computer assignment and artistic works. Finally, if you translate the work of another person into any other language and do not cite the source, this is also plagiarism. **In Simple Words: Do not copy, paraphrase or translate anything from anywhere without saying where you obtained it!** Source: Academic Integrity Website: <http://concordia.ca/students/academic-integrity>

**Disabilities:** The University’s commitment to providing equal educational opportunities to all students includes students with disabilities. To demonstrate full respect for the academic capacities and potential of students with disabilities, the University seeks to remove attitudinal and physical barriers that may hinder or prevent qualified students with disabilities from participating fully in University life. Please see the instructor during the first class if you feel you require assistance.

For more information please visit <http://concordia.ca/offices/acsd>

**Safe Space Classroom:** Concordia classrooms are considered ‘safe space classrooms’. In order to create a climate for open and honest dialogue and to encourage the broadest range of viewpoints, it is important for class participants to treat each other with respect. Name-calling, accusations, verbal attacks, sarcasm, and other negative exchanges are counter-productive to successful teaching and learning. The purpose of class discussions is to generate greater understanding about different topics. The expression of the broadest range of ideas, including dissenting views, helps to accomplish this goal. However, in expressing viewpoints, students should try to raise questions and comments in ways that will promote learning, rather

than defensiveness and feelings of conflict in other students. Thus, questions and comments should be asked or stated in such a way that will promote greater insight into the awareness of topics as opposed to anger and conflict. The purpose of dialogue and discussion is not to reach a consensus, nor to convince each other of different viewpoints. Rather, the purpose of dialogue in the classroom is to reach higher levels of learning by examining different viewpoints and opinions with respect and civility.

## **Department Policies**

**Participation:** This grade is based on overall punctuality and attendance in the classes, labs and workshops. Student preparedness, initiative and *level of class engagement* is evaluated (this means participating in discussions and demonstration of familiarity with required readings). Participation also includes completing all required readings and all assignments **on time**. Students are expected to be collegial, respectful and tolerant of peers, teaching assistants, technical instructors and professors. The best classroom experience will occur with courteous and engaged participation and interaction with each other, the work, the discussions and debates.

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is a requirement. Students are expected to actively participate in all classes, workshops, critiques, discussions and labs associated with courses, and to complete all required course work according to deadlines and guidelines as assigned. Failure to comply can result in loss of marks.

**Electronic Devices:** No electronic devices may be used once the class starts. All mobile phones, iPods, PDAs, cell phones, laptops etc. *must be turned off and put away*. The only exceptions are if the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities has authorized such use or the instructor specifically grants permission for use.

## **COMMUNICATION STUDIES NUMERICAL GRADE, LETTER GRADE AND OFFICIAL GRADE POINT EQUIVALENTS**

### **Numerical Grade Letter Grade Official Grade Point**

94 - 100	A+	4.33
90 - 93	A	4.0
86 - 89	A-	3.67
82 - 85	B+	3.3
78 - 81	B	3.0
74 - 77	B-	2.67
70 - 73	C+	2.33
66 - 69	C	2.0
62 - 65	C-	1.67
58 - 61	D+	1.33
54 - 57	D	1.0
50 - 53	D-	0.67
0 - 49	F	0.0

Please note the individual instructors may elect to use numerical grades, letter grades or both for individual assignments, while all final marks for the course are given as letter grades at the university level. Course grades are not considered final until approved by the Department Chair.

**A** Superior work in both content and presentation. This is a student who appears, even at an early stage, to be a potential honours student. The work answers all components of a question. It demonstrates clear and persuasive argument, a well-structured text that features solid introductory and concluding arguments, and examples to illustrate the argument. Few, if any presentation errors appear.

**B** Better than average in both content and presentation. This student has the potential for honours, though it is less evident than for the A student. Student's work is clear and well structured. Minor components of an answer might be missing, and there may be fewer illustrations for the argument. Some minor but noticeable errors in presentation may have interfered with the general quality of the work.

**C** Student demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of the material. Ideas are presented in a style that is at least somewhat coherent and orderly. Occasional examples are provided to support arguments. Presentation errors that affect the quality of the work are more apparent than in B work. Some components of a question may have been omitted in the response.

**D** Student has only a basic grasp of the material. Sense of organization and development is often not demonstrated in the response. Few, if any, examples are provided to illustrate argument. Major components of a question might have been neglected; and major presentation errors hamper the work.

**F** Shows an inadequate grasp of the material. Work has major errors of style; and provides no supporting illustration for argument. Ideas are not clear to the reader. Work lacks a sense of structure. Additional criteria, parameters and guidelines will be handed out in class when each assignment is introduced and discussed.

### **Professor's Policies**

**Late assignment policy:** Unless you are given permission in advance, late assignments **are not accepted** without adequate documentation of medical or personal emergencies.

**Handing in Assignments:** All written assignments **MUST** be submitted in hard copy at the beginning of class on the due date. Any written assignment submitted electronically are subject to a reduction of 10% of the value of the assignment and/or will not be returned with feedback.