

York University Dept of Communication Studies

COMN 2312(9) & 2312(6): **INFORMATION, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY** 2010-11

Lectures: Tuesdays 12:30 – 2:30pm
Course Director & Office: Dr. Jennifer Peterson
Phone & Email: 416-736-2100 ext: 77405
Office Hours: Tuesdays 3:30 – 4:30 pm

CLH - D
3040 TEL Building
jennipeATyorku.ca
or by appointment

Course website¹: <http://jopeterson.weebly.com/>

Tutorial Information:

Tutorial Number	T.A. 6.0	ROOM	Day	Time	Email for course use only
1	Brasset, Sheilagh	TEL 1016	T	9:30	sbrassetATyorku.ca
2	Gundogdu, Ercument	ACW 304	W	9:30	gundogduATyorku.ca
3	Marku, Hana	VH 1152A	T	4:30	hanamATyorku.ca
4	Krouzil, Jan	ACW 302	T	10:30	jkrouzilATrogers.com
5	Brasset, Sheilagh	TEL 1016	R	2:30	sbrassetATyorku.ca
6	Marku, Hana	VH 1018	W	8:30	hanamATyorku.ca

Tutorial Leader 9.0					Contact Info (Tel/Email)
1	MacLellan, Jo-Anne	MC 213	W	8:30	jomac2312ATrogers.com
2	Palatnik, Shoshana	ACW 303	T	8:30	palatnikATyorku.ca
3	Meurer, David	SC 303	T	4:30	dmeurerATyorku.ca
4	Krouzil, Jan	ROSS S136	T	2:30	jkrouzilATrogers.com
L	Dagmara Woronko	LTutorial			DagmaraATyorku.ca

2312 TUTORIAL SCHEDULE

Course Description:

¹ Course website will likely be moved from an external site to a web based cite inside of York course frame.

Like fish swimming in water – we are told we swim in “an information age.” In an attempt to help us see “the water we are swimming in” – this course will survey and sample the several formations that the terms “information” “society” and “technology” evoke. Our attention will be towards diverse currents of inquiry – and will expose us to a broad set of disciplinary perspectives and methods. As we examine these terms and their affiliated technologies, times and cultural impacts, we will maintain three proactive goals:

1. To sample, inquire and enjoy the banquet offered by this highly varied topic. Our major goal will be to comprehend its diverse topography and currents.
2. To inquire regards the relationship of information, technology and society to our world and culture that we might learn from a diverse past and present towards empowering² ourselves regards our future.
3. To forge a broad and interdisciplinary *critical lens (particularly so we can respond to that future)*.

This course operates as part of critical technology studies program at York. The critical technology studies focus is described as follows:

“examine the relationships between cultures, societies, identities, and communication technologies. The focus of this area is to expose students to different theories and methodologies that will allow them to identify and analyse the established, contemporary and emergent technologies. The emphasis here is on exploring the ways in which technology and society are co-constructed.”³

Our survey will follow broad strokes of this critical technology lens and prioritize cultural and media studies inquiry with its multidisciplinary interests. Thus in addition to the broad aims outlined above, the course will also engage key terms and concepts relevant to methodological and theoretical approaches that would ready students to engage with the more complex and sophisticated analyses, such as those subjects discussed in 3000 and 4000 level courses in the Critical Technology Studies, Department of Communication Studies stream.

Course Communication

Thoughtful and engaged efforts to make this a positive and engaging course for all involved – are welcomed. I try to stay least 1/2 hour after the course (more if you arrange it). I also offer office hour shortly after class – so you can follow up on a thought or interest.

There are a lot of us in this survey course – and this does make communication challenging – And all of us - do have a busy schedules – which is also challenging – so we have to work together creatively and respectfully to make the course work. I highly value the efforts students engage to make a course work for themselves and also for their fellow students. Thank you for this.

Thus tutorials have been created to offer you an accessible space to communicate in – Try to communicate and work issues through with TAs first.

As well, if you have needs – please think through whether you are following the course format, attending lectures, doing readings – as a great many course issues can be resolved through these expected activities.

² Empowerment will be defined as the course goes along, but we might describe it here as the capacity to find the space of analysis, question, action, agency and proactive involvement in one's world.

³ From York Communication Department website: <http://www.yorku.ca/laps/comn/aboutus.html>

In addition to visiting tutorials on occasion, I will be in touch with the T.A.s regularly and will endeavour to respond to the class in this way –.

Email is the best way to get me. I will try to respond to email on Friday afternoons after my last lecture - unless the email is marked as urgent in the subject line (and indeed, seems to be truly urgent).

Course Format, Grading, and Assignments:

Readings and Attendance: All students are expected to attend both course lecture and tutorials. Students are expected to do the readings which accompany the course.

The course flow and is keyed to attendance at the tutorial and lecture.

Those who attend both course and lecture are likely to find themselves succeeding in the class.

Exams, tutorial assignments, and tutorial participation points are keyed to readings.

9 and 6 credit: Following the tradition established for this course by previous instructors, this course combines 9-credit Gen-Ed Foundation sections, and 6-credit Communication Studies sections, there are thus two assignment protocols:

Assignments for the 9-credit sections are designed for a Gen Ed focus and survey and sample this field; these also build and test students' basic research and writing skills.

Assignments for the 6-credit sections are fewer.

6 credit:

Attendance and participation: 10% (5% per term)

Major Assignments: 60% (3- Each worth 20%) : Field-note assignment / 1 exam / 1 paper⁴

Precis 15% (3 - each worth 5%)

Question sets 15% (2- each worth 7.5%)



5 articles total for the course, ideally these should be balanced across the year's tutorials.

Attendance will be taken in tutorials. In tutorials you will be held accountable for readings, for participating and asked to give evidence of attending the lectures. An extra credit offered (there will be two offerings per term. Extra Credit will count towards attendance and participation)

9 credit

⁴ 6 credit student may take an exam in Dec or April. They are to do a paper in the opposite term.

Attendance and participation: 16% (8 % per term)

Major Assignments: 60% (4-assignments- Each worth 15%) :

Field note assignment

Choice of Exam + two papers

Paper + two exams

Precis 12 % (3 - each worth 4%)

Question Sets 12% (3 - each worth 4)



6 total articles for the year. Ideally this assignment should balance across the year with 3 assignments per term.

Tutorial Assignments: Due dates variable

As this course is exploration oriented, discussion and exploration of the readings and lecture topics are important. The tutorials are key to this.

Students are expected to attend their tutorials and attendance and participation are part of their grade. In the tutorial students will be given an opportunity to connect the lecture and readings, and to demonstrate regular attendance of the lectures.

The tutorial assignments will give students responsibility for more in depth coverage of a specific article and thus also more in depth leadership/participation contribution to tutorial discussion related to that article:

1. **Precis:** Most weeks of the course will have a reading or something to view. Out of the 24 total weeks of the course students are to chose articles to write a précis for. What a précis is will be explained more explicitly in class, suffice it to say here it is a specific kind of summary of the article. The number of précis required depends on the credit amount for the course.
2. **Questions:** Out of the tutorials offered most will have a reading or something to view. The questions will be used during the tutorial to help the discussion and then ranked by your peers and T.A. Each of the good questions will be used in the exam. Each question set is worth ten points. Questions used in the exam will accrue bonus points⁵ What a questions set is will be clarified and delineated in the second lecture and at the first tutorial

Major Assignments:

Major assignments include the following

The field note assignment

Exam (s)⁶

Paper (s)

⁶ Students in 6 credit portion of course take 1 exam and 1 paper and can pick which term to do which. Students in 9 credit pick 2 exams and 1 paper, or 1 paper and 2 exams. See earlier section of syllabus.

The field note assignment is a guided observation assignment that will become the research base for a paper (s). This assignment will be composed of specific guided assignments given over the month of Oct, and due in final form in tutorials the week of Nov. 2

The exams for the course will be short answer and fill in the blank and will include material from the lecture and the readings. Students who attend most of the lectures, tutorials and do the readings should find them fairly straightforward.

The paper's for this course are to be solid 10 page papers (1.5 spacing). Student will use their field note assignment to develop topics to pursue. The papers will be discussed in length mid Oct. Due dates of the papers will vary depending on the load choices for the course, but those turning in papers for the fall term should do so by Dec. 7 and by Mar 29 for Spring Term.

Course texts and readings:

Many readings for the course will be pulled from varied resources, and available either on the website or through York e-resources. Students are directed to the page on the website entitled

Later in our course we will be using the text

Theories of the Information Society by Frank Webster

Routledge, 2006, 3rd edition, ISBN-10: 0415406331 / SBN-13: 978-0415406338

For this first part of the term we will be engaging varied readings, these will be posted on our website approximately two weeks prior to their use. Most will be available through the York Library, generally the e-resources.

Course Calendar:

September 14: Missed lecture due to instructor illness.

Assignment: read through syllabus.

Part A: I/T/S Introduction through anthropological and aesthetic analysis:

September 21: Introduction to course themes, evaluation rubric and syllabus

September 28/ Oct 5: GUN & DOLL

Reading 1 to be done by Sept 28: *Barbie: Girls vs Sea Monsters*

Reading 2 to be done by Sept 28: *Kimmel & Mahler: Adolescent Masculinity, Homophobia and School Violence*

Both readings are posted on website and also available through York Library e-resources

Additional info: Students will be introduced to details around précis, question sets and field note assignments.

Oct 19: SCREEN

Reading to be done by Oct 19: Introduction to The Virtual Window: by Anne Friedberg. Reading will be posted on website on Sept 28.

Field note trial-informal practice assignment is due.
Field note formal (actual) assignment will be explained

Additional info: Students will introduced to paper assignments

Part B: A few key "Words" for exploring I+T+S

Oct. 26: Word 1: the **FORM** in information

Reading to be done by Oct 26, lecture

Chapter 3: The Burden of Linearity and Donkey Urbanism from Architecture and the Burden of Linearity: Catherine Ingraham: Reading to be posted on Website on Oct 16.

Exam/Paper choice due in tutorials

Nov 2: Word 2: **PAIN:** The body and society/technology/information

Reading to be done by November, lecture

Introduction to The Body in Pain, the Making and Unmaking of the World by Elaine Scarry. Reading to be posted on website by Oct 16.

Field-note assignment due

November: 9: Word 3: FLOW:

Reading to be done by November 9, lecture

Chapter 1:1 Expectations from Digital Ground: Architecture, Pervasive Computing and Environmental Knowing by Malcolm McCulloch, Reading to be posted on website by Oct. 16

November 16: COUNT, VALUE - Reproduction
Readings due at Nov. 16 lecture.

Black Barbie and the Deep Play of Difference by Ann DuCille:, Posted on website on Oct. 16

Extra credit: The Holocaust and Rodney King, Memory and Silence: *Cliffs Notes* in the Age of Historical Reproduction by Alan Nadel, MFS Modern Fiction Studies (June 1996), 42 (2), pg. 445-468, available through York E-resources (use Scholars Portal Journals)

November 23: Word 5/6: Alphabet/Byte

Some Dynamics of Textuality selection from Orality and Literacy: the Technologizing of the Word by Walter J. Ong, will be posted on website by November 9

Exam review worksheet will be handed out in this lecture

November 30: Word 7: Sensorium:

The Mediated Sensorium by Caroline A. Jones, From The Sensorium Embodied Experience, Technology, and Contemporary Art Edited by Caroline A. Jones. Posted on website on November 16

December 7: Exam

Part C: Critical theorists and I/T/S:

Jan 04: Classical Critical Technology Influences: Non North American:

Excerpt from Chapter 2 from Perspectives on our Age: Jaques Ellul Speaks on His Life and Work to be posted on website over Christmas break.

Ivan Illich: Tools for Conviviality, excerpts to be posted on website over Christmas break

Walter Benjamin: excerpt from The Work of Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction. to be posted on website over Christmas break.

Jan 11: Classic Critical Technology Influences: Canadian

Excerpts from Harold Innis: Empire and Communications: Introduction/Chapter 1 to be posted on website over Christmas break.

Excerpts from Marshall McLuhan: The Guttenberg Galaxy to be posted on website over Christmas break.

Jan 18: Some North American Theorists and Critics:

Excerpt from Lev Manovich: The Language of New Media: Chapter V. Forms: Database to be posted on website over Christmas break.

Cyberlibetarian Myths and the Prospects for Community
By Langdon Winner to be posted on website over Christmas break.

Jan 25: Gender and Technology:

Designing the Smart House: Posthuman Domesticity and Conspicuous Consumption by Lynn Spigel (from *Electronic Elsewheres, Media, Technology and the Experience of Social Space*), to be posted on website over Christmas break.

Excerpts from *Cyber-manifesto* by Donna Haraway, to be posted on website over Christmas break.

Feb. 01: Post-colonialism and Technology

Fear of Small Numbers, Chapter 3 in Arjun Appadurai's, *Fear of Small Numbers* to be posted on website over Christmas break.

Unstable Object: The Making of Radio in Nigeria from *Signal and Noise: Media, Infrastructure and Urban Culture in Nigeria* to be posted on website over Christmas break.

Feb 08: Psychoanalysis/Post-structuralism/Deconstructionists: Guest Lecturer (Reading to be announced)

Feb 15: Reading Break

Feb 22: Sociological theorists: (Guest lecture, reading to be announced)

D. Situating Current Trends in I/T/S with economic, political and other themes

Mar 01: Webster's Theorists: Chapter 3, 4

Read Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 in text

Mar 08: Webster 's Theorist: Chapter 5 and 6

Read Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 in text

Mar 15: Webster's Theorists: Chapter 7 and 8

Read Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 in text

Mar 22: Social Media: Guest Lecturer reading to be announced

Mar 29: Exam

OTHER RESOURCES

Academic Integrity Tutorial and Quiz

The Academic Integrity Tutorial is designed to help you learn about issues of academic integrity. It explores plagiarism and related matters with case examples and positive strategies you can use to improve your academic efforts and avoid committing an academic offense as outlined in the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. York's Policy and procedures on academic honesty are featured. The

tutorial includes a self-test allowing you to gauge how well you understand issues covered. The tutorial and quiz can be completed in approximately 30-40 minutes. You are required to complete this tutorial and quiz before Week 4 of the course, and to print out and hand in your machine-graded quiz at your Week 4 tutorial meeting. The tutorial is found at the F-CAP website:

<http://www.yorku.ca/fcap/onlinetutorials.html>

COMPUTER SERVICES FOR STUDENTS:

For this course, you will need an email address and access to the internet. If you do not currently have internet access at home but have a computer and modem, you can activate a Dial-In Modem Account and access the internet through York's dial-in server. You can also activate an email address through York, which is accessible at home through a website.

York has several computer labs around campus or in the Scott Library which can be accessed with an Acadlabs-PC/MAC Labs account. To activate any of these accounts and other services, go to the website <http://apps.yorku.ca> and click on "Manage My Services". You will be required to log in through Passport York which is your 'passport' to various computing services and websites at York.

If you need assistance in activating your accounts, accessing Passport York, or require help with any other computer-related issues, please contact CNS Client Services in the Computing Commons, Arboretum Lane Parkade on Campus Walk (416-736-5800; email: helpdesk@yorku.ca).

To see the list of computer labs available on campus (and hours of operation), go to www.cns.yorku.ca/computing/labs/index.html

In addition to the Computing Commons, there are other smaller labs on campus, some of which will be open to you (such as the Stong College Computer Lab). To see the full list, click on "Other labs on campus" at the bottom of the page."

FOUNDATIONS COMPUTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (F-CAP)

F-CAP, a computer assistance program dedicated to Foundations students (those taking a nine credit course in Social Science or Humanities) is housed in the Bootstrap Computer Lab in Calumet College (Room 108) which also has printing and scanning facilities. F-CAP offers individual computer tutoring, and workshops to improve computer literacy and computer-based critical skills.

"Ask F-CAP" is a phone and email helpdesk for computer-related issues. F-CAP also maintains a website with a range of pre-writing strategies and links to useful on-line materials for critical skills development. For more information, go to www.yorku.ca/fcap

CAMPUS SERVICES:

Centre for Academic Writing [CAW], S329 Ross (416 736-5134).

CAW offers one-on-one tutoring. To be assigned a tutor, you must sign up well in advance. CAW also offers mini-workshops on topics such as 'How to Develop a Thesis' and 'Effective last Minute Revisions'. These workshops happen regularly.

over the year and fill up quickly. Stop by the CAW to sign up. Link available on the course website: click on "Learning Skills" or check out their website at www.arts.yorku.ca/caw

E-TUTOR (etutor@yorku.ca)

E-tutor will comment on essay drafts. E-tutor tries to respond within one week but in periods of high demand it may take longer. Plan ahead so that you can take advantage of this excellent service.

English as a Second Language Open Learning Centre (ESL-OLC)

Vanier College 037 (416-736-2100 x 22940)

The Centre is open twelve months a year to all York students, registered in degree programs, and is free of charge. Students may request help in any aspect of English: listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

ESL-OLC offers individual tutoring by appointment and weekly workshops on topics related to the language needs of ESL students: Conversing in English, Understanding Lectures and Note Taking, the Internet for Language Learning, Reading Academic Texts, Correcting Common Grammar Errors, Presenting in Front of a Group, Research Skills for Essays, and Organizing and Writing Essays.

Register at ESL-OLC or on the website at www.yorku.ca/eslclc (click the First Time Sign Up link on the left). Once registered, you can use the online form or visit the Centre to book space in tutorials and workshops.

Counselling and Development Centre [CDC], 145 BSB (416-736-5297)

CDC offers a range of services to students including personal counselling, skill development workshops (on time management, stress management and test preparation) and support for those with psychiatric disabilities and learning disabilities (112 BSB x33409). Link available on the course website: click on "Learning Skills" or check out their website at www.yorku.ca/cdc. Or check out their advertisements in Excalibur.

There is also an Office for Persons with Disabilities (109 Central Square x55140).