

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| COMN 2312/SOSC 2319, 6 and 9 credit Spring Exam Prep Sheet | COMN 2312/SOSC 2319 Exam date: last day of class, March 29, 2011 | Exam Length: 1 hr 50 min |
| | | Format: Same as Fall Exam |
| | | Covered: All course material since Winter Break |

Spring Exam Prep Sheet

Coverage of Exam:

Students should have an understanding of the broad stroke reference to fall term (see below), but except for this and in general, fall material will not be covered on the exam. The exam format will be similar to the fall exam. The exam will cover lecture and reading material introduced to students since our return from winter break on Jan 04, 2011. The lecture material will be covered in depth. The reading material will be covered in relationship to main points of each reading, its broad framework of argument and points: Readings will also be important in its connections to lectures, especially if lecture materials references the reading material. Finally as the lectures this term, center around theorists, the reading material often features an exposure to this theorist and their style of thinking, writing and argument: The readings are thus fundamental to comprehending and experiencing the theorist. Those who take the exam should be able to situate the readings as connected to the theorists, and if they study this way, will likely have an easier time taking the exam.

Format of Exam:

Short Answer Questions: Choose 3 questions out of five:

Each question is worth 10 points each.

This section in total is worth 30 points out of 100.

(I recommend allotting 24-30 min for this part of the exam or 8 to 10 min per question)

Essay question: Choose one question out of 4:

This section is worth 38 points out of 100.

(I recommend allotting 30 to 35 mins for this part of the exam)

Section 3: Multiple choice, fill in the blank or matching:

16 questions are worth two points each:

This part of the exam is worth a total of 32 points

(I recommend allotting 32-35 min for this part of the exam)

Broad Strokes: Picture of the Fall:

Our examination of information, technology and society last term used anthropologic and aesthetic inquiry. Anthropology studies culture(s) through their potent objects, forms and rituals: in like fashion we studied the

potent objects forms and rituals of our own culture. Aesthetic inquiry uses form to analyze culture(s). We used several 'forms' to analyze our culture. We did this in part because we are immersed in our culture - making it difficult to see and read it. We also did this because our culture, though desiring to gather itself around stable ideas of purified forms situated in science, numbers, capital and rather technical understandings; nevertheless (through varied technologies and medias) creates, decomposes and recreates itself as a continual fluidity of forms: Turns out we live in an extremely aesthetic world flooded by unprecedented interplays of form, information, technologies, colors, sounds, texts, images, performances, speakers, actors, watchers, buyers, players, spectacles, spectators, and speculations. To comprehend these ever changing formations, in which we are affected by the flow of multi-media dramas involving information, society and technology, Lev Manovich argues: we need an aesthetics of new media to comprehend our times. In our version of aesthetic inquiry, we began to work on this idea of multi-media literacy: We finished the fall term by trying to read more specific effects, effects that form(s) of communicative technologies have had historically and in present times, on cultural formation: We looked mainly at western culture in this consideration.

Picture of This Term (since winter break)

Since winter break we have been considering specific theorists relevant to our topic: information, technology and society. We have been drawing in the main from theorists who are relevant to communications as critical technology studies (as our focal theme has been this, all year). My emphasis has been on introducing you to theorists who have been influential but who can also be resources for you in the future: highlighting scholars who are of use in establishing multi-media critical literacy. (This was done somewhat last term as well, through our readings) As our focus was often current North America in the fall, I have interspersed this semester with varied theorists from varied geographies, and whose history with the topic may include other than current North American perspectives. Theorists have also been introduced in relationship to the field of critical technology studies as it intersects with critical media studies, and our journey this semester has been historical in so much as we have worked our way forward from classical critical studies into the variants of theoretical approaches that have emerged alongside the development of digital media. Though we have used aesthetic inquiry at times this term, we have mainly considered theorists in relationship to their own theoretical interests. With Frank Webster's text book, we will consider more closely the economic and political as connected to varied theorists who offer a theory and/or response to the idea of an "information society." We will begin our study of this theorists with a lecture on Marx, whose theory is important to the course in many ways, especially undergirds much of Webster's presentation of information age theorists.

Specific things to study:

- Each lecture starting with Jan 04 going to March 22
 - Pain and the Sensorium: We began by looking back at the concept of pain, which we looked at last term through Elaine Scarry's book: *The Body in Pain, Making and Unmaking of the World*. Pain was discussed as that which cuts through the virtual/actual - helps us find the actual. Pain returns

us to the actuality of our technological/media configuration-wakes us up to examine “our” situation in regards to technology.

- Theorists pre Webster (study through lecture, study my take on these, but make sure you can connect the course reading with the theorists - especially as they support the lecture on that theorist):

- Ellul,
- Benjamin,
- Illich,
- Innis,
- McLuhan,
- Manovich
- Winner
- Haraway
- Spigel
- Appadurai,
- Marx (Marku’s lecture)

- Theorists (theories) as interpreted mainly by my lecture (but in combination Webster’s text -looking at his main points, about each theorist)

- Daniel Bell
- Regulation School Theory, Fordism, Post Fordism
- Manuel Castells
- Herbert Schiller
- Jurgen Habermas
- Anthony Giddens

- Readings: You will need to be familiar with readings to be successful on test. I would have a basic summary understanding of all the readings, and especially know how they connect to theorists, (and my use of these in the lecture on each theorist). I would consider picking some readings (6 at least) to study in more depth, tracking these especially as these connect to theorists and lectures. This may help you in essay and short answer sections of the exam.

- Information Society: theories of (to be covered in lectures on March 8, 15, 22) and also covered in Webster’s text

Essay questions

You will have a choice of 4 essay questions. They will all ask you to integrate lecture and reading material and to be successful in answering an essay question you should pick at some readings to study in depth. This is

one of the questions that will be on the exam. You may prepare an essay ahead of time if you wish, here is one of the questions that will be on the exam:

Consider the relationship of democracy, information, technology and society by comparing and contrasting the following theorists: Manuel Castells, Harold Innis and Jürgen Habermas with another (course covered) theorist of your choice. To get full credit, you must credibly use course readings given for each theorist, along with intertwining relevant lecture material into your argument.

Study tips:

The exam is easier if you have attended the lectures and done the readings. It is also easier if you have reviewed the lectures and readings before the exam. Those familiar with the material will likely be able to answer the multiple choice questions, fill in the blanks, and sentence completion questions quicker thus leaving more time for the other portions of the exam.

Review this exam sheet in full.

Prepare summaries of all the readings. Don't forget bibliographic info (title, date) etc, as this info helps ground an essay. Pick some readings to study in depth, especially in their connection to theorists, and my lectures.

Review all the lectures: prepare outline-summaries

Consider placing these summaries on index cards (precis). Index cards can be studied on bus, while waiting for other things...etc.

Be ready to follow suggested timings on the exam: practice