

SYLLABUS
DEI 615: New Perspectives: Media History and Analysis
University of Waterloo
Masters in Digital Experience Innovation
Winter Term 2014

Professor: Dr. Christine McWebb
Phone: 519-888-4567, ext. 23008
E-mail: cmcwebb@uwaterloo.ca
Office Hours: Mondays, 1-3.30pm or by appointment

Description:

In this course, students will first be introduced to key moments in the building of networks, where knowledge and information are interlinked on a large scale, such as the printing press of Renaissance Europe, early cinema and photography at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, and then digital technologies of the 21st century. Secondly, students will receive training in the critical analysis of these media through the use of conceptual tools such as semiotics, cultural criticism, discourse analysis, visual anthropology and others. The objectives of this course are twofold:

1. to provide students with historical and cultural grounding in the interaction between technological developments and the shaping and transfer of knowledge
2. to equip students with critical and conceptual tools to effectively analyse cultural representations in a variety of media.

Students will acquire these skills through lectures, individual and team assignments, and case studies.

Evaluation:

Participation – Individual	10%	
Article or Chapter Review – Individual	15%	
Leading a Discussion (Chapter Summary + Discussion) – Team	25%	(Summary: 10%; Discussion: 15%)
Final Project – Team	50%	(Outline: 10% Final project: 40%)
TOTAL	100%	

Deliverables:

1. Participation: Students are expected to actively contribute to class discussions, to prepare the class material ahead of time and to offer their opinions and insights.
2. The Article or Chapter Review should consist of a succinct summary and a critical review. Arguments must be supported by quotes from or references to the article

itself. Arguments should also point to other secondary sources. Length: five double-spaced pages + bibliography.

3. Preparation and Leading of a Discussion: the Friday *before* the discussion, the team must hand in a succinct summary (written in prose) of the assigned chapter, a list of questions/topics to be discussed, anticipated outcomes, an annotated bibliography for further reading (minimum of 5 entries). Length: max. two double-spaced pages + bibliography. The day *of* the Discussion, the team is responsible for guiding the class discussion by asking pertinent questions, soliciting peer opinions and insights. Duration: 30 minutes. Students will choose their own teams.
4. Final project:
 - For each team project, teams will present their project outline, salient points, methodology, modes of presentation (video, text, music, photography, data visualization, etc.) to the class on March 10. Length: 10 mins. + 10 mins. Q&A
 - A team contract will be used for each project.
 - The teams will be finalized by the professor.

Students will have a choice for their final project:

- a) Contribute to the multimodal e-book on *Media History and New Perspectives*. This book was started by the graduating class of 2013. We will add two or three more chapters to it. The book will be published on CreateSpace (amazon.com) and all authors will be recognized. Two or three teams can choose to contribute to this project for one chapter each. Each chapter will include text, videography, photography, infographics, music or a partial combination thereof. As part of your "chapter", each team must submit a 10-15 page double-spaced essay that is a critical analysis of the topic assigned.
- b) Create a digital living document out of the *Blueprint Equinox Summit: Learning 2030*. Students will work with the Waterloo Global Science Initiative (Perimeter Institute/University of Waterloo). Details will follow.
- c) Create multimodal digital content for the Globe and Mail's University Report 2014 on "Teaching Innovation." Details will follow.
- d) In conjunction with DEI626 User Experience Research and Design, create content and conduct a usability study of a web-based annotation tool, *imagemat*. Details to follow.

Reading List:

- Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen. *Reading Images. The Grammar of Visual Design*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2010
- Clive Thompson. *Smarter Than You Think. How Technology is Changing Our Minds for the Better*. Penguin P, 2013.
- Online reading

Tentative Programme:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Assignments</i>
January 6	Introduction : What will we do in this course? What will we learn in this course? What is an Information Revolution?		
January 13	The Medium is the Message	Marshall McLuhan "The Medium is the Message" (available online at http://lib.uwaterloo.ca) Lucien Lefevre: "The Coming of the Book" (Learn) <i>Smarter Than You Think</i> "The Rise of the Centaurs" "We, the Memorious"	Team discussion 1 Team discussion 2
January 20	Planning the Final Project Working Session Introduction to Semiotics and Visual Rhetoric	<i>Reading Images</i> "Introduction" "The Semiotic Landscape"	Team Discussion 3
January 27	Trip to Google, Kitchener		
February 3	Semiotics and Visual Rhetoric Continued	<i>Reading Images</i> "Representation and Interaction: Designing the Position of the Viewer" <i>Smarter Than You Think</i> "Public Thinking" "The New Literacies"	Team Discussion 4
February 10	Semiotics and Visual Rhetoric - cont'd In-class activity	Roland Barthes "Rhetoric of the Image" (Learn)	Team Discussion 5
February 17	<i>Reading Week - no class</i>		
February 24	Glen Drummond, CEO Quarry Communications - tentative Project Work		Article Review
March 3	Multimodality and the Meaning of Composition	<i>Reading Images</i> "Modality: Designing Models of	Team Discussion 6

reality" "The Meaning of Composition"			
March 10	Project Outlines		Presentations - Project Outlines
March 17	Project Work The Connected Society	<i>Smarter Than You Think</i> "The Art of Finding" "Ambient Awareness" "The Connected Society"	Team Discussion 7
March 24	Project Work		
March 31	Project Presentations and Review		Final Presentations

NOTE ON AVOIDANCE OF ACADEMIC OFFENSES

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/ for more information.]

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity [check www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/] to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate Associate Dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm. For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 (Student Petitions and Grievances) (other than a petition) or Policy 71 (Student Discipline) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 (Student Appeals) www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm. When in doubt please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Avoiding Academic Offences:

http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html