Wilfrid Laurier University
Waterloo, ON

CS333C: ALTERNATIVE MEDIA
Winter 2016

Instructor: Elin Edwards
Email: eedwards@wlu.ca

Office Hours: Thursday, 3:30-5, DAWB 3-129
Class: Tuesday and Thursday, 5:30-6:50, DAWB 2-101

COURSE DESCRIPTION, UNDERGRADUATE CALENDAR:

This course examines the history, structure, role, content and development of a range of independent, progressive and radical media. The emphasis is on different media and communication forms (e.g., language, pamphlets, manifestos, video, websites) set within their historical and socio-political contexts, particularly their contribution to, and position within, oppositional cultures, social movements and political organizations.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through course readings, lectures, discussions, assignments, and activities, students will develop an understanding of the definition, history, context, function, and breadth of “alternative media.”

They will interact with a wide variety of alternative media texts, formats, interpretation, and research through:

- Reader response (course readings, journal entries)
- Creation (medium creation, group presentations)
- Analysis (class discussion, individual essay)
- Synthesis (midterm & final exams)

ASSESSMENT
Participation    20%
Midterm    20%
Group Project/Presentation  15%
Essay     25%
Final Exam    20%

TASKS

Participation, 20%
  • Attendance
  • In-class tasks (individual and group) and class discussion
  • 6 journal entries uploaded to MyLearningSpace dropbox during the term (topics will be provided)

Midterm, 20%
  • In-class, February 23

Group Alternative Media Creation Project, 15%
  • Creation of an “alternative” medium (e.g., zine, video, game, “craftivism” object)
  • Group presentation of creation (process and purpose)
  • Presentations, March 10, 17, 24 (3 groups/day)

Essay, 25%
  • Due March 29

Final Exam, 20%
  • During examination period (schedule announced around mid-term)

RESOURCES

  • All readings will be available through the MyLearningSpace website
  • Assignment details will be available on the MyLearningSpace website
  • The course MyLearningSpace webpage will include the course syllabus and readings, a discussion board, links to additional resources, a calendar (with deadlines), announcements, the dropbox section (for electronic submission of assignments), and access to your grades

LATE POLICY
A penalty of 1% per day will be deducted from late assignments, without documentation or prior permission of the instructor. Assignments will be accepted after the end of classes only with permission.

SCHEDULE

NOTE: check the course MyLearningSpace page for links to readings.

MODULE 1: Alt-media - Introduction and Definitions

- January 5, introduction
- January 7, definitions: alternative media vs. mainstream media
  - Journal #1 due (to dropbox, by midnight)
- January 12, history: underground press
- January 14, groups (creative project and presentations)
- January 19, contexts: power/society/community
- January 21, activism.
  - Journal #2 due (to dropbox, by midnight)
MODULE 2: Alt-text

- January 26, indy media

- January 28, alt-media & movements: Idle No More
  - Idle No More website, www.idlenomore.ca

- February 2, zines
  - Kevin Dunn, May Summer Farnsworth, “‘We are the revolution’: Riot GRRRL Press, girl empowerment, and DIY self-publishing.]” *Women’s Studies*, 41:2012, pp. 136-157.

- February 4, blogs
  - Journal #3 due (to dropbox, by midnight)

- February 9, blogs, continued
  - List of alternative media (U.S. political left)
  - List of alternative media (U.S. political right)
FEBRUARY 17-21, READING WEEK

February 23, MIDTERM

MODULE 3: Alt-digital

- February 25, independent radio/television
  - Journal #4 due (to dropbox, by midnight)

- March 1, video

- March 3, DIY internet

- March 8, music/distribution

- March 10, PRESENTATIONS A, B, C
  - Journal #5 due (to dropbox, by midnight)
MODULE 4: Alt-activism

- March 15, Tactical Technology
  - Tactical Technology Collective

- March 17, PRESENTATIONS D, E, F

- March 22, DIY citizenship

- March 24, PRESENTATIONS G, H, I

- March 29, Craftivism
  - ESSAY DUE

- March 31, last class
  - Journal #6 due (to dropbox, by midnight)

FINAL EXAMINATIONS
- APRIL 7-23 (schedule announced near middle of term)
- Note: Do not make travel or other commitments for this period until you know the schedule.
1. Students with disabilities or special needs are advised to contact Laurier's Accessible Learning Office for information regarding its services and resources. Students are encouraged to review the Calendar for information regarding all services available on campus.

2. Students are expected to be aware of and abide by University regulations and policies, as outlined in the current Undergraduate and Graduate Calendar.

3. Students must reserve the examination period as stated in the Undergraduate Calendar under Academic Dates. If you are considering registering for a special examination or event, you should select a time outside the examination period. Consult with the Undergraduate Calendar for special circumstances for examination deferral.
   (Applicable to Undergraduate students only.)

4. The penalties for plagiarism or any form of academic misconduct are severe and enforced at all times. The Student Code of Conduct and Discipline, and the procedures for investigating and determining appropriate disciplinary measures for breaches of the Code are given in the current Undergraduate and Graduate Calendar.
   Please note: submitting the same work to two different courses, or to different sections of the same course, is academic misconduct and will be addressed according to the procedures outlined in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendar. Students who are repeating a course are not permitted to re-use essays or assignments from the previous course.

5. The Student Code of Conduct and Discipline, and the procedures for investigating and determining appropriate disciplinary measures for breaches of the Code are given in the current Undergraduate and Graduate Calendar.

6. Students' names may be divulged in the classroom, both orally and in written form, to other members of the class. Students who are concerned about such disclosures should contact the course instructor to identify whether there are any possible alternatives to such disclosures. Additional information on the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act at Laurier is available at the Privacy Coordinator Office.

---

**Foot Patrol walk home service l 519.886.FOOT (3668)**
Foot Patrol is a volunteer operated walk-home service, available daily during evening hours. Male-female, radio-dispatched teams trained in Emergency First Aid are available on request to escort students to and from campus as well as to off-campus destinations, either by foot or by van.

**Counselling Services & Peer Help Line l 1-866-281-PEER (7337)**
Counselling Services are available to help students deal with emotional, psychological and social challenges of university. Counselling, consultation or referral are available on the 2nd floor of the Student Services Building (across from Health Services). Monday-Thursday 8:30am-8:00pm, Friday 8:30am-4:30pm. Peer Help Line, a confidential listening, referral, information and support line, is available during evening hours to provide support.

**Student Food Bank**
All Laurier students are eligible to use the Student Food Bank. Anonymous requests can be made online at WLUSU.COM under the Services tab. All dietary restrictions are accommodated, and food hampers typically last up to a week.

For more information visit WLUSU.com