

SOCIOLOGY 345 CULTURAL STUDIES

Fall 2015

Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:00-3:20PM T 1-93

This course explores the major concepts and theories of contemporary cultural studies with a focus on the development of Canadian cultural studies and communication theory. The course examines concepts, theories and intellectual practices developed in response to two far-reaching historical changes. The first of these is the emergence of the new consumer “society of the spectacle” (Guy Debord) after the second world war under U.S. political and economic leadership and the intensification of its crises over the recent neoliberal decades of globalization. The second of these is the emergence of postwar new social movements—second wave feminism, civil rights movements, peace movements, human rights movements, environmental movements—which have recently converged into a “movement of movements” variously called the anti-capitalist or alterglobalization movement. The cultural studies we undertake in class examine the cultural resources of everyday life through which exploited, oppressed, marginalized group identifications and classes cope, resist, manage, use, re-make, subvert (and when the opportunity presents itself to revolt against) institutions of domination. In opposition to the traditional discourses of the humanities and anthropology, the concept of culture in cultural studies is a dialectical figure or “placeholder” for a set of puzzle pieces—popular culture, mass culture, racism, ethnicity, identity, tradition, modernity, postmodernity, multiculturalism, communication, representation, mediation, and the common—which do not neatly fit together into some pretty picture but which remains a puzzle (a crisis of representation!) that can be re-made over and over again, as we will learn to do in this course.

The format of the course is discussion-based and involves seminars and studio sessions (see description on course website). A substantial component of course work involves group presentations and participation in the course studios. A substantial final exam paper based on the studios is required.

COURSE INFORMATION

Dr. Sourayan Mookerjea

6-10 Tory Bldg, 492-3384 Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:00-4:00PM

COURSE READINGS

1. *Canadian Cultural Studies: A Reader*. Eds. S. Mookerjea, I. Szeman, & G. Faurschou. Duke University Press: Durham, N.C.. 2009.

2. Course Reserve Readings: available via Rutherford (e-)reserve.

See course bibliography for details

Course Participation

Readings

You are expected to have done the required reading assigned for each class (see schedule) and be prepared for class discussion in seminars and studios.

Studios

A major feature of this course are the studios. The work we do in the studios involves researching a local contemporary cultural political conflict (the Northern Gateway / Energy East and other pipeline controversies), the close study of the course readings and the preparatory groundwork required for you to be able to write your final exam paper. Studio work will include working in groups, presentations, readings, research, working online and through the course website and in class studio discussion. Note that inconsistent studio participation will affect your final grade adversely. For details see the Course Schedule, The Soc345 Studio Guidelines and the Final Exam Paper Guidelines.

Evaluation of Course Work

Work & Relative Weight

Course Work	Percent Relative Weight	
In-class Mid Term Exam	30% (essay questions)	October 8th 2015
Studio Work	40% (all aspects inclusive)	
Take Home Final Exam Paper	30%	due Dec. 14th 2015

100%

Note that in the evaluation scheme presented above, numerical figures represent percent relative values of each piece of course work; these figures are NOT marks.

For more information regarding the criteria by which I will evaluate your work see The 345 Studio Manual and Final Paper Guidelines on E-class.

Evaluation & Grading

As you know, the University of Alberta, Faculty of Arts uses a letter grade system.

Over the semester I will evaluate your work by assigning letter grades to each requirement you complete. Along with verbal feedback, letter grade evaluations will give you a clear idea of the level of your performance in the course, individually or as a group member per requirement. After I have evaluated all of your course work, including your final exam paper, I will submit a letter grade from the scale described below based on my judgement of your overall level of performance considered in itself and compared with the work of other students past and present, using the relative weights of each requirement described above.

Your final grade will therefore be determined by whether your work over the term can be characterized overall as either:

A+ Original, exceptional and outstanding in all respects

A Distinctly outstanding work

A- Careful, thorough and insightful work

B+ Excellent, insightful work in most respects

B Very Good solid work

B- Good work in most respects

C+ Good work in some respects

C Satisfactory work

C- Satisfactory but significant flaws

D+ Substantial incomprehension of course material

D Minimal Pass

F Fail

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Responsibility: Enrolment in this course means that you hereby agree to conduct yourself according to the following statement on academic responsibility:

Students' academic responsibility consists of the following:

(i) Preparedness.

(ii) Respect for the learning needs and processes of others.

(iii) In debate and discussion, criticisms and commentary are to be directed at ideas and arguments, not persons.

(iv) That you accept the contributions of others in a generous spirit, understanding them to be directed at ideas and arguments, not your person.

(v) That you are always responsible for what you say and this responsibility goes beyond merely expressing your opinion to include a generous contribution to the creation of a positive environment for learning for everyone in the class.

Late Work: Late exam papers, assignments and project work will be penalized. Students will be eligible for a grace period of three days extension provided that you request an extension from me at least one day in advance of the due date. After the grace period, your evaluation will be marked down one evaluation rank per late day at my discretion. No course work will be accepted beyond two weeks past the last day of classes. If you are ill and are unable to complete your work by the due date, you must contact me immediately and at most within 3 days after the due date.

Plagiarism and Fraud: Plagiarism, cheating and fraud (including misrepresentation of reasons for missed exams and assignments) will be considered a serious violation of academic responsibility and can result in expulsion from the university. (See the Calendar for details, in particular: www.ualberta.ca.secretariat/appeals.htm). I will strive to protect the integrity and value of your work from being undermined by cases of plagiarism. If you are unsure of how to appropriately cite the ideas, work, arguments of others in an academic context, please ask me for assistance.

Re-evaluation of submitted course work The following conditions apply for students requesting that their course work be re-evaluated. (1) You must present an argument explaining why your work should be re-evaluated. (2) You must make your request for re-evaluation within one week of having your work returned or marks posted.

Missed Term Work

If you miss the midterm or other course requirements due to illness, it is your responsibility to convince me reasonably that this is an excusable absence, and provide me with one of the following documents within two working days of the scheduled exam or course requirement:

For medical illnesses, students can present one of the following:

“University of Alberta Medical Statement” signed by a doctor

"Medical Declaration Form for Students" (for Faculty of Arts students)

"Statutory Declaration" (for students in Faculties other than Arts, to be obtained from home Faculty or the Office of the Registrar)

For other acceptable absences, provide documentation appropriate to the situation. For example:

For a death in the family – a copy of the death certificate

For a car accident – a copy of the accident report

For other serious afflictions – consult with Instructor or Department about appropriate documents

Note that I, as your instructor, am not allowed to grant you a deferral for a missed final exam. If you need to defer the final exam you will have to apply to your home Faculty to be granted a deferral.

Registered?

Make sure you are correctly and accurately registered in the courses you are taking by checking your class schedule on Bear Tracks. I am not given up-to-date student registration information until it is too late.

University Services for Students

"Students who require accommodations in this course due to a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, or mental or physical health are advised to

discuss their needs with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) located in 1-80 Students' Union Building, 492-3381 (phone) or 492-7269 (TTY)."

Required Official University Policy Notices

1. Note the University's policy on missed exams:

23.5.6 Absence from Exams (University Calendar §23.5.6)

"Excused absence for a missed exam is not automatic and is granted at the discretion of the instructor (in the case of term exams) or the student's Faculty (in the case of final exams).

Instructors and Faculties are not required to grant excused absences for unacceptable reasons that include, but are not limited to personal events such as vacations, weddings, or travel arrangements. When a student is absent from a term or final exam without acceptable excuse, a final grade will be computed using a raw score of zero for the exam missed. Any student who applies for or obtains an excused absence by making false statements will be liable under the Code of Student Behaviour."

2. Re: Plagiarism, once more:

"The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially

result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

“Don’t Do It” sheet at <http://tinyurl.com/cheating-plagiarism>

“Don’t Cheat” sheet at www.governance.ualberta.ca/StudentAppeals/DontCheatsheet.aspx.

3. “Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).”

4. “Policy about course outlines can be found in §23.4(2) of the University Calendar.”