

Sociology 345 Cultural Studies

Winter 2018 B1

Mondays and Wednesdays, 10-11:20AM TB90

Course Instructor: Dr. Sourayan Mookerjea

6-10 Tory Bldg. email: sourayan@ualberta.ca

Office Hours: By appointment

Prerequisite: SOC 100 or consent of instructor

Course Objectives

Cultural Studies is an intellectual movement and an intervention into the politics of knowledge that has transformed the social sciences and humanities over the last three decades. As an intellectual movement, cultural studies emerged first in Great Britain after the Second World War in response to the fundamental transformations of global capitalism taking place as the United States replaced the British Empire as the paramount political-military-logistical infrastructure enabling the accumulation of capital in the geopolitical context of the cold war. Britain's first ever Labour government began to democratize its university system and for the first time common-folk —working men and women, immigrants, religious and ethnic minorities— were able to access higher education in substantial numbers. Cultural Studies emerged out of this context, as new “intersectional” subjectivities entered growing public university systems throughout the anglophone world and posed new and original questions about their own experiences of subordination, exploitation, and marginalization; about knowledge, its purposes and presuppositions; and about the world itself as a new kind of capitalism, new kinds of politics and new kinds of technology changed social landscapes around the world.

This course provides a substantial encounter and reflection upon this “subaltern” intellectual movement with a special emphasis on Canadian Cultural Studies understood in the context of British, American, Inter-Asian Cultural Studies and the global New Left. It does so in two ways: The course examines major theories, concepts and debates in Cultural Studies such as: everyday life, society of the spectacle, mass culture, popular culture, ideology and the question of intellectuals and universities, hegemony, crisis of representation, mediation, war of position, cultural politics, commodity fetishism, colonization of the life-world, bias of communication, media ecology, petrocultures, class politics, interlocking oppressions, the new enclosures and the commons.

Secondly, drawing on the theoretical tools of Cultural Studies, the course provides a critical encounter with the media saturation of contemporary social life and our contemporary petroculture as it faces escalating intermediations of social and ecological crises, the prospect of climate catastrophe and the necessity of planning a just and democratic energy transition from fossil capitalism to a low carbon mode of social reproduction.

Course Requirements

<u>Course Work</u>	<u>Relative Weights</u>
Assignment 1	20% Due Jan 31 2018
In-class Midterm Exam	30% on Feb 14 2018
Class participation	20%
Take-home Final Assignment (2)	30% Due April 13 2018

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 and guidelines regarding the course assignment, mid-term exam, course participation and Studio, and the take home-final assignment see the course e-class website.

Your class participation grade weight will be comprised of two components: your 1) participation in class discussion overall and 2) your attendance and participation in the course Studio (The Perfect Storm role playing energy transition game) including the completion of Studio tasks. (See guidelines on e-class for details)

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:

Grade	Description	GPV
A+	Excellent: original, exceptional outstanding in all respects	4.0
A	Excellent: distinctly outstanding work	4.0
A-	Excellent: careful, thorough and insightful work	3.7
B+	Good: insightful work in most respects	3.3
B	Good: very good, solid work	3.0
B-	Good: good work in most respects	2.7
C+	Satisfactory: good work in some respects	2.3
C	Satisfactory: satisfactory work	2.0
C-	Satisfactory: satisfactory but significant flaws	1.7
D+	Poor: Substantial incomprehension of course material	1.3
D	Minimal Pass	1.0
F	Fail	0

Course Readings

See course bibliography for details.

Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything*, Knopf Canada 2014 has been ordered at the SUB bookstore and can also be purchased online.

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. 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 beartracks. 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

(see Attendance section of the University Calendar)

"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, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as apart of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course 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 Course Requirements, Evaluation Procedures and Grading of the University Calendar."