



IND 110 Cultural Perspectives (3)
Fall Semester 2004
Instructor: Ken Nickel

Contacting the Instructor

Office: _____ **Office Phone:** 410-2000 (ext. 6903)
Class Times: Tuesday & Thursday @ 1:00 - 2:15
Location: 501
Email Address: knickel@auc-nuc.ca

Course Description

The course seeks to expose first year students to a variety of contemporary media and cultural issues relevant to Canadians. It invites and nurtures an integrative, critical, and interdisciplinary examination of the topics while seeking to establish a foundation for further academic reflection from more specialized perspectives in fields such as philosophy, law, economics, history, sociology, and psychology.

Objectives

1. Students should develop the capacity and ability to approach frequently disputed questions and concerns regarding media and culture in ways that reflect thoughtful and educated Christian perspectives.
2. Students should improve the precision with which they read, write, and talk about the issues that are generating public debate and social concern.
3. Students should learn to critically assess the unavoidable diversity and complexity of the 21st century in the light of Christian heritage and tradition.

Required Text

Szuchewycz & Sloniowski (Eds.). (2002). *Canadian Communications: Issues in Contemporary Media and Culture* (2/e). Toronto, ON: Prentice Hall.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

Précis # 1 Due: September 30¹ 10%

- What is the value of 'political correctness'?*
- How does language create our worlds?*

Précis # 2 Due: October 21 10%

- Is media bias acceptable?*
- Is youth culture going in the wrong direction?*

Précis # 3 Due: November 18

- 10%
- Is there too much violence in the media?*
 - Is gender represented fairly in the media?*

Précis # 4 Due December 2 10%

- Is it permissible to market products directly to children?*
- Is our society too "logo" obsessed?*

Twelve Quizzes 20%

- Twelve quizzes will be randomly administered over the course of the term either at the beginning or the end of class. The quizzes will require short answers and will pertain to recent readings from the text and/or lecture material. Quizzes will not be rescheduled to accommodate absentees, nor can they be retaken. Each quiz is worth two marks and the two lowest quiz marks over the course of the term will not count toward the student's final grade.

Final Exam 40%

- Students must pass the final exam to ensure a passing grade in the course. A student who performs well during the term but performs very poorly on the final exam may fail the course.

Assignment Information

1. Definition of a 'précis'.

X n. summary of a text or speech.

X A précis endeavours to (1) report important details or arguments (2) relate or compare

them to each other or to other relevant ideas, and (3) analyze and evaluate.

2. Submission Procedure

- X Each précis is to be submitted electronically in an e-mail attachment by 4:00 PM on the assigned due date. No hard copy submission is required. E-mails will be saved as 'official submissions' in the event of dispute over original content.
- X Required word processing formats are either ®Microsoft Word or ®Word Perfect (i.e., .doc or .wpd files). Files are to be named as follows: IND(last name)(first initial)(precis#).doc or IND(last name)(first initial)(precis#).wpd.

3. Late Policy

- X Late submissions (i.e., submissions after 4:00 PM on the due date) are penalized 5% for every 24 hours they are not submitted. Weekend days and holidays are counted the same as typical week days. Submissions more than 5 days (120 hours) late receive a failing grade.
- X Papers and grades will be returned electronically at the student's AUC e-mail address.

4. Précis Format Requirements

- X Double spaced (not e.g., 1.25, 1.95, 2.5, etc.)
- X Two pages or roughly 23 lines of text per page.
- X 12pt Font (not e.g., 10, 11, 11.8, 12.5, etc.)
- X New paragraphs should be indented with no additional space between paragraphs.
- X Sentences should be separated by two spaces, not just one.
- X Roughly 1 inch margins (2.5 cm), not 1.5 or 2.0.

5. Intended Educative Outcome

- X The goal of these assignments is to help students develop skills in writing and critical thinking. The two page restriction is intended to compel students to assess, edit, and revise their written work. A successful student will be able to evaluate ideas and arguments giving priority to the most significant themes while avoiding incidental or less important details.

Grading Of A Précis

- X See page 47 of the *AUC Academic Calendar* for a detailed grading scheme.
- X A grade of *F* reflects work that is altogether unsatisfactory. It will likely, though not necessarily, be replete with format deficiencies as well as spelling, syntax, and grammar errors. Students whose work merits such a grade should consider tutorial assistance.

- X A grade ranging from **D** to **D+** reflects a minimal pass. Such assignments will, perhaps amongst other difficulties, not have met format requirements, will have significant errors in grammar, sentence, and paragraph construction. Such assignments generally demonstrate little evidence that the ideas expressed were comprehended with adequate clarity.
- X A grade ranging from **C-** to **C+** reflects work that is minimally to generally satisfactory for a first year university course. Such assignments will usually be on topic but have some format deficiencies and generally lack writing proficiency in any number of important categories, e.g., spelling, syntax, grammar, semantics, sentence and paragraph construction. The content of such a paper is typically a simple reporting of facts with little evidence of synthesis or analysis.
- X A grade ranging from **B-** to **B+** reflects work that exceeds expectations and is marginally to generally good. A **B** range paper shows evidence of some writing proficiency but could have, with more diligent revision, been improved. A 'good' paper is almost flawless in terms of spelling, syntax, and grammar, but may be deficient in conveying intended meaning. A **B** paper typically moves beyond the reporting of relevant facts and gives evidence of synthesis and analysis.
- X A grade ranging from **A-** to **A+** reflects work that greatly exceeds expectations and is generally very good to excellent. Such work meets all format requirements and is flawless in terms of spelling, syntax, and grammar. It exceeds merely good work because of the overall quality of the written presentation. The **A** range précis is economical, clear, compelling, and well articulated. The ideas and thoughts presented give evidence of an exceedingly careful, subtle, and critical reading of the text. Not only is there exceptional discernment of the relevant facts, the **A** paper demonstrates meaningful engagement with some of the broader implications of the topic.

Important information

- X **NOTE:** two major reasons for unrealized grade expectations among students are (1) failures to proof read, often the result of not giving oneself enough time for multiple drafts, and (2) late submissions.
- X Students should familiarize themselves with all academic regulations found in the *AUC Academic Calendar* (pages 46-51) giving specific attention to **plagiarism, academic dishonesty, and cheating** found on page 50.
- X Students are responsible to check their AUC e-mail account regularly. E-mail may be used to notify students of cancelled classes or other important details relating to the course.

Course Outline²

Sept 9 Introduction

Language

Sept 14 Chapter 2: Language and Ideology: Newspeak and ‘Bafflegab’

Sept 16 Chapter 3: PC on Campus: The War Over Words

Cultural Forms

Sept 21 Chapter 4: Canadian Identity: The Shifting Terrain

Sept 23 Chapter 5: Canadian TV: Is Anybody Watching?

Sept 28 No Class

Sept 30 Chapter 6: Canadian Film: Not Coming to a Theatre Near You

Oct 5 Chapter 7: Canadian Notes: Singing a Different Tune

Oct 7 Chapter 8: Canadian Comedy—Funny, Eh?

Oct 12 Chapter 9: The Writing’s on the Wall: Youth Culture in Canada

News Reporting

Oct 14 Chapter 10: Media Bias: Slants on the News

Oct 19 Chapter 11: Media Ownership: He Who Pays the Piper

Representing Cultural Perspectives

Oct 21 Chapter 12: Gender: Speaking of Girls

Oct 26 Chapter 13: Race: Stereotypes and Appropriations

Oct 28 No Class

Nov 2 Chapter 14: Political Minorities: “The Invisible Man (sic)”

Nov 3 * 7:00-10:00PM - Public showing of *Bonhoeffer* (AUC or downtown church location)

Nov 4 Chapter 16: The Valour and the Horror: The War on Documentary

² This course outline is provisional and may, at the discretion of the instructor, require revision over the course of the term. The instructor reserves the right to deviate from the outline to accommodate, amongst other things, timely issues or pressing concerns.

Policy and Regulation

Nov 9 Chapter 17: Cultural Policy: A Taxing Issue

Nov 11 No Class

Nov 16 Chapter 18: Stern Radio: Taming the Shock Jock

Nov 18 Chapter 19: Media Violence: Remote Controls and Twitch Instincts

Nov 23 Chapter 20: Censorship: Hate in the Media

Advertising

Nov 25 Chapter 21: Advertising in Canada: Kidstuff

Nov 30 Chapter 22: Corporate Sponsorship: Something for Nothing

Dec 2 Chapter 23: Public Relations: The Canadian Spin

Dec 7 Last Class: Review