

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION
CMNS 110-3
D1.00

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INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION STUDIES

The aim of this course is to provide a general introduction to a range of theories that seek to explain why we communicate as we do. The first part of the course establishes a general overview of communication theory from both theoretical and historical points of view. We will examine the relation between communication and social consciousness, the development of alphabetic writing, and theories of orality and literacy. We will also review the concept of the self in the context of communication studies.

The second part of the course will focus on specific fields within the area of communication, including the study of popular culture, media analysis, film studies, advertising, and the political economy of communication. We will also examine the rise of technology studies in communication and consider the way in which the electronic media (in particular computers and the internet) have refashioned both human consciousness and culture. In this context we will discuss issues of privacy and democracy in the emerging digital culture.

Our main goal, then is to critically assess the images and messages of contemporary media. How do they create meaning? Do they enlarge our understanding of the world, or influence us to think about it in increasingly narrow ways?

Required Readings: *(available at SFU Burnaby Bookstore)*

- Marcel Danesi, *Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Semiotics, Media, and Communications*, University of Toronto Press, ISBN 9780802083293.
- Gary McCarron, *Introduction to Communication Studies*, Pearson Custom Publication. ISBN 9780558961746.

Course Requirements:

Midterm (In-Class) Exam	25%
Written Assignment	35%
Final (In-Class) Exam	25%
Tutorial Participation	15%

The school expects that the grades awarded in this course will bear some reasonable relation to established university-wide practices with respect to both levels and distribution of grades. In addition, The School will follow Policy S10.01 with respect to Academic Integrity, and Policies S10.02, S10.03 and S10.04 as regards Student Discipline (note: as of May 1, 2009 the previous T10 series of policies covering Intellectual Honesty (T10.02) and Academic Discipline (T10.03) have been replaced with the new S10 series of policies).