



**DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & EDUCATION
COURSE OUTLINE – WINTER 2014**

EN 3830 A3: INTRODUCTION TO POPULAR CULTURE – 3(3-0-0) 45 HOURS

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Anna Lapointe **PHONE:** 780-539-2992
OFFICE: C420 **E-MAIL:** alapointe@gprc.ab.ca

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:00-2:00 p.m.

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE: Six credits of junior English

REQUIRED TEXTS:

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th edition. Modern Languages Association, 2009.

Guins, Raiford, and Omayra Zaragoza Cruz, eds. *Popular Culture: A Reader*. Sage Publications, 2005.

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: An examination of the theory and practice of popular culture including, but not limited to, the investigations of television, Disney, Hollywood, shopping malls, video games, music, sports, cyberspace, and “trash” fiction.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course will introduce students to the theory and some critiques of popular culture. Materials covered will include pop lit, video culture since the 1980s, and social media. These will be assessed from a critical/scholarly point of view, and students will write at least two academic essays in the course of the term. We will also, however, look at modes of production, recent innovations, and shifts in agency made possible by new media. Students will have the option to produce a creative project in place of a third academic essay.

CREDIT/CONTACT HOURS: 3 (3-0-0) UT

DELIVERY MODE(S): Lecture/Seminar discussion

TRANSFERABILITY:

University of Alberta

University of Calgary

University of Lethbridge

Athabasca University

**** Grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions.**

Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability

GRADING CRITERIA:

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE			
GRADING CONVERSION CHART			
Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Designation
A ⁺	4.0	90 – 100	EXCELLENT
A	4.0	85 – 89	
A ⁻	3.7	80 – 84	FIRST CLASS STANDING
B ⁺	3.3	77 – 79	
B	3.0	73 – 76	GOOD
B ⁻	2.7	70 – 72	
C ⁺	2.3	67 – 69	SATISFACTORY
C	2.0	63 – 66	
C ⁻	1.7	60 – 62	
D ⁺	1.3	55 – 59	MINIMAL PASS
D	1.0	50 – 54	
F	0.0	0 – 49	FAIL
WF	0.0	0	FAIL, withdrawal after the deadline

EVALUATIONS:

Grading of written assignments assesses students' compositional skill and sophistication, critical analysis of material, and secondary research skills. Grading of in-class discussion assesses students' grasp of the material and willingness to make substantial and meaningful contributions. All assessments will be given as letter grades.

Theory and application essays (1250-1500 words)	3 x 15%
(A creative project may be substituted for one essay)	
In-class presentation (10 minutes)	7.5%
Presentation paper (due 1 week after presentation)	7.5%
Final exam	30%
Attendance & participation	10%

STUDENT PRINTING POLICY:

It is the responsibility of each academic department to ensure that their students are not required to print more than the amount provided by this policy. If the requirements of the program are such that additional printing cannot be avoided, it is the responsibility of the department to ensure that their students are aware of this policy, and that additional charges for printing should be expected.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Requirements for Essays:

All essay-assignments in this course must be written in academic essay format. Formatting expectations are posted on Moodle, and will be distributed as a handout. All essays must be typed, double-spaced, and stapled together. Assignments not meeting these criteria will not be accepted.

2. Attendance

Attendance is crucial to this course. More than **one** unexcused absences in the course of the term will result in a significant deduction from your participation grade.

For an absence to be excused, the student must inform the instructor by e-mail, and must have a valid reason (serious illness, family emergency, etc.). Documentation may be required for excused absence. Students missing significant numbers of classes even with valid reasons must contact the instructor to "make up" the missed attendance/participation element.

That said, simply showing up is not sufficient. You are expected to comment, respond to questions, interact with classmates, and otherwise contribute to the class dialogue. Questions are welcomed and encouraged. If you're wondering about something, most likely several classmates are as well, only they're afraid to speak up. So ask!

Students are responsible for all missed material, including material missed due to legitimate/excused absences. The instructor is not the person to contact for this material. All handouts will be posted on Moodle. Students are responsible for collecting notes and ensuring their accuracy.

3. Late Assignments

Assignments are due in class, and on paper. Late papers may be left in the mailbox on my office door (C420). It is the student's responsibility to confirm I have received assignments left on my door. E-mail me to ensure I have received your paper.

Late papers are penalized at the rate of one third of a letter grade per day (ie. submitting two days late reduces a grade from a B+ to a B-, or from a B to a C+). Weekends count as one day. However, Fridays are not included in the weekend. If your paper is extremely late, come talk to me; I may take pity and cap the deducted marks.

I grant extensions for the following reasons: computer failure (may be used only once), sick children/family crisis, illness or injury of student (with doctor's note), alien abduction (documentation required). Extensions are not open-ended; rather, we will agree on a new deadline, after which late penalties apply. The time to let me know you will need an extension is before the assignment is due.

4. Moodle

Students are responsible for checking Moodle regularly for updates, announcements, and handouts. Ensure you check Moodle each day before coming to class.

Class announcements will be sent via GPRC e-mail. Ensure you check your GPRC account every day.

All handouts are posted on Moodle after they have been distributed in class. If you miss a class or lose a handout, go online to access it.

Resources for assignments are also posted on Moodle, often in hyperlink form. Ensure you can access this material well in advance of the assignment due date.

If you have trouble accessing Moodle or your GPRC e-mail, contact the technical

support office immediately. Students are responsible for ensuring they have access to the course material.

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, submission of work in one course which has already been submitted in another, failure to cite sources, attempts to communicate with other students during exams, impersonating another student, and purchasing papers online. (This is not a complete list. See the GPRC Academic Calendar pp. 44-45 for details and a list of penalties.*)

Academic dishonesty devalues your education and the education of your classmates. It is disrespectful of the institution and (particularly) of your instructor. I take this issue very seriously.

*Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change)

Jan 8: Introduction

Jan 15:

Raymond Williams - "'Culture' and 'Masses'"

F.R. Leavis - "Mass Civilization and Minority Culture"

Jan 22:

Dwight Macdonald - "A Theory of Mass Culture"

Tania Modleski - "Femininity as 'Mas[s]querade: A Feminist Approach to Mass Culture"

Jan 29

Morag Shiach - "The Popular"

Karl Marx - "The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof"

Feb 5

Walter Benjamin - "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"

Theodor W. Adorno - "Culture Industry, Reconsidered"

Guy Debord - "Commodity as Spectacle"

Feb 12

Frederic Jameson - "Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture"

Paul Smith - "Tommy Hilfiger in the Age of Mass Customization"

Feb 26

Ellis Cashmore - "America's Paradox"

Janet Wasko - "Corporate Disney in Action"

March 5

Laura Kipnis - "(Male) Desire and (Female) Disgust: Reading *Hustler*"

Paul Willis - "Symbolic Creativity"

March 12

Henry Jenkins - "*Star Trek* Rerun, Reread, Rewritten: Fan Writing as Textual Poaching"

Lauren Berlant - "The Face of America and the State of Emergency"

March 19

Dick Hebdige - "Subculture"

Angela McRobbie - "Second-Hand Dresses and the Role of the Ragmarket"

March 26

Tricia Rose - "A Style Nobody Can Deal With: Politics, Style, and the Postindustrial City in Hip Hop"

Judith Halberstam - "Drag Kings: Masculinity and Performance"

April 2

Michel de Certeau - "Walking in the City"

Michael Nevin Willard - "Séance, Trickology, Skateboarding, and the Space of Youth"

April 9

George Lipsitz - "Diasporic Noise: History, Hip Hop, and the Post-Colonial Politics of Sound"

Lisa Nakamura - "Head-Hunting on the Internet: Identity Tourism, Avatars, and Racial Passing in Textual and Graphic Chat Spaces"