

1. Course Information

MS 9601: PhD Interdisciplinary Foundations of Media Theory. Tuesdays 10:30-1:30. FNB 4130. In the event of pandemic interruption, the course will be taught online.

2. Instructor Information

Professor Nick Dyer-Witheford. Email: ncdyerwi@uwo.ca. Office Hours: Online, by appointment.

3. Course Description

This seminar orients doctoral students of Media Studies to theoretical texts important to the discipline. It does not pretend to be a comprehensive survey of the history of media theory; rather, it engages a selection of theorists and concepts resonant with our contemporary political and cultural moment. Each week we will commence with discussion of some media theory writing on a current topic—the pandemic, digital platforms, political populisms, play under lockdown, protest against sexual predation, police, race and riots—and then work backwards in time to understand its conceptual antecedents: in this way we will excavate the foundations for a future media theory from the viewpoint of the present. The aim is to establish a broad intellectual basis for doctoral work and help identify schools and traditions of thought particularly relevant to dissertation writing today. The course assignments are described under “Methods of Evaluation.”

4. Course Materials

Each week, seminar members will read, and prepare themselves for discussion of, 4-6 substantial journal articles or book chapters, available on the course OWL site. In some weeks, these may be supplemented by viewing of films or video, also available through OWL. Students are also expected to read extensively in research for their in-seminar presentations and course papers.

5. Methods of Evaluation

Participation-attendance at and contribution to seminar discussions: 10%. Students who attend less than 9 sessions will fail the course.

Reading responses-submission of 6 written weekly responses, posted to OWL Forums (approx. 500 words each) 10%

Seminar presentation 1-15-20 min talk on approved topic, and facilitation of 15-20 min discussion, date to be set according to the place of the chosen topic in the course syllabus: 20%.

Seminar presentation 2- 15-20 min talk on approved topic, and facilitation of 15-20 min discussion: 20%.

Final Paper Proposal-due, Oct 29, 500 words, plus working bibliography: 5%

Final Research Paper- due Dec. 5, 5000 words, plus bibliography: 35%

6. Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

