



CS101-A: Canadian Communication in Context, Fall 2025

We acknowledge that we live, learn and work on the traditional territories of the Neutral, Anishnawbe and Haudenosaunee peoples.

Lecture and location

Thursdays 4:30 - 6:20 starting September 4, 2025 in ART 1E1

Course description

An introduction to the key issues in Canadian communication studies from a variety of perspectives, including such topics as social history of communication in Canada, public policy and politics, and popular culture (0.5 Credit).

Expanded course description

This course introduces the contemporary communication and media landscapes of Canada—including Canada's place in the global mediascape. We will focus on learning about central institutions, issues, concepts, and debates that are key to understanding communication and media in Canada and their effects on our cultural milieu. We will explore a variety of topics including the development of media industries in Canada and how they are changing; Canadian content regulations and their operation in relation to Canadian music, film, and cultural industries; convergence/concentration in media industries; categories of copyright and privacy; and future scenarios of Canadian communication and media. We will reflect on the role of media in society and on our media usage and relationships to media. Weekly tutorials will focus on academic writing and study skills.

Instructor: Dr. Alex Levant

Office hours: Monday 1:30pm – 2:20pm in DAWB 3-127 or by appointment via Zoom.

Email: alevant@wlu.ca

- Start the subject line of your email with “CS101”
- From Monday to Friday, expect a reply to your email within 48 hours.
- Emails sent from an account other than your @mylaurier account will get no response.

Tutorial Leaders	Day and time	Room	Tutorial leader
A1 wood4320@mylaurier.ca	Thursday 08:30 – 09:20	PET P351	Isobel Woodiwiss
A2 albr5950@mylaurier.ca	Thursday 08:30 – 09:20	PET P331	Benjamin Albright Peakall
A3 ewen1050@mylaurier.ca	Thursday 09:30 – 10:20	PET P331	Luke Ewen
A4 wood4320@mylaurier.ca	Thursday 09:30 – 10:20	PET P351	Isobel Woodiwiss
A5ewen1050@mylaurier.ca	Thursday 10:30 – 11:20	PET P331	Luke Ewen
A6 albr5950@mylaurier.ca	Thursday 10:30 – 11:20	PET P351	Benjamin Albright Peakall
A7 khan6880@mylaurier.ca	Friday 08:30 – 09:20	PET P351	Ahmad Khan
A8 sain3550@mylaurier.ca	Friday 08:30 – 09:20	PET P331	Inderjit Saini
A9 khan6880@mylaurier.ca	Friday 09:30 – 10:20	PET P351	Ahmad Khan
A10 sain3550@mylaurier.ca	Friday 09:30 – 10:20	PET P331	Inderjit Saini
A11 sain3550@mylaurier.ca	Friday 10:30 – 11:20	PET P331	Inderjit Saini
A12 melc1090@mylaurier.ca	Friday 10:30 – 11:20	PET P351	Katlyn Melcher
A13 melc1090@mylaurier.ca	Friday 11:30 – 12:20	PET P351	Katlyn Melcher

***Note:** Tutorials start Thursday Sept. 11/Friday Sept. 12.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe the broad scope of our contemporary Canadian communication context
- Identify key institutions, issues, concepts, and debates in our Canadian communication context
- Read, distinguish, and synthesize scholarly, non-scholarly and policy writing on communication issues
- Evaluate key points and concepts in scholarly and policy writing on communication issues
- Write and edit assignments in a scholarly context, which includes applying requirements for independent academic research and writing

Readings

- **Weekly required readings** are to be completed prior to our Thursday lecture. They are available via MyLearningSpace, where they are organized by week under the Content tab.

Assignments and evaluation

15% Annotated bibliography is due Oct. 1 by 4:30pm to the MyLS dropbox entitled Biblio Guidelines for the annotated bibliography will be discussed on Sept. 18. This research assignment will require you to locate scholarly sources for your research paper. The assignment will require you to submit a bibliography of scholarly sources with short annotations, using APA7 format.

15% Midterm exam (one-hour) will be written Oct. 9 on MyLS, between 9am – 9pm

The exam will be based on readings and lectures from Sept. 4 – Oct. 2. Guidelines and expectations will be discussed in lecture and in tutorial prior to the exam.

25% Lecture attendance and tutorial participation are mandatory each week (tutorials start Thursday Sept. 11)

You will earn a participation grade based on weekly attendance and participation in lecture and in your tutorial. Active participation includes arriving on time, staying for the entire lecture and tutorial and participating in activities. Active participation is based also on the quality of your contributions to discussion. Your tutorial leader will outline further elements and expectations for participation in tutorial.

20% Research paper is due November 27 by 4:30pm to the MyLS dropbox entitled Essay

Guidelines and expectations for your 6–8-page research paper will be discussed on Sept. 18. You will be given several topics to choose from. You will also receive a library orientation in class.

25% Final exam will be written on MyLS, Dec. 6 – 20. Exact date and time TBD.

The final exam will be based on readings, lectures and screenings for the entire term. Details will be discussed in class and tutorial prior to the exam. Students are strongly urged not to make any commitments (e.g., vacation) during the examination period. Students are required to be available for examinations during the examination periods of all terms in which they register.

Course schedule and important dates

The readings are mandatory. Please find them on MyLS at no cost. They are listed according to lecture date.

September 4 – Introduction

- ☐ Introductions, expectations, course syllabus and important dates

September 11 – Topics in Media and Cultural Theory 1: Communication Studies in the Canadian Context (37 pages)

- ☐ Salter, L. (2015) [Communication studies](#)
- ☐ Shade, L. (2014) Introduction to mediascapes
- ☐ Shade, L. (2014) Theoretical and methodological approaches to Canadian communication studies
- ☐ Hamilton, S. (2014) Considering critical communication studies in Canada
- ☐ Tutorials (Sept 11/12): Introductions, expectations, tutorial syllabus and assignment deadlines, reading and analysing academic writing

September 18 – Topics in Media and Communication History 1: Media Industries, Convergence and Concentration (33 pages)

- ☐ Blidook, K. (2009) Choice and content: Media ownership and democratic ideals in Canada
- ☐ Theckedath, D. & Thomas T. (2012) Media ownership and convergence
- ☐ Edge, M. (2011) Convergence after the collapse: The ‘catastrophic’ case of Canada
- ☐ Guidelines will be distributed for annotated bibliography and for research essay
- ☐ Library orientation during lecture
- ☐ Tutorials (Sept 18/19): Planning your research

September 25 – Topics in Media and Communication History 2: Canadian Media Structures and Institutions (31 pages + online article)

- ☐ Henderson, S. (2008) Canadian content regulations and the formation of a national scene
- ☐ Dewing, M. (2014) Canadian broadcasting policy
- ☐ Journalists for Human Rights (2019). “Buried Voices: Media Coverage of Aboriginal Issues in Ontario” <https://jhr.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Buried-Voices.pdf>
- ☐ Tutorials (Sept 25/6): Proper citation and APA7 formatting
- ☐ **DUE: annotated bibliography is due on Wednesday Oct. 1 by 4:30pm to MyLS dropbox.**

October 2 – Topics in Media and Cultural Theory 2: Audiences, Users, Makers (45 pages)

- ☐ Hume, R. & Walby, K. (2023) “Invading Indigenous Territory is Not Reconciliation”: Problematizing War Frames in News Coverage of Wet’suwet’en Solidarity Actions.
- ☐ Lipton, M. (2014) Doing media studies
- ☐ Tutorials Oct 2/3: review for midterm exam

October 9 – Midterm

- ☐ Write 1-hour exam on MyLS during its 9am – 9pm availability. No lecture or tutorials this week.

October 16 – NO CLASS

- ☐ No class, tutorials or readings this week.

October 23 – Topics in Global Communication: Digitization/Globalization (33 pages)

- ❑ Fletcher, F. (1998) Media and political identity: Canada and Quebec in the era of globalization
- ❑ Patrick, S. (2018) Without a paddle: Schitt's Creek, CBC, and the return to community and family
- ❑ Kumar, S. (2012) Digitizing India: The transformation from analog to digital cable television
- ❑ Tutorials Oct 23/24: Grammar 1

October 30 – Topics in Cultural and Creative Industries 1: Media Production and Labour (45 pages)

- ❑ Cohen, N. & Clarke, S. (2024) Diversity Through Precarity? Gender, Race, and Work in Digital Journalism.
- ❑ Shepherd, T. (2013) Young Canadians' apprenticeship labour in user-generation content
- ❑ Harvey, A. & Fisher, S. (2016) Growing pains: Feminisms and intergenerationality in digital games
- ❑ Tutorials Oct 30/31: Grammar 2

November 6 – Topics in Cultural and Creative Industries 2: Media Ownership and Intellectual Property (40 pages)

- ❑ Bannerman, S. (2011) Canadian copyright: History, change and potential
- ❑ Scharf, N. (2017) Creative commons-ense? An analysis of tensions between copyright law and Creative Commons
- ❑ Government of Canada (2024) [Guide to copyright](#)
- ❑ Tutorials Nov 6/7: Punctuation

November 13 – Topics in Digital Media Studies 1: Privacy, Surveillance and Control (31 pages)

- ❑ Grimes, S., Jayemanne, D, and Giddings, S. (2023) Rethinking Canada's Approach to Children's Digital Game Regulation
- ❑ Holmes, N. (2008) Canada's federal privacy laws
- ❑ Vaidhyathan, S. (2011) Welcome to the surveillance society
- ❑ Wilfrid Laurier University (2024). [Notice of collection, use or disclosure of personal information](#)
- ❑ Tutorials Nov 13/14: Style and language

November 20 – Topics in Digital Media Studies 2: Smartphones, the IoT, and AI

- ❑ Greengard, S. (2015) Mobility, clouds, and digital tools usher in a connected world
- ❑ Paul, K. (2019) Teen claims to tweet from her smart fridge—but did she really?
- ❑ McKelvey, F. and MacDonald, M. (2019) [Artificial Intelligence Policy Innovations at the Canadian Federal Government](#)
- ❑ Tutorials Nov 20/21: Revision and peer editing, review

November 27 – Final Exam Review

- ❑ **DUE: research essay to MyLS dropbox by 4:30pm.**
- ❑ No tutorials this week. No readings. Lecture time will focus on review for final exam.

Letter grades defined

A+ 100 – 90 Outstanding

Demonstrates thorough knowledge of content and/or techniques and exceptional skill or great originality in the use of content or techniques to satisfy requirements of the assignment or course.

A 89 – 85 Excellent

Demonstrates thorough knowledge of content and/or techniques with a high degree of skill and/or some elements of originality in satisfying requirements of the assignment or course.

A- 84 – 80 Excellent, but not original

Demonstrates thorough knowledge of content and/or techniques with a high degree of skill in satisfying requirements of the assignment or course.

B+ 79 – 77 Very Good

Demonstrates very good knowledge of content and/or techniques with a fairly high degree of skill in satisfying requirements of the assignment or course.

B 76 – 73 Good

Demonstrates good level of knowledge of content and/or techniques with considerable skill in using these to satisfy requirements of the assignment or course.

B- 72 – 70 Fair

Demonstrates fair level of knowledge of content and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using these to satisfy requirements of the assignment or course.

C+ 69 – 67 Competent

Demonstrates acceptable knowledge of content and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using these to satisfy requirements of the assignment or course.

C 66 – 63 Fairly Competent

Demonstrates acceptable knowledge of content and/or techniques together with some skill in using these to satisfy requirements of the assignment or course.

C- 62 – 60 Marginally Competent

Demonstrates acceptable knowledge of content and/or techniques to satisfy requirements of the assignment or course.

D+ 59 – 57 Pass

Demonstrates slightly better than minimal knowledge of content and/or techniques together with some ability to use these to satisfy requirements of the assignment or course.

D 56 – 53 Pass with difficulty

Demonstrates minimum knowledge of content and/or techniques needed to satisfy requirements of the assignment or course.

D- 52 – 50 Marginal pass

Demonstrates enough knowledge of content or techniques to pass, but demonstrates minimal understanding of requirements of the assignment or course.

F 49 – 0 Unsatisfactory

Few requirements of the assignment or course were met.

XF

Did not write the final exam but fulfilled all other requirements of the course.

Course policies

Late policy

Late assignments will **not** be evaluated without medical documentation submitted directly to Dr. Levant. Your TA cannot give extensions for assignments or accept medical documentation.

Assignments submitted late without a medical note will be penalized **five percent per day**, including Saturday and Sunday. The time stamp in MyLS will be used to determine when you submitted your assignment.

Late assignments can be submitted up to **a maximum of 3 days late**, with the five percent daily penalty (i.e., 15% total deduction). Assignments submitted three days after deadline will receive a grade of zero unless you have made alternative arrangements with Dr. Levant. No alternative arrangements will be considered within a week of a due date. There will be no make-up alternatives for missed assignments. **There will be no exceptions to this late policy.**

Exams must be taken during the time allotted. There are no make-ups or later dates for missed exams.

ALC Accommodations

Requests for extra time on exams must be approved by the ALC by the deadlines the ALC provides.

Evaluation

Grades are not negotiable. Grades do not change unless there is an obvious error (for example, a calculation error or a mistake in a test question). Grades will not be discussed during lecture or tutorial. This is a discussion for office hours with your tutorial leader or with Dr. Levant.

Turnitin.com

This course entails different forms of evaluation, including writing, testing and participation. Assignments will not be accepted via email. Submit them by their due date and time to the designated MyLS dropbox. Assignments will be scanned by turnitin.com software. Don't plagiarize. It's not worth it. Academic misconduct carries serious penalties. Read the Student Code of Conduct. Unfamiliarity with Laurier's policy on academic misconduct cannot be used as an excuse.

Punctuality and attendance

Arriving late to lecture or tutorial is unacceptable. It is a disturbance for your classmates, instructor and TA. If you cannot avoid being late, enter the classroom quietly. You are expected to attend all lectures and tutorials. Missed a lecture? Get notes from a classmate. If you cannot avoid being absent from a tutorial, inform your tutorial leader **at least 24 hours in advance** to be excused. Your tutorial leader may assign supplementary work to make up for an excused tutorial. Regularly missing tutorial, or being habitually late for tutorial, will affect your participation mark.

Privacy

Students' names may be divulged in the classroom, both orally and in written form. Students who are concerned about such disclosures should contact Dr. Levant or their TA to identify whether there are any possible alternatives to such disclosures. Additional information on the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act at Laurier is available at the [Privacy Coordinator Office](#).

Academic conflicts or concerns

Academic conflict or concerns pertaining to the course may arise during the term. First, speak with your TA. If your conflict is with your TA, speak with Dr. Levant. If your conflict is with Dr. Levant, speak with Department Chair, Dr. Miller (jamiller@wlu.ca). If you have non-academic concerns or conflicts, see below for a variety of campus resources.

Classroom conduct

Students, TAs and instructor are expected to conduct ourselves in ways that facilitate everyone's learning. Conduct that is disrespectful or discriminatory will not be tolerated. If you are disrespectful, you will be asked to leave. We will not allow our laptops, or any other screen devices, to be distractions from the learning environment of the lecture hall or tutorial classroom.

Intellectual property

The educational materials developed for this course, including, but not limited to, this syllabus, slides, hand-out materials, examinations and assignments, and any materials posted to MyLS, are the intellectual property of Dr. Levant. These materials have been developed for student use only. They are not intended for wider dissemination or communication outside of this course. Posting or providing unauthorized audio, video, or textual material of lecture content to third-party websites violates Dr. Levant's intellectual property rights, and the Canadian Copyright Act.

Recording lectures in any way is prohibited in this course unless Dr. Levant has granted specific permission. Failure to follow these instructions may be in contravention of Laurier's Code of Student Conduct and/or Code of Academic Conduct and will result in appropriate penalties.

Participation in this course constitutes an agreement by all parties to abide by the relevant University Policies, and to respect the intellectual property of others during and after their association with Wilfrid Laurier University.

Pandemic Considerations

If pandemic conditions require the University to adjust course delivery during the term, it may be necessary to alter course requirements. Students will be provided with the necessary information as soon as is feasible under the circumstances.

For synchronous remote learning involving Zoom, and where permissible by the course structure, students are encouraged to use technological supports such as virtual backgrounds and the muting of audio and video feeds whenever desired to protect the privacy of their virtual work environment.

Important note for remote learning students in other countries: Please be aware that this course might cover topics that are censored or considered illegal by non-Canadian governments; this may include, but is not limited to, human rights, representative government, defamation, obscenity, gender or sexuality, and historical or current geopolitical controversies. While committed to the ideals of academic freedom, Laurier has no sway over international governments, and students should be mindful, both of local laws, and of the reality that when they partake in class discussions or communicate to the members of the class, that for some students, sensitive material might result in repercussions.

Relevant, University, and Departmental Policies

Extra-Curricular Activities

Involvement in extra-curricular activities (such as sports practices or games, Fashion N Motion, etc.) does not exempt students in any way from their academic responsibilities in classes.

Academic Calendars

“Students are encouraged to review the [Academic Calendar](#) for information regarding all important dates, deadlines, and services available on campus.”

Accessibility

Contact [Accessible Learning Centre](#) if you require academic accommodations because of a disability. Review the [Registration](#) page for information about intake and documentation requirements. Deadlines: Students are responsible for meeting posted deadlines for registering with Accessible Learning and booking accommodated exams. Accessible Learning cannot guarantee accommodations for requests received after posted deadlines.

Library Accessibility Services

The Library offers accessibility services for people with disabilities, including alternate formats or remediation of Library collections and help accessing materials. For information please visit the Library Accessibility Hub (library.wlu.ca/services/accessibility-hub) or email libaccessibility@wlu.ca.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Laurier is committed to a culture of integrity within and beyond the classroom. This culture values trustworthiness (e.g., honesty, integrity, reliability), fairness, caring, respect, responsibility and citizenship. Together, we have a shared responsibility to uphold this culture in our academic and nonacademic behaviour. The University has a defined policy with respect to academic misconduct. As a Laurier student you are responsible for familiarizing yourself with this policy and the accompanying penalty guidelines, some of which may appear on your transcript if there is a finding of misconduct. The relevant policy can be found at Laurier's [academic integrity](#) website along with resources to educate and support you in upholding a culture of integrity. Ignorance is not a defense.

Wilfrid Laurier University uses software that can check for plagiarism. If requested to do so by course instructors, students are required to submit their written work in electronic form and have it checked for plagiarism.” (Approved by Senate May 14, 2002).

The use of generative AI is not permitted in this course. Using generative AI to aid in or fully complete your coursework will be considered academic misconduct and Senate Policy 12.2 Student Code of Conduct: Academic Misconduct will be applied.

Religious and Spiritual Accommodation

The University welcomes students, staff and faculty from a wide range of backgrounds, beliefs and traditions and has a duty to provide accommodation based on creed (religion and spirituality) under the Ontario Human Rights Code. This obligation requires the University to work with students to provide reasonable accommodation when a student's religious observances or spiritual beliefs creates a conflict with their academic schedule. In order for instructors to provide proper accommodations, students have obligations to request accommodations in a timely manner.

Gender Inclusivity

This course will be conducted in an affirming and mutually respectful atmosphere for people of all gender expressions and identities. I was provided with a class roster with your name as it appears on the official enrollment information. If you use a name different from the roster, please let me know at your earliest convenience. You can also share your gender pronouns with me if you like. Members of the class are expected to refer to one another by the name and pronouns identified by each student and the tutorial leaders. If you are comfortable, you can also let your classmates know about your name and pronouns. The Centre for Student Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (CSEDI) has developed a website [outlining how to](#)

[request a different name to appear on some university records and systems](#) such as Zoom, MyLS and email. The website also provides information about Laurier's Inclusive Washroom Initiative, support resources at Laurier, and more.

Multi-campus Resource:

Good2Talk is a postsecondary school helpline that provides free, professional and confidential counselling support for students in Ontario. Call 1-866-925-5454 or through 2-1-1. Available 24-7.

Kitchener/Waterloo Resources:

- [SAFEHawk app](#): This app features campus-specific emergency contacts at all Laurier locations, personal support resources, safety tips, new feeds and accessibility information.
- [Food Security](#): As a student, your focus is on your academic studies while still having the best student experience, with food insecurity being the least of your worries. Laurier has the resources to help you thrive.
- [HawkWalk](#): Hawk Walk is a volunteer operated safe walk program available daily during evening hours.
- [Student Wellness Centres](#): 548.889.3239. The Centres are the home of all physical, emotional and mental health services for students on our Waterloo and Brantford campuses.