

# Communication Studies (CMNS) 302

## Communication in History (Revision 9)

|                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Status:</b>         | Replaced with new revision, see the <a href="#">course listing</a>  for the current revision  |
| <b>Delivery mode:</b>  | <a href="#">Individualized study online</a>  . Delivered via Brightspace.                                                                                                      |
| <b>Credits:</b>        | 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Areas of study:</b> | Arts or Humanities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Prerequisites:</b>  | None                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Precluded:</b>      | None                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Challenge:</b>      | CMNS 302 has a challenge for credit option.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Faculty:</b>        | <a href="#">Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences</a>                                                                                                                    |

CMNS 302 is one of three foundation courses for the Bachelor of Professional Arts (Communication Studies) degree program. It follows the interactions between media and society in a number of technological contexts: oral and literate cultures, manuscript and print cultures, electric and electronic cultures.

The course surveys the development of communication technology and introduces some important scholarly debates about those technologies. In so doing, it tries to establish the notion that the history of communication technology is as much about ideas and practices as it is about events and things.

## Outline

- Unit 1: Introduction: Technology and Society
- Unit 2: Literacy and Orality: A Debate
- Unit 3: Scribal Culture into Print
- Unit 4: The Wired and Wireless World
- Unit 5: Image Technologies and the Emergence of Mass Society
- Unit 6: Radio: The People's Medium
- Unit 7: TV Times
- Unit 8: The Age of Information and Disinformation

## Objectives

*Communication in History* is intended to accomplish the following objectives:

- 1. Understanding:** introduce major developments in the history of communication technology so that students can understand how innovation and institutionalization occur in different settings.
- 2. Comparative analysis:** develop students' ability to compare and contrast different technologies across different cultural contexts.
- 3. Application:** apply understanding and critical abilities to professional practice through the study of debates and practices in the field.

## Evaluation

To **receive credit** [↗](#) for CMNS 302, you must *complete all assignments* and obtain a minimum composite course grade of at least **D (50 percent)** [📄](#). The chart below summarizes the course activities and the credit weight associated with each assignment.

| Activity                                          | Weight      |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Assignment 1: Focused Summary                     | 15%         |
| Assignment 2: Comparative Analysis and Reflection | 25%         |
| Assignment 3: Learning Object                     | 25%         |
| Term Paper                                        | 35%         |
| <b>Total</b>                                      | <b>100%</b> |

**Note:** Weighting in grouped-study offerings may be altered to accommodate a classwork component.

## Materials

This course either does not have a course package or the textbooks are open-source material and available to students at no cost. This course has a **Course Administration and Technology Fee** [↗](#), but students are not charged the Course Materials Fee.

All course materials are online.

## Challenge for credit

### Overview

The challenge for credit process allows you to demonstrate that you have acquired a command of the general subject matter, knowledge, intellectual and/or other skills that would normally be found in a university-level course.

Full information about **challenge for credit** [↗](#) can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar.

## Evaluation

To **receive credit** [↗](#) for the CMNS 302 challenge registration, you must achieve a grade of at least **D (50 percent)** [📄](#) on the challenge examination.

| Activity                     | Weight      |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Online Challenge Examination | 100%        |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>100%</b> |

[📄](#) **Challenge for credit course registration form**

## Important links

- › [Academic advising](#) [↗](#)
- › [Program planning](#) [↗](#)
- › [Request assistance](#) [↗](#)
- › [Support services at AU](#) [↗](#)

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

*Opened in Revision 9, June 12, 2024*

*Updated October 3, 2025*

View **previous revision** [📄](#)