



Communication Studies (CMNS) 445

Directed Readings in Communication Studies (Reading course)

(Revision 1)

Status:

Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#)  for the current revision 

Delivery mode:

Individualized study 

Credits:

3

Areas of study:

Arts or Social Science

Prerequisites:

CMNS 301 and **CMNS 302** and professor approval.

Precluded:

None

Challenge:

CMNS 445 is not available for challenge.

Faculty:

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences 

Overview

This course requires students to present research on a topic chosen in consultation with an instructor. Contact a Communication Studies course coordinator for guidelines. This course is excluded from the Challenge for Credit Policy.

Outline

Part 1: Topic, Thesis Statement and Annotated Bibliography

In this assignment, you narrow and analyse the general topic you decided on in discussions with the course professor before registering. You will then generate a thesis statement to guide your research and reading, and compile an annotated bibliography of materials you propose to use as the basis for your essay. The Topic, thesis statement and annotated materials list is submitted to the course professor for comment and grading. The method of evaluating your project and the grading scheme that will apply are negotiable with your course professor. In the scheme we recommend, this set of items is given a grade that counts for 15% of the composite mark for the course.

Part 2: Literature Review and Formal Outline

After you produce a review of five or six of your best sources, based on your reading and note taking, you next draw up a formal outline of your essay. The literature review and outline together make up the second assignment that is to be submitted to the course professor. According to the scheme recommended here, this segment of your project is accorded 25% of the composite mark for the course. Again, however, this evaluation scheme is negotiable with the course professor.

Part 3: Final Essay

Your final task is to write the essay that you outlined in Part 2 of your project. Assuming that your reading, notching and outlining went well, you should be able to write a first draft of your essay in month five of your course contract period, and to devote the final month revising and proof-reading your draft before sending a final version of your paper to the course professor. The essay you submit for grading should be about 30 pages (7500 words) long. We recommend that it be graded out of 60% of the composite mark for the course. Again, this evaluation scheme is negotiable with the course professor.

Evaluation

CMNS 445 is divided into three parts, each of which focuses on a particular set of tasks. The course organization may be modified in consultation with the course professor to ensure that it is appropriate for your project. To pass this course, you must complete all of the assignment and achieve a course composite grade of at least **D (50 percent)** . The recommended weighting of the components of that composite mark are presented in the table below.

Activity	Weight
Part 1: Topic, Thesis Statement and Annotated Bibliography	15%
Part 2: Literature Review and Formal Outline	25%
Final Essay	60%
Total	100%

Materials

Physical course materials

The following course materials are included in a course package that will be shipped to your home prior to your course's start date:

Avery, Heather, Lucille Strath, Karen Taylor, and Kathleen James-Cavan. 1995. *Thinking It Through: A Practical Guide to Academic Essay Writing*. Rev. 2nd ed. Peterborough, ON: Academic Skills Centre, Trent University.

Communication Studies 445: Directed Readings in Communication Studies—Student Manual and Study Guide. Athabasca, AB: Athabasca University, 2000.

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 1, January 1, 2001

Updated November 5, 2025
