

Master of Arts Interdisciplinary Studies (MAIS) 665

Cultural Studies: Reflections, Democratic Possibilities, and Futures

(Revision 2)

Delivery Mode: Grouped Study [↗](#)

Credits: 3

Area of Study: Arts

Prerequisites: None

Precluded: None

Faculty: Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences [↗](#)

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

Notes: Students in Group Study courses are advised that this syllabus may vary in key details in each instance of the course. Always refer to the Moodle site for the most up-to-date details on texts, assignment structure, and grading.

➤ Overview

Overview

MAIS 665 Cultural Studies: Reflections, Democratic Possibilities, and Futures begins by outlining the developing questions, intellectual positions, and analyses that have emerged in Cultural Studies' critical attention to "everyday" means of domination. We will explore sites of culture—including sports, arts, and media—attending to debates about how societies are organized, who participates in these organizing logics, and who is excluded or marginalized. We will engage the study of culture in relation to sexuality, gender, race, ability, and other locations/systems through theoretical positions including post/decolonial criticism, environmentalism, and social justice. Students will engage with a variety of everyday examples and case studies of their own interest to enhance understanding of the dynamism of cultures and identities resulting from the reorganization of societies and nations, and the complexities associated with global integration, social movement, technological engagement, and rapid climate and ecological shifts.

In summary, key goals of the course include the following:

- recognition of the enduring investment of cultural studies in subordinated groups and knowledges;
- development of an understanding of the relationship between culture, power, and knowledge production; and
- cultivation of an appreciation for Cultural Studies' commitment to exploring new territory and promoting new dialogues in an effort to contribute to social change in the contemporary moment.

The field of Cultural Studies does not entail a simple "multicultural" appreciation of different cultures, nor does it involve an appreciation of "culture" as elite artistic practice; rather, this field locates the practices of "everyday life" as sites of power that require critical attention. This interdisciplinary course is attentive to the internationalization of cultural studies and the limits and possibilities of

applying established practices and ways of thinking in different contexts. Consequently, the course materials draw from a variety of locations and scholarly traditions in the social sciences and humanities, seeking to examine some enduring and novel challenges in the social world, in pursuit of transformative futures. This course adheres to the principle that “[i]ntellectual work matters, that it is a vital component of the struggle to change the world and to make the world more humane, and that cultural studies, as a particular project, a particular sort of intellectual practice, has something valuable to contribute” (Grossberg, 2006, p. 2).

➤ Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes


After completing this course, students should be able to:

- Identify current developments, issues, debates, and changing conditions in the field of Cultural Studies.
- Articulate Cultural Studies’ commitment as a dynamic intellectual project that studies cultural politics in an effort to affect social change, especially for marginalized groups and knowledges.
- Critically understand a variety of locations of culture and power in everyday life.
- Evaluate the field of Cultural Studies as a contested site that must also respond to exclusions—such as Indigenous knowledges—at its origins.
- Communicate the challenges facing efforts to decolonize and globalize the field of Cultural Studies.
- Analyze contemporary sites of culture and power by selecting from a dynamic theoretical and methodological “toolbox”.

➤ Evaluation

Evaluation



To receive credit for this course, students must participate in the online activities, successfully complete the assignments, and achieve a final mark of at least 60 percent. Students should be familiar with the Master of Arts—Interdisciplinary Studies [grading system](#) . Please note that it is students' responsibility to maintain their program status. Any student who receives a grade of "F" in one course, or a grade of "C" in more than one course, may be required to withdraw from the program.

The following table summarizes the evaluation activities and the credit weights associated with them.

Activity	Weight
Online Participation	25%
Assignment 1: Critical Reflection	15%
Assignment 2: Media Analysis	20%
Assignment 3: Term Paper Outline	10%
Assignment 4: Term Paper	30%
Total	100%


All of the materials for this course are online.

Athabasca University Online Materials

Course Home Page: You will find Course Information (including the Assignment File and other pertinent information) at the top of the course home page. You will also find your Study Guide presented unit by unit online. You will find your assignments and links to submit your work to your professor on the course home page.

Athabasca University Library: Students are encouraged to browse the Library's Web site to review the Library collection of journal databases, electronic



journals, and digital reference tools: <http://library.athabascau.ca> .


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Important Links

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- > [Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies](#) 
- > [Focus Area](#) 
- > [Courses](#) 
- > [Fees and Funding](#) 

individualized-study counterparts.

Opened in Revision 2, July 16, 2021

Updated September 27, 2021, by Student & Academic Services

View [previous revision](#) 

