

WRDS 150: Research and Writing in Academic Contexts

## Surveillance



### DR. KATJA THIEME

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### OFFICE HOURS

POND G 22 office: THU 1:00-2:30pm  
IBLC Learning Lounge: WED 10:30-11:45am

### Course Description

This section of WRDS 150 is specifically designed for students who are studying in a faculty other than Arts at UBC. To help us focus our investigation into how different disciplines write and communicate, we will investigate how the concept of surveillance is developed and used in areas such as health studies, media studies, and ethics in science and engineering. Surveillance has become a research issue of practical concern (e.g., with what surveillance tools can global spread of diseases be effectively observed and controlled?), as well as of ethical questions (e.g., what should the ethics be for using drones in applied science work?).

Looking at examples of how these questions have been discussed in research writing, this course will help you identify and use different research methods, types of data and evidence, and elements of style in research writing. You will also pursue your own questions on this topic by conducting research on a critical question related to surveillance. Assignments are structured so as to build on each other; this means that much of the reading and writing you do throughout the term can contribute to your final project. Please be aware that all the writing you do in this course will not only be read by the instructor but also by other students in the course.

### Assignments

Attendance & commitment to class	10%
Ungraded assignments (incl. introduction, quizzes, presentation slides and notes, presentations, drafts, peer feedback)	15%
Small group discussion assignment	15%
Collaborative research proposal (300-words) & 4 annotations of research articles	15%
In-class stylistic analysis	15%
Research paper (1200 words)	30%

## Learning Objectives

In WRDS 150 you will:

- study the research culture of the university and the ways scholarly genres (articles, proposals, annotations) reflect and construct that culture
- analyse scholarly texts as conversations that assess existing knowledge and produce new knowledge
- identify differences in the goals, methods, citation practices, and styles of different academic disciplines
- participate in scholarly conversation as a novices by producing a research proposal, research presentation and research paper

## Criteria for Attendance & Commitment to Class

- you attend almost all classes
- in preparation for class, you have read course readings and taken notes on the readings
- in class, you have hard copies of the readings and are ready to engage in class activities using these readings
- you are engaged both in the content of the course (taking notes, offering questions, making suggestions) and in conversations with your classmates (exchanging course information, explaining key concepts and tasks, giving feedback)
- you participate in class discussion when they happen in pairs, groups or in class as a whole
- you can make connections between readings and integrate ideas from previous classes

When I ask you to be committed to class, I want you to (1) make the best possible use of the learning opportunities in this class, as well as (2) help your classmates make the best possible use of their learning opportunities in class. Our shared goal is to make the most of the time we work together. To do that, we must increase our focus and limit all distractions.

If you do things on your computer or phone that are not related to class activities, you are falling short on your commitment to class.

## Policy on Tutors for WRDS 150

Some students hire tutors or use a tutoring service to assist them with specific assignments. We have observed that tutors can misdirect WRDS 150 students and thus impede your learning as well as your success in the course. Using tutors can also result in academic misconduct. We discourage the use of paid tutors in this course. If you are using the help of a tutor on WRDS 150 assignments, you are **required to hand in the drafts of your written work with your tutor's feedback** along with the revised text.

## Required Reading

All course readings are available online through UBC Library databases. Once logged into the UBC wireless on campus or UBC virtual private network from elsewhere, follow the hyperlinks below and save the PDF version of the article to your files. Please **print your own copies**. Should the link not work for you, go to [www.library.ubc.ca](http://www.library.ubc.ca) and cut and paste the title of the article into the search bar; then follow the links to get to the PDF version (if you're clicking on the article from outside UBC wireless, you will be asked to log in with your CWL).

➔ I require you to **print** these texts before reading them. In advance of each of the classes in which each reading is first discussed, please **write notes** on the hardcopy as you read the article in preparation for class discussion. ←

### MEDIA STUDIES

Lauer, Josh. (2012). Surveillance history and the history of new media: An evidential paradigm. *New Media & Society*, 14(4), 566–582. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444811420986>

Fuchs, Christian. (2011). New Media, Web 2.0 and Surveillance. *Sociology Compass*, 5(2), 134–147.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9020.2010.00354.x>

### HEALTH STUDIES

Fairchild, Amy L., & Bayer, Ronald. (2016). In the Name of Population Well-Being: The Case for Public Health Surveillance. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 41(1), 119–128. <https://doi.org/10.1215/03616878-3445650>

Brownstein, John S., Freifeld, Clark C., & Madoff, Lawrence C. (2009). Digital Disease Detection — Harnessing the Web for Public Health Surveillance. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 360(21), 2153–2157.  
<https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMp0900702>

### ENGINEERING

Finn, Rachel L., & Wright, David. (2012). Unmanned aircraft systems: Surveillance, ethics and privacy in civil applications. *Computer Law & Security Review*, 28(2), 184–194. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clsr.2012.01.005>

Anderson, Amber McKee, & Labay, Vladimir. (2006). Ethical considerations and proposed guidelines for the use of radio frequency identification: Especially concerning its use for promoting public safety and national security. *Science and Engineering Ethics*, 12(2), 265–272. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-006-0026-7>

## Recommended Reading

Giltrow, Janet, et al. *Academic Writing: An Introduction*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.

While we won't be using this textbook in class, the theory in it forms the backbone of our course. Most of the concepts and approaches we will use to analyze and produce research writing are further explained in the textbook. I highly recommend securing access to a copy of the book—it can be a used copy, an older edition, a copy shared with a friend—so you can deepen and clarify your understanding of what I lecture on and ask you to do in class.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week	Topics	Readings & preparation	Due dates & workshops
Jan 2	Genre	Wed: Introductions Fri: The concept of genre; forming small discussion groups	
Jan 7	Citation & summary	Mon: The research article as genre; strategies for note-taking Wed: <b>Read</b> Lauer, " <a href="#">Surveillance History and the History of New Media</a> " Fri: Small group discussion	Fri: <b>Discussion Leader #1</b> ; print copy of introduction due in class
Jan 14	Orchestrating voices	Mon: <b>Read</b> Fuchs, " <a href="#">New Media, Web 2.0 and Surveillance</a> " Wed: Small group discussion Fri: <b>Read</b> Fairchild and Bayer, " <a href="#">In the Name of Population Well-Being</a> "	Wed: <b>Discussion Leader #2</b>
Jan 21	Levels of analysis	Mon: Small group discussion Wed: Read Brownstein et al., " <a href="#">Digital Disease Detection</a> " Fri: Small group discussion	Mon: <b>Discussion Leader #3</b> Wed: Proposal interests in class Fri: <b>Discussion Leader #4</b>
Jan 28	Primary materials	Mon: Read Finn and Wright, " <a href="#">Unmanned Aircraft Systems</a> "; forming proposal pairs Wed: Small group discussion	Wed: <b>Discussion Leader #5</b>

		Fri: Read Anderson and Labay, " <a href="#">Ethical Considerations and Proposed Guidelines</a> "; proposal pairs—strategies for gathering articles	
Feb 4	Planning your project	Mon: Proposal pairs—choosing research articles for annotations & writing annotations Wed: Proposal pairs—deciding on primary materials & writing proposal texts Fri: <b>Proposal consultations</b> in lieu of class	Mon: 2 research articles per person <b>due in class</b>
Feb 11	Annotations & proposal	Mon: <b>In-class peer review</b> of proposal text Wed: <b>In-class peer review</b> of 4 annotations Fri: Proposal pairs—revision of proposal text and annotations	Mon: printed proposal text due Wed: printed annotation texts due Sat: final version of proposal & annotations due on Canvas
Feb 18	Midterm break: no classes		
Feb 25	Citation	Mon: Forms of citation Wed: Working with primary material Fri: Diverse voices; citation across disciplines	Wed: printed primary material due
Mar 4	Stylistic features	Mon: Modal expressions; limiting expressions Wed: <b>In-class mini-presentations</b> Fri: First-person pronouns	Wed: Slides for mini presentation due
Mar 11	Stylistic analysis	Mon: Meta-discourse; definitions; introduction to stylistic analysis Wed & Fri: <b>no class</b> (I'm away at a conference)	
Mar 18	Stylistic analysis	Mon: Stylistic analysis practice Wed: <b>In-class stylistic analysis</b> Fri: How to visually represent your research	
Mar 25	Research presentations	Mon: Preparation for research presentations Wed: <b>Research presentations</b> Fri: <b>Research presentations</b>	Mon: Slides & notes for research presentation due on Canvas
Apr 1	Review	Mon: <b>In-class peer review</b> of first 700 words of research paper Wed: <b>In-class peer review</b> of conclusion of research paper Fri: Snacks & review discussion	Fri: Research paper due on Canvas

*Please be aware that we might make changes and adjustments to the above schedule.*

## Introduction Assignment (ungraded)

Your family (however you define it) and you occupy a certain space in this world. It's a space shaped by geography, social structure, ethnicity, political and spiritual beliefs. Patterns of writing and reading are a part of that cultural space which shaped you: what kinds of texts (literary, non-literary, books, news, essays) did family members encourage or discourage each other from reading; were those texts of leisure or work or community life; which texts were spoken about and which weren't; what kinds of situations prompted private or public writing? In 500-600 words, introduce yourself by writing about how your family culture shaped you through reading and writing. You can focus on an illuminating anecdote, describe a particular text and its role, narrate a moment of conflict, highlight aspects that made your family different from others, or ponder how bigger historical forces have enabled or hindered your family's practices of reading and writing. Please bring a printed copy of this introduction to class. We will read each other's introductions in class.

### Sample Introduction: Katja Thieme

I grew up in an atheist and largely apolitical family in East Germany. My parents were both born just a few years after the formation of the German Democratic Republic within families who before the war had mostly been peasants. While there were deprivations in the post-war years, a decided advantage for lower-class East German families was the communist state's goal of putting workers and peasants into power. One of the strategies was to make education available, and that was a clear benefit to families like mine even if the nature of this education was tightly sanctioned by the East German planned economy and its five-year plans. In those post-war years, one of my grandmothers, formerly a housemaid, was able to become an elementary school teacher. One of my grandfathers began to work his way up to becoming a manager in a consumer goods coop. My parents were each the first in their families to enter high school—which was still an extremely exclusive path—and from there they went onto college to become an engineer and a teacher (and not in the gender distribution you might presume).

Ongoing reading of literary texts was a practice that fit well into this developing status of my family. In a family where there's no religion to pass on, novels helped in asking complex moral questions and discussing what makes a good person. In a family that had moved socially upward but continued to be critical of the elite, the habit of reading novels in one's leisure time could stand for both one's social aspirations and one's social criticism. I absorbed the high principles that we seemed to relate to reading: a good student (and a good citizen) is a person who always reads novels, who chooses challenging books, who reads both great works by great authors and newly published books, who turns to novels to ask the big questions about life and society and the world. In line with those beliefs, I hugely admired when my father read the multi-volume tomes of Russian novelists during our summer camping trips and spoke about the dilemmas of Russian history as he did so. Mikhail Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don* had four volumes, each about 400 pages. I myself made plans to work my way up to longer and longer books, and saw this process as a clear measurement of intellectual growth. Can you read a 400-page novel yet? No? Then your mind might not yet be as developed. (I tried once but didn't make it very far into *Ulysses*—and then decided to abandon that particular theory of reading development.)

Part of the elevated role that novels played also had to do with the particulars of German history. On the one hand, our anti-fascist East German state kept reminding us about the ways in which Nazi Germany had suppressed certain artistic expressions and persecuted critical thought. On the other hand, East Germany itself was oppressive and took various measures to outlaw criticism, including through the censorship and prohibition of certain books. All of these attitudes combined made books extremely precious possessions. At the time, I wasn't aware at all of current issues of censorship, but the rare status of books informed our habits of book preservation, and those I fully absorbed. Don't fold pages. Don't write on them except in pencil. Always keep books dry. Don't eat while you are reading. Slide books carefully into your bag and make sure they stay upright. Don't bend the binding.

It's fair to say then that novels had a sacred quality when I grew up. While we passed novels around and shared them widely, we had high expectations of how they should be handled. Living in Canada, the historical context is a different one, but I still have all the habits. I make only minimal pencil marks in books. I don't fold pages and don't bend spines. I'm deeply shocked each time I notice that someone has written—in permanent ink!—in a library book (really, it is one of the more horrible things).

## Small Group Participation & Leading a Discussion (15%)

On the second day of our analysis of each course article, you will work in small groups to discuss and synthesize the ideas and questions from that reading. Each student in the group will be asked to facilitate and lead one of these discussions.

**Objective** → Your goal is to get the other members of the group talking, and to advance everyone's grasp of the article.

**Preparation** → As discussion leader, your task is to set a direction for the discussion. Go over the reading in some detail and consult your notes from the previous class. What concepts, ideas, insights from these reading have already been treated as important in preceding class discussion? What are connections between the concepts in this reading? What ideas stood out in your own reading of the material but have not yet gotten air time in class? Are there noticeable differences, interesting contrasts, or even potential disagreements between this reading and previous ones?

You are welcome to prepare slides and present them to the group on a laptop; you may also print and distribute a handout.

**Structure** → Please decide what you want to focus on, prepare a set of questions, think of a structure for the discussion. For instance, you can announce that you have 3 (or another number) of questions and you would like the group to discuss them one after another. Or, you want the group to first work on how to define 2 or 3 terms before tackling 2 questions about how those terms relate to each other. Or, you want the group to first discuss what were strong points of the readings, and then in the second half ask critical questions about the research.

Please take steps so that all group members have a chance to contribute to the discussion. Have a plan and make the discussion work as best as possible—but don't worry if you don't get to stick to the ideal plan or if you don't finish the whole list of items you'd prepared.

**Timing** → At the beginning of the discussion session, the discussion leader appoints a note-taker (please make sure to rotate the note-taking task between discussion sessions so that every group member gets the opportunity to be note-taker).

In most of our small group discussion classes, the timing will be as follows:

- 20-25 minutes small group discussion lead and facilitated by the discussion leader of the day
- During the discussion, the notetaker takes digital notes in the Canvas discussion forum (thereby accessible to both the small group members and the instructor any time after the discussion)
- 5-10 minutes written reflections (on paper; to be read only by instructor)

**Assessment** → My assessment of the small group participation & leading a discussion will be based on the reflections submitted at the end of each session as well as the notes posted on the Canvas discussion forum.