COMS 310: “Media and Feminist Studies” Remote Delivery Plan  
Prof. Carrie Rentschler (she/her)  
Fall 2020  
Normally scheduled to meet on Mondays and Wednesdays 1:05-2:25pm

**Wednesdays: Lecture drops in MyCourses (no Zoom meeting)**  
**Mondays: Zoom sessions with professor 1:05-2:25pm via MyCourses *(not required, but encouraged)*

We’ll be meeting remotely for the entire semester in COMS 310. In order to make things as easy and productive as possible, we will divide our class preparation and class time up a bit differently than a course that would meet in person in a classroom. Please note that the terms of this remote delivery plan are subject to modification as conditions change, in order to provide for flexibility and to optimize course delivery. Course requirements as set out in the Course Syllabus, however, will not be subject to modification.

(**Image description:** a tiger cat rides a synthesizer keyboard and grasps a microphone with its front paw. Background is a colourful shot of outer space in red, blue, green and purple; Image from Reddit PsBattle: Photogenic Tiger Cat)

**Lecture Drop—WEDNESDAYS:** Each week Professor Rentschler will “drop” her weekly lecture as an audio narrated power point (and keynote) presentation into MyCourses on **Wednesday by 1:05 pm Eastern time zone.** Students are required to watch, read and listen to the lecture, and to do any activities that have been included in the lecture. **Activities included in the Wednesday lectures must be completed by the following Monday at 1:05pm Eastern time zone.** Lecture-based activities might include any of the following:

- polls to check student comprehension and to gather feedback and questions
- short answer definitions or explanations of a concept we read for the lecture
- viewing media examples and writing brief responses to them
- and other writing-based responses to lecture material

Lecture-based activities are required; some will be evaluated while others will count for credit but not be graded. They replace classroom activities we would normally have in a live course lecture. **There will be one lecture per week; that lecture will be broken down into smaller components for ease of use and completion.**
After the Wednesday lecture drop and before the following Monday Zoom session, students will post questions and comments in the Discussion forum in MyCourses that Prof. Rentschler will answer via an audio or video recording she will post in MyCourses.

*Please note: any video and audio recordings created for this course and posted to MyCourses are not reproduced for, or being placed in, the public domain. This means that COMS 310 students can use the recordings for their own educational (and research) purposes, but they cannot allow others to use it, by posting it on the Internet or by giving it or selling it to others who may also copy it and make it available. Please refer to McGill’s Guidelines for Instructors and Students on Remote Teaching and Learning for further information.

**Weekly Course Meeting (encouraged but not required)—MONDAYS**: Each week Professor Rentschler will hold a meeting of COMS 310 on **MONDAYS from 1:05-2:25pm Eastern Time in ZOOM** (access from within MyCourses). The MONDAY class meetings are not required but encouraged. Students who will be working mostly asynchronously over the term due to time zone differences will not be penalized for not attending the Monday sessions.

Prior to the Monday sessions, the TA will identify a set of representative questions that have been raised by students in the Discussion Forum. **Prof. Rentschler will record and post answers to those questions in MyCourses. Students can then ask follow-up questions in the discussion forum in MyCourses (for students doing COMS 310 asynchronously, please use this option; everyone is also welcome to), and/or join the Monday Zoom.**

During the optional Monday Zoom meetings, the professor will hold a live Q&A session to answer questions that students have about the lecture material, reading(s) or media examples the professor has used, in addition to those posed by students in the MyCourses discussion forum prior to Monday’s class session. We will also discuss upcoming class assignments and readings; the professor will also post this information to MyCourses. Please note: what students post on the discussion forum will be visible to other students in the course as well as the professor and TA. Students should only post questions and comments in the Forum that are not private.

Our meeting time on Mondays will be broken-down in the following way:

1. **30 minutes** of answering additional questions by Prof. Rentschler (in addition to those she has posted answers to prior to Monday’s session).
2. **20 minutes** of smaller group discussion building from the lecture, reading, and Q&A (using Breakout Room feature in Zoom)
3. **15-30 minutes** of discussion regarding upcoming assignments, deadlines, and troubleshooting, if necessary (Prof. Rentschler will also post this information in Announcements on MyCourses).

To ask questions during our meeting time in Zoom, students can use the “raise hand” function in Zoom to indicate they would like to ask a question or can simply raise their hand to be visible in their video feed. Students can also use the chat in Zoom to pose questions or make comments relevant to the class session and the issues/ideas under discussion. The TA will oversee the Zoom chat and keep track of students who have questions. For smaller group discussion on Mondays, we will use the **breakout room feature** in Zoom.

A **discussion board will be set up on MyCourses** to enable further conversation/discussion between students and between the students, professor, and TA. This is also a place where students are expected to raise questions about the readings and lecture material that your professor will then answer prior to the Monday Zoom sessions. You can also ask questions of other people in the course or of your TA. For students taking the course asynchronously, the discussion board and its fora will be crucial ways that you can ask questions of the
Assignments: All work for the course will be submitted on MyCourses. Class assignments will include reading quizzes (through the quiz tool), activities associated with the lectures (as explained above), two written media reports, and two short analytic essays. All feedback will be communicated to students through MyCourses. There will be no exams in COMS 310. More details are available in the full syllabus.

Office Hours: will be held via Zoom on Wednesdays 4-6pm Eastern time and Fridays 10am-12 noon Eastern time (these times may change due to circumstances in Prof. Rentschler’s workplace and will be announced). Zoom links are available in MyCourses. Please do not share the office hour Zoom links with people outside of our course. These office hours will also be used by students in Prof. Rentschler’s other undergraduate course this term. For those of you in different time zones, if neither of these 2-hour work for you, please let Prof. Rentschler know and she’ll work out another way to connect.

Expectations of How we Interact Together: For those of us who will meet in Zoom, please mute your microphone at all times except when you are speaking. When you have finished commenting/speaking, please say something like, “okay, that’s my point” that signals you are done. Keep comments short and to the point.

Ideally, COMS 310 is a space in which we can grow as scholars, critics, writers, analysts, and for some, advocates. In this space, we are able to try out ideas, even if we might abandon them later. In this course, one of our goals is to give ourselves and other people the space to transform their thinking and change their minds. We will not seek a purity of ideas nor should we expect others’ ideas to be “pure.” Contingency, contradiction, mutability, uncertainty, and partial knowledge all make up how we think and what we believe. In the midst of all of this, clarity in what we say and write is especially valuable. Respectful dialogue is expected of everyone. And while disagreements are expected, they should not shut down dialogue. Learning is a process: we make mistakes; we change our minds; we sometimes even regret some things we’ve said earlier. Our aim is to work
together to learn and un-learn some of the things we take for granted, and to sharpen our analytic skills in the process.

To this end, please grant your fellow course participants courtesy and respect, whether you agree with what they say or not. Let’s avoid attacking someone’s character or personhood if you disagree with something they have said: what someone thinks or says is not reducible to who and where they are. Our goal in using the discussion forum and talking in small groups is to understand the texts we read, the concepts we use, and the media examples we encounter, and how they might be useful to us. As much as possible, let’s work to avoid purely negative critique in comments and responses. Let’s also extend the same consideration to classmates. Consider what other people say in their comments and discussion forum posts and think about how you can build on them and respond as generously as possible.

While you each bring interesting experiences to the course, you should consider whether you really want to bring them up in discussion. If you do bring up your own experience, recognize that it becomes a topic for discussion. Ask yourself what point you want to make by talking about yourself. Do you want others to know this about you? You also do not have to express your own opinion on a subject. You are also free to change your mind on any topic at any time.

Questions on Remote Delivery? If you have any questions about the remote delivery plan for the course, or have any accessibility needs of which Prof. Rentschler should be aware, please contact her at: carrie.rentschler@mcgill.ca. Please also familiarize yourself with McGill’s student guidelines on remote delivery of courses: https://www.mcgill.ca/tls/instructors/class-disruption/guidelines-remote#students. For tutorials on the different platforms we will be using in COMS 310, see: https://www.mcgill.ca/tls/students/remote-learning-resources

See you in MyCourses, and on Zoom!