

MEDIA, DIVERSITY & SOCIETY

JRSM 4702.001

FALL 2024

CLASS MEETINGS: Tuesday and Thursday 1-2:25 pm

ROOM: Meeman 112

Prof. Tonyaa Weathersbee

Office Hours: By Appointment.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalog description: Advanced study of critical problems faced by mass media, with exploration of complexities that cause them.

Textbooks, Software and Required Readings

- *Diversity in U.S. Mass Media*. Catherine A. Luther, Naeemah Clark and Carolyn Ringer Lepre. Third Edition
- *The Communications Media, Ironically, Have Failed to Communicate: The Kerner Report Assesses Media Coverage of Riots and Race Relations*. Link: <https://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6553>
- *Latinos in Waldo: A Case Study of the Effects of Contact Versus Media Exposure on Rural Americans Acceptance of Hispanic Immigrants*. Link: <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/UFE0050099/00001/pdf>

Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis online learning home page: <http://memphis.instructure.com>
2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. In the Term Year course list available to you, click on the link for JRSM 4702.001 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

You will read and analyze, from historical and current perspectives, the impact that media portrayals of various groups have wielded on how they are perceived by society. You will also examine the influence of social media on those perceptions by tracking your own use of social media, television, podcasts and websites by maintaining a media use diary. You will also write papers derived from a reflection question of your choosing at the end of each chapter in "Diversity in U.S. Mass Media." You will also be assigned supplemental readings, as determined by the chapter topics. Lastly, you will write a final research paper on a topic of your choosing – and approved by me – on media diversity today.

Class format: We'll meet in person, twice a week. Occasionally, we may meet offsite for an exercise that underscores topics presented in class.

Attendance: One excused absence will be allowed. After that, 25 points will be deducted from your grade. Make every effort to be on time; I will not provide a do-over of activities or discussions that occurred during class for those who arrive late.

Cell phones: Not allowed during class unless used as part of the lesson. Please put them on silent mode.

Laptops: Laptops are not required. We meet in a computer lab. However, you can use one if you wish.

ASSIGNMENTS

You will complete 12 weekly media use diary reports. The reports should be one to two pages and will be due on Thursday. You will also complete six three- to five-page papers on a reflection question of your choosing at the end of chapters in "Diversity in U.S. Mass Media." Those papers will be due every other Tuesday. Your final assignment will be a research paper, at least 10 pages long, on a topic of your choosing and approved by me, on media diversity today. That paper will be due on Dec. 3.

Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late assignments will be accepted only up to 24 hours after the due date and time and will be penalized ten points. If an issue is preventing you from meeting those deadlines, please contact me before the assignment is due and we can discuss it.

GRADING

Media use diary papers= 25 % towards grade

Reflection question papers= 25 % towards grade

Final research paper= 50 % towards grade

A+ = 96.5-100%; A = 92.5-96.4%; A- = 89.5-92.4%

B+ = 86.5-89.4%; B = 82.5-86.4%; B- = 79.5-82.4%

C+ = 76.5-79.4%; C = 72.5-76.4%; C- = 69.5-72.4%

D+ = 66.5-69.4%; D = 59.5-66.4%

F 0-59.4%

OTHER ISSUES

Cheating, plagiarism, and unethical behavior will not be tolerated. Evidence of such behavior may be grounds for an automatic "F." As a journalist, you are entrusted with certain privileges and responsibilities. Your research might lead to sensitive information on individuals. Any misuse of this information – identity theft, trolling, doxing, etc. – may be grounds for an automatic "F." We are here to learn and to serve the public good, not to serve our own interests or to harm others. I am committed to including and valuing the identities and voices of all students, especially those from historically marginalized and vulnerable groups.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Aug.27: Introduction to this course and one another. What is media diversity and why does it matter? Assignment due Aug. 29: Read Chapters 2 &3 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media. Begin tracking media use for diary and paper.

Aug. 29: First media use diary paper due. Discussion of readings. Assignment due Sept. 3: First reflection question paper. Read Chapter 4 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Sept.3: First reflection question paper due. Discussion of papers, readings. Assignment due Sept. 5: Second media use diary paper. Read “The Communications Media, Ironically, Have Failed to Communicate’ The Kerner Report Assesses Media Coverage of Riots and Race Relations.”

Sept. 5: Second media use diary paper due. Talk by Dr. Tom Hrach on the 1968 Kerner Report, the media and the 1967 urban riots. Assignment due Sept. 10: Read Chapter 5 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Sept. 10: Discussion of readings and papers. Assignment due Sept. 12: Third media use diary paper. Read “Latinos in Waldo: A Case Study of the Effects of Contact Versus Media Exposure on Rural Americans’ Acceptance of Hispanic Immigrants.”

Sept. 12: Third media use diary paper due. Discussion of readings. Assignment due Sept. 17: Second reflection question paper. Read Chapter 6 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Sept. 17: Second reflection question paper due. Discussion of readings. Assignment due Sept. 19: Fourth media use diary paper. Read Chapter 7 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Sept. 19: Fourth media use diary paper due. Discussion of readings. Assignment due Sept. 24: Read Chapter 8 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Sept. 24: Discussion of readings. Review of possible research topics. Assignment due Sept. 26: Fifth media use diary paper. Read Chapters 9 &10 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Sept. 26: Fifth media use diary paper due. Discussion of readings. Assignment due Oct.1: Third reflection question paper. Read Chapter 11 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Oct. 1: Third reflection question paper due. Discussion of readings. Assignment due Oct. 3: Sixth media use diary paper; assigned readings.

Oct. 3: Sixth media use diary paper due. Discussion of readings. Assignment due Oct. 8: Read Chapter 12 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Oct. 8: Discussion of readings. Assignment due Oct. 10: Seventh media use diary paper. Read Chapter 13 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Oct. 10: Seventh media use diary paper due. Discussion of readings. Assignment due Oct. 17: Eighth media use diary paper. Read Chapter 14 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Oct. 15: FALL BREAK

Oct. 17: Eighth media use diary paper due. Discussion of readings. Assignment due Oct. 22: Fourth reflection question paper. Read Chapter 15 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Oct. 22: Fourth reflection question paper due. Discussion of readings. Assignment due Oct. 24: Ninth media use diary paper. Read Chapter 16 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Oct. 24: Ninth media use diary paper due. Discussion of readings. Assignment due Oct. 29: Fifth reflection question paper. Read Chapter 17 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Oct. 29: Fifth reflection question paper due. Discussion of readings. Assignment due Oct. 31: Tenth media use diary paper. Read Chapter 18 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Oct. 31: Tenth media use diary paper due. Discussion of readings. Assignment due Nov. 5: Read Chapter 19 of Diversity in U.S. Mass Media.

Nov. 5: Discussion of readings and progress on research papers. Assignment due Nov. 7: Eleventh media use diary paper. Assigned readings.

Nov. 7: Eleventh media use diary paper due. Discussion of readings. Guest speaker. Assignment due Nov. 12: Final reflection question paper. Assigned readings.

Nov. 12: Final reflection question paper due. Discussion of readings. Assignment due Nov. 14: Final media use diary paper. Assigned readings.

Nov. 14: Final media use diary paper due. Discussion of readings.

Nov. 19: Media diversity panel discussion. Research paper progress discussions.

Nov. 21: Guest speaker on media diversity topic. Research paper progress discussions.

Nov. 26: Research paper progress discussions.

Nov. 28: THANKSGIVING BREAK

Dec.3: Research papers due.

ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

Professional Values and Competencies in JRSM 4702

- Apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, both in a global context and in the United States.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

How professional values and competencies will be met

Cognitive objectives to be mastered (ability to explain, analyze, understand, think critically)

- Recognize the role of media in influencing the political and cultural dynamics on the global stage.
- Develop a strong historical sense of how mass communication technologies originated and developed.
- Understand the variety of relationships between media and their audiences, particularly diverse audiences.
- Be sensitive to the needs of diverse and under-represented groups in programming and leadership when creating messages.
- Understand the ongoing government regulation of the U.S. Media as well as the constitutional principles that guide it.
- Recognize the continuing impact and power of social media platforms in shaping global media messages.
- Evaluate the dynamics that cause mistrust in the media, and assess attempts to manipulate media, including social media, for political and social gain.
- Recognize the ethical and philosophical issues that arise in media culture and understand the range of viewpoints regarding these issues.
- Recognize the stark differences in delivery of media content globally.
- Understand the behind-the-scenes operations and decision-making processes of major mass communication industries.
- Understand how evolving technology affects the media and mass communication.
- Understand what's involved in preparing for and advancing a career in the changing media.
- Understand mass communication theories and their application to media professions.

Performance standards to be met (demonstrable skills, abilities, techniques, applied competencies)

- Earn a passing score on periodic tests and/or exams.
- Participate in one or more outside activities (e.g., attend FOI and First Amendment lectures, interview media professionals, visit media organization, participate in applicable research) at the discretion of the instructor.

How assessment of student learning will be met

Awareness

- Grow awareness of the First Amendment and basics of media law
- Recognize major divisions of mass media, including newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, the internet, books, movies, public relations and advertising.
- Evaluate how diversity affects the media industry.

Understanding

- When ethical decision-making is discussed throughout the semester as it applies to each media profession, students will be required to present justification for their opinions during discussion and class exercises to show they are not just repeating the instructor's lecture points but showing understanding of the process.
- Discussion questions will be posed in class to stimulate critical thinking. Independent thinking is encouraged.
- Demonstrate an awareness of current issues and events in news and popular culture.

Application

- Creation of research papers related to various issues of diversity in mass media are required to show an understanding of the current media landscape.
- Participation in class discussions are designed to encourage healthy dialog around critical issues of diversity, equity and inclusion through mass media.
- Principles and practices of various media organizations that are discussed can be used in other classes within Journalism & Strategic Media.

JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA POLICIES

Portfolio requirement

As an undergraduate student in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media, you are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of your work. Portfolios begin in JRSM 3900/3905. The portfolio should contain samples of coursework and/or professional experiences and should develop as you build skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while you are enrolled in your capstone course.

You may use any type of web hosting for your portfolio, but it must have an independent and professional URL. You may use any content management system, but you are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix, or SquareSpace. It is also encouraged to purchase a URL if you plan to use the portfolio long term. You must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

You should have a professional email address you plan to use throughout your professional life, via a common email service, such as Gmail.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)

A current résumé

A personal profile

Contact information/means of contact
Professional social media links (minimum LinkedIn)

You may wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, presentations, design PDFs, audio files or writing pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career you seek after graduation. Your portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

Email

You must have your UofM email account activated. If you are using another provider, such as Google, you are required to have all UofM emails forwarded to that account. Go to the [account management website](#) for information about implementing email forwarding. You are required to check your email daily.

Electronic devices

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for their specific classes.

AI/Chat GPT

The use of artificial intelligence software, such as Chat GPT, is prohibited in some courses and required in others in Journalism & Strategic Media. Please refer to specific guidelines for this course in the course-specific part of the syllabus.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism & Strategic Media. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual tardiness.

Course repetition

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade (C-) in a class required by your program of study in Journalism & Strategic Media after three attempts will be dropped from the program.

You may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. Substantially reworking the original submission, or working with the same general idea, may be permissible upon discussion and with written approval from the professor of the current course.

Academic integrity

The University of Memphis expects all students to behave honestly and follow the policies stated in the Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities. If you need more information about the University policy on academic integrity visit the [Office of Student Accountability's website](#).

In addition to University-wide policies, the Department of Journalism & Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses or receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on your own, as acts of cheating and punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Punishment may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the University.

Further, you are expected to comply with copyright and intellectual property laws and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for rating the originality of your ideas and to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. All creative work may be checked for policy adherence by the professor. The only exception to this policy is your online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo). By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or may not be accepted at all.

Online SETEs

You are encouraged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. If completed, once the instructor has posted final grades, you can immediately see that grade. To access evaluation forms, log in to MyMemphis; click the "Student Pages" dropdown menu and select "My Resources" and find the SETE evaluation forms; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and is appreciated.

Deadlines

All deadlines are firm. Because Journalism & Strategic Media is a professional program, students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

You may be permitted to make up missing work if it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency, such as a death in the family that can be documented.

AP Style and grammar

All written work in this class must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. You are responsible for learning these rules and checking your work for errors.

Disability and accommodations

If you need accommodation based on the impact of a disability, contact Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 at 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodation.

Diversity and inclusivity

The Department of Journalism & Strategic Media values diversity in all its forms. Some of these forms include ability, age, appearance, ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, language, nationality, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexuality, socio-economic status, and other personal identities and experiences. As such, students are expected to participate in fostering an inclusive environment that respects the differences of others.

Students are expected to approach their work through a diverse lens. Creating messages that resonate with diverse audiences requires an understanding of a variety of perspectives, which are carried out through multiple platforms, such as digital and traditional media outlets.

The department seeks to foster healthy and positive classroom discussions and experiences. As such, faculty and students are expected to remain respectful and professional at all times.

Weather policy

Always check with local media, the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather.

Student support

If you are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, visit the Student Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/index.php> or contact the Dean of Students Office at 901-678-2187, or in person in Suite 359 in the University Center for assistance. You may also talk with course instructors about the challenges you are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting you with campus or community support.