Diversity & Mass Media - COMM 3357-01  
Spring 2013

Professor: Dr. Patrick Hadley  
Office: Humanities 144  
Phone: 678-839-4931  
E-mail: phadley@westga.edu or CourseDen (D2L) email  
Class Time: Monday & Wednesday, 3:30 pm – 4:50 pm (HUM 228)  
Office Hours (F2F): Monday & Wednesday, 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm  
(Friday, 11:00 pm – 3:00 pm  
(Or by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course examines some of the relationships between the media in the U. S. and the social constructions of race and gender. Four related concerns are at the heart of many of these relationships: 1) media representations of race and gender, 2) audience interpretations of media portrayals, 3) critical analyses of media culture and media content, and 4) what to do about these concerns: media literacy, activism, and advocacy.

Course topics include (but are not limited to):
● Race and gender as social constructions
● Media stereotypes in television and film
● Representations of masculinity and femininity
● Sexual Orientation in the Media
● Feminist Media Studies
● Music Videos
● Blogs and Gender
● Advertising & Beauty
● Hip-Hop Culture

COURSE OBJECTIVES
After taking this course, it is expected that each student will:
1. Develop an awareness of, and sensitivity towards the various ways race and gender impact both media content and audience interpretations of media content.
2. Possess a greater understanding of our media culture through examination of various production, construction, and meaning-making processes.
3. Acquire a fundamental knowledge of the various issues and “dialogues” over media relationships to race and gender, and of how both are shaped by power—structural political and economic inequities.
4. Become familiar with selected approaches used to study media, gender, and race.
5. Enhance oral and written communication skills; develop analytical thinking and critical reading proficiencies.
6. Develop a greater appreciation of the media's cultural influence and ultimately, become more media literate.
REQUIRED READING MATERIAL

Other readings/video content as assigned and posted on CourseDen (D2L).

COMPUTING AND ELECTRONIC MAIL
Students are required to maintain an active computer account for electronic mail and other computing services. Most course materials will be available via the Internet on CourseDen (D2L). Technical assistance for students is available at the UWG|Online Helpdesk, accessible via email at online@westga.edu, and by telephone at 678-839-6248 (M-F 8-5pm). Regularly accessing and reading electronically distributed course information is important for success in the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS
This course includes the following requirements:
1. **Attend class on a consistent basis**: Attendance will be taken every class meeting.

2. **Participate in class discussions**: Although this class is comprised of a fairly large number of students, it will include open class discussions and group presentations. Thus, you are expected to attend and participate in these discussions.

3. **Complete the assigned readings** for the week they are assigned (listed) on the Weekly Schedule. Do not get behind in the readings as the pace and structure of the course make it difficult to "catch up." You will be expected to demonstrate your understanding of the readings in class discussions and online quizzes. Further, many of the lecture-discussions will supplement (not repeat) the assigned readings and thus presume that you already have read the material. **In short, you must read for this class!**

4. **Complete online readings quizzes for each chapter** (100 pts @ 12.5 pts/quiz)
Due by 3:00 pm on the assigned dates (unless otherwise specified on the Weekly Schedule). Quizzes will cover the assigned readings for the week the quiz is due. Reading quizzes can be taken at your convenience online via CourseDen (D2L) anytime from when they are posted until the time they are due. You have one hour (60 minutes) from the time you access the quiz to answer all 10 multiple choice or true/false questions. **Save your answers as you go; you will not be able to return to quiz questions once you have skipped or completed them.** Reading quizzes are due before class starts (usually Mondays at 3:00 pm) and will be available in the Quizzes area in CourseDen (D2L), at the latest, by 6:00 pm on the Friday before their due date.

There will be no make-up readings quizzes offered unless documentation of you have a documented personal excuse that made it impossible for you to complete the reading quiz (e.g., hospitalization), or you experienced technical problems with CourseDen D2L (not your computer or connection) that can be **confirmed in writing by UWG Online.**
5. **Complete an Introductory Blog (15 pts):** You will create a new blog on Blogger.com for this class (even if you already have an existing blog). **Deadline Friday, Jan. 25, 2013 by 11:59 pm.**

   a. **Paragraph #1:** Introduce yourself to the class (e.g., first name only is OK, major, career interest, hometown, hobbies).
   b. **Paragraph #2:** Give a 1-paragraph overview of a specific example of diversity in mass media, or the lack of diversity in mass media, or a related issue that concerns or interests you.
   c. Include a hyperlink to an article that describes this issue that interests you.
   d. Embed a video that is relevant to this issue that interests you.
   **e. Post the URL to your blog in CourseDen (D2L) Discussion area for “Introductory Blog Posts”**

6. **Work in a group** to identify competing positions on an assigned topic and prepare the following:

   - **Debate/Role Play:** Prepare and present a role play or debate scenario allowing the group to present those competing positions with members of the group split into opposing sides and presenting the opposing positions. Be creative. Examples include a debate, competing commercials, a dramatic performance, etc. These presentations should be no longer than 30 minutes. All team members will earn the same primary grade out of 24 points, with up to 6 additional points allocated for group participation through peer/self evaluation (total of up to 30 points).

   - **Blog report highlighting illustrations and sources related to your debate topic:** Your group should prepare an online blog post with hyperlinks and a video illustrating the issue discussed in your debate/role play and highlighting sources that describe it. All team members will earn the same primary grade out of 24 points, with up to 6 points allocated for group participation through peer and self evaluation (total of up to 30 points).

7. **Complete a Final Research Project (70 points):** Complete a final research project that will be posted on your individual blog. More details to be presented during semester. **Deadline: Wednesday, April 24 by 5:00 pm** on your blog.

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**GRADING POLICY**

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<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reading quizzes (online) (8 x 12.5 pts)</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introductory blog post</td>
<td>15 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>30 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Blog Report on Presentation Issue</td>
<td>30 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Research Project</td>
<td>70 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Assignment of final grades will be based on the following scale.

A: 243 - 370  
B: 216 - 242  
C: 189 - 215  
D: 162 - 188  
F: 161 - below

In the interest of academic integrity and fairness, please note that at the end of the semester, I do not offer individual extra credit opportunities.

**ATTENDANCE**

Attendance

I will take daily attendance throughout the semester. This course involves a heavy amount of in-class activities, such as discussions, presentations, and video viewing, so class absence will compromise performance in the class. Arriving after class begins or leaving before class ends is discouraged as such behavior may distract presenters.

You are allowed three unexcused absences without penalty.

**EACH** unexcused absence beyond three lowers your final attendance grade by **five (5) points**, **except that any member of a team with an unexcused absence during his or her team’s presentation will have 12 points deducted from his or her Group Presentation score, subject to the class attendance policy.** Please discuss any attendance concerns you have about this course with the instructor as soon as possible (by the end of the second week of class).

Note: It is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to be aware of your attendance. You should see me at any point during the semester if you have any questions about this policy or your attendance—the sooner the better. I will not entertain unsubstantiated claims at the end of the semester that an absence was incorrectly recorded earlier in the semester.

**Excused absences:** Absences may be excused when due to unavoidable situations substantiated with documentation. Acceptable situations include a serious incapacitating illness or a death in your family. Job interviews, unexpected employment duties, and car trouble do not fall this definition. Requests for excused absences will not be considered unless made in writing prior to the absence in question unless there are extreme circumstances that did not allow for a prior request. I certainly understand that unforeseen things can happen to anyone. Please try to work things out with me in advance whenever possible. In any case, written documentation is a necessity for consideration.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Academic dishonesty will result in failure on assignment(s) as well as possible disciplinary sanction(s) as stipulated by university rules. The University of West Georgia Student Conduct
Code defines academic dishonesty as cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating or allowing academic dishonesty in any academic exercise. The Code defines cheating as using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids; fabrication as falsification or unauthorized invention of any information or citation; and plagiarism as representing the words or ideas of another as one's own. The code also states that direct quotations must be indicated and ideas of another must be appropriately acknowledged.

SPECIAL NEEDS

I will make special arrangements for students with special needs. Please contact me at the beginning of the semester, outside of class if you prefer. Do not wait until after the first exam to communicate with me. If you need special accommodations for tests, let me know early, not a few days before the exam. I am here to facilitate your learning, but need to be informed to do so.

GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION OF SENSITIVE OR CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS

Throughout the semester, we will engage in a number of class discussions—some will deal with sensitive and controversial topics. Everyone’s opinions and views are to be respected at all times. There is absolutely no place in this course for rudeness, discourtesy, and intolerance. Everyone will not agree with everything that is said or written in this course--that’s okay, as long as we create and maintain a learning environment that encourages open and honest exchanges of ideas and opinions at all times!

DISCUSSION PARTICIPATION

This course is writing and discussion intensive. Students are expected to be familiar with readings and course content in such a manner that they can engage in intelligent and critical course discussions. While I encourage you to relate your experiences and opinions, I expect these to be grounded in an understanding, engagement with, and specific references to the concepts presented in the readings. Merely giving your opinion about a particular topic or your experience with it, without any connection to the readings, is not high quality discussion for purposes of this class or your participation grade.

[END OF SYLLABUS-WEEKLY SCHEDULE IN SEPARATE DOCUMENT]