

Media, Cultures & Identity

3 credits

OVERVIEW

Catalog description: Examines the role of media in facilitating, challenging, and enabling power dynamics as well as shaping identity in the United States and globally. Looks at various media forms and constructions of race, gender, sexuality, class, religion, and ability. Analyzes the relationship between media, identity, and power, as well as individual role as a media consumer.

COURSE GOALS

When you successfully complete this course, you will:

- Understand what “media” is — both as a way of describing professional journalism and as pop- culture.
- Know how to properly examine and analyze media and media effects.
- Identify how cultural perspectives can influence media.
- Be able to think critically about the role media plays in influencing a variety of social and cultural perspectives, as well as about social issues regarding the various power dynamics in our society.

YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Kelly Bjorklund
k.bjorklund@ufl.edu

Welcome!

I am glad you're here and I am happy to be teaching you.

Questions?

Please email me.

STUDENT OFFICE HOURS

Thursdays 1:45 – 2:45 pm EST on Zoom:
<https://ufl.zoom.us/my/kelly.bjorklund>
Or please email me to arrange a time.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK + RESOURCES

Len-Ríos, M. E., & Perry, E. L. (Eds.). (2019).
[Cross-cultural journalism and strategic communication: Storytelling and diversity](#)
(Second Edition). Routledge. ISBN: 978-1138595224

Electronic materials including papers, news articles, talks, and films. You will also need access to the video resource [Kanopy](#) (free through UF, make sure you have [UF's Gatorlink VPN](#) set up). **I have chosen a diversity of materials (both content and format) for variety and different perspectives. It is not important if you agree or disagree with the materials, but that you consider them and how identities are framed in the media.**

Recommended/Further reading: Dines, G., Humez, J. M., Yousman, B., & Yousman, L. B. (Eds.). (2018). [Gender, race, and class in media](#) (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

LEARNING ASSESSMENTS

COURSE SCHEDULE

This course is organized into a series of topic-based modules. During each module, you will have assigned readings, films/clips/TED talks to watch, and activities to complete. Exact dates for readings, discussions, quizzes, and other deadlines are listed in Canvas.

Modules start on Mondays and end on Sundays, with assignments generally due at 11:59 pm at the end of the one- or two-week module. If you have a question, write to me early in the module so we can make sure you receive the information you need.

Take time to note important deadlines, plan your semester, and manage your time appropriately. Start your reading early in the module! **A few notes about assessment and assignments:**

- **I want you to succeed in this course! Please be actively engaged and organized.**
- **For every module, I have created a To Do List for you of what to Read, Watch, and Do.**
Make sure to read and watch the materials, do the assignments, and engage with the course content.
- **When possible, I've included hyperlinks to make the course easier to navigate and life easier for you.**
- **I have done my best to provide clear instructions as well as evaluation rubrics so that you know what to expect for the learning activity assignments.**
- **If something is not clear, or you have a question, please reach out. I am here to help.**

QUIZZES: 7 x 10 points = 80 points

You'll have a quick quiz for each module. The purpose of these quizzes is to give you extra incentive to read and watch all of the assigned materials. You will be assessed weekly through quizzes rather than through a final exam. They're open book, but you won't have time to look everything up. If you do the readings and watch the videos, you'll do fine.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES: 7 x 40 points = 280 points

You'll complete an activity for each module that's designed to help you process the topics at hand and apply them to real-world examples. This is a journalism class...so spelling and grammar count, and **you must reference in APA style.**

DISCUSSIONS: 8 x 10 points = 80 points

You'll participate in discussions for each module. I'll give you a question meant to help you contemplate the module topic, and you'll write a post answering the question. For full credit, you'll also need to respond to a couple of your classmates' posts and respond to some responses.

FINAL PAPER: 1 paper = 100 points

At the end of the semester, you'll write a paper demonstrating your ability to analyze and examine the relationship between media, identity, and power. I will not be administering a separate final exam.

Additional information is provided in detail on Canvas.

Spring 2026 Course Schedule

Module / Date	Topic	Required Materials	Assignments
Orientation January 12-18	Welcome and Preparation	<p>READ: Course Syllabus Course Calendar APA referencing links</p> <p>WATCH: UF Writing Studio Video - Citing Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism</p> <p>Laura Vanderkam's TED Talk How to gain control of your free time.</p>	<p>Make Sure you have access to the textbook and Kanopy (and you have installed the Gatorlink VPN.)</p> <p>Discussion Post: Individual Introductions (Initial post by Wednesday, respond to two classmates by Sunday) (due Jan. 18)</p> <p>Make a note of important deadlines.</p> <p>Plan your semester and organize your time so that you can succeed in this course!</p>
Module 1 January 19-25	Foundations and Conceptual Grounding	<p>READ: Chapters 1-3 in Len-Rios & Perry (2019) Chapter 1: Conceptual Understanding Chapter 2: Talking Across Difference by Keith Woods Chapter 3: Who Is American?</p> <p>WATCH: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TED Talk The Danger of a Single Story</p> <p>What are the universal human rights? - Benedetta Berti (youtube.com)</p>	<p>Quiz 1 (due Jan. 25)</p> <p>Discussion 1: Make sure to post your initial discussion post by Wednesday and thoughtfully respond to at least two classmates by Sunday. (due Jan. 25)</p> <p>Module 1 Activity (due Jan. 25)</p>
Module 2 January 26 – February 8	Gender	<p>READ:</p> <p>Chapter 5 Gender and the Media: Envisioning Equality in Len-Rios & Perry.</p> <p>Cohen, R., Slater, A., & Fardouly, J. (March 17, 2019) "Women can build positive body image by controlling what they view on social media." The Conversation.</p> <p>Koval, P., Holland, E. & Stratemeyer, M. (July 23, 2019). "Sexually objectifying women leads women to objectify themselves, and harms emotional well-being" . The Conversation.</p>	<p>Quiz 2 (due Feb. 1)</p> <p>Discussion 2 (post by Wednesday, replies by Sunday Feb. 1)</p> <p>Module 2 Activity (due Feb. 8)</p>

		<p>Powers, C. (August 5, 2021). TikTokers Won't Stop Calling Out The Male Gaze And It's Quality Content. <i>Girlfriend Australia</i>.</p>	
Module 3 February 9 – 22	Social Class	<p>READ:</p> <p>Chapter 4: Making Class Matter: Journalism and Social Class in Len-Ríos & Perry.</p> <p>WATCH:</p> <p>7 minute excerpt from the documentary “Class Dismissed: How TV Frames the Working Class” narrated by Ed Asner, based on the book by Pepi Leistyna.</p>	<p>Quiz 3 (due Feb. 15)</p> <p>Discussion 3: (Post your original discussion post by Wednesday. Thoughtfully respond to at least two of your classmates' posts by Sunday.) (due Feb. 15)</p> <p>Module 3 Activity (due Feb. 22)</p>
Module 4 February 23 – March 1	Race and Ethnicity	<p>READ:</p> <p>Chapters 8-10 in Len-Ríos & Perry:</p> <p>Chapter 8: Reporting and Strategic Communication Across Borders</p> <p>Chapter 9: Immigrants and Immigration: Reporting the New America</p> <p>Chapter 10 “Achieving Excellence in Crime Coverage”</p> <p>Noble, S. (March 26, 2018). “Google has a striking history of bias against Black girls.” <i>Time</i>.</p> <p>Wang, C. (June 4, 2021). “Lack of Asian representation in media shows through in recent blunders”, <i>The Baltimore Sun</i>.</p> <p>WATCH:</p> <p>Film on Kanopy: “Latinos Beyond Reel: Episode 2 Challenging a Media Stereotype (Abridged Version)” by Herrera, H., Picker, M., Sun, C.-F., Pagan, E., Open Lens Media,, & Media Education Foundation. (2012). (1 hour)</p> <p>The First Time I Realized I Was Black They called the cops on him. 'Friends' spat in his Coke. 20 people, including Van Jones, Angélique Kidjo, and Montel Williams, share the first time they... By CNN Facebook (4 minutes)</p>	<p>Discussion 4 Post your original discussion post by Wednesday. Thoughtfully respond to at least two of your classmates' posts by Sunday. (due Mar. 1)</p> <p>Module 4 Activity (due Mar. 1)</p>

Module 5 March 2 – 15	Sexuality	<p>READ:</p> <p>Chapter 6: Mass Media and the LGBT Community in Len-Ríos and Perry.</p> <p>WATCH:</p> <p>Documentary film “Out in the Night: Criminalization of Race, Gender Identity and Sexuality” on Kanopy (1 hour, 15 minutes)</p>	<p>Quiz 5 (due Mar. 8)</p> <p>Discussion 5 Post your original discussion post by Wednesday. Thoughtfully respond to at least two of your classmates' posts by Sunday (due Mar. 8)</p> <p>Module 5 Activity (due Mar. 15)</p>
Spring Break March 16-20			
Module 6 March 23 – April 5	Religion	<p>READ:</p> <p>Chapter 7 in Len-Rios & Perry: Missing in Action: Religion in Mass Media Markets and News</p> <p>WATCH:</p> <p>Documentary film Reel Bad Arabs Kanopy (50 minutes)</p>	<p>Quiz 6 (due Mar. 29)</p> <p>Discussion 6 Post your original discussion post by Wednesday. Thoughtfully respond to at least two of your classmates' posts by Sunday. (due Mar. 29)</p> <p>Module 6 Activity (due Apr. 5)</p>
Module 7 April 6 – 12	Abilities, Trauma & Health Inequities	<p>READ:</p> <p>Chapter 11-12 in Len-Ríos & Perry:</p> <p>Chapter 11: “The Complexity of Disability”</p> <p>Chapter 12: “Rx for Communicating About Health Inequalities”</p> <p>Global Alliance for Disability in Media and Entertainment: Best Practices for News Media</p> <p>WATCH:</p> <p>Trauma Unmakes the World. Dr. Samira Rajabi TEDxBoulder (10 minutes)</p>	<p>Quiz 7 (due Apr. 12)</p> <p>Discussion 7 Post your original discussion post by Wednesday. Thoughtfully respond to at least two of your classmates' posts by Sunday. (due Apr. 12)</p> <p>Module 7 Activity (due Apr. 12)</p>

		Stella Young's 2014 Ted Talk: " Stella Young: I'm not your inspiration, thank you very much TED Talk " (9 minutes)	
Module 8 April 13 – 22	Summary and Final Paper	Read Chapter 15 in Len-Rios & Perry - Next: Where Do We Go from Here?	Final Paper: Now what? (due Wednesday, April 22)

Additional details:

The textbook chapters that ground the modules are from Len-Ríos, M. E., & Perry, E. L. (Eds.). (2019). [Cross-cultural journalism and strategic communication: Storytelling and diversity](#) (Second Edition).

Additional learning materials such as videos, articles, and films are listed in each Module on Canvas.

Assignment and submission details are provided on the Canvas assignment pages.

UF Academic Calendar: Available [here](#).

GRADING POLICIES AND SCALE

GRADING POLICIES

In general, online classes provide significant flexibility for completing assignments. Manage your time properly so that you earn credit for your assignments.

Assignments must be turned in on time and via Canvas to receive credit, unless otherwise indicated. Assignments may not be submitted via email. **If you find yourself in a situation in which you need an extension for a legitimate reason, please contact me via email before the assignment deadline so that we can work together to find a solution.**

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in the course are consistent with university policies. See [University Attendance Policies](#) here.

If you have a University-approved absence or personal emergency that will cause you to miss work, please contact me in advance of the assignment deadline if possible.

GRADING SCALE

Letter Scale and Grade Descriptions

A/- = Excellent! In addition to excellent quality and performance, work that earns an "A" exceeds minimum requirements and expectations.

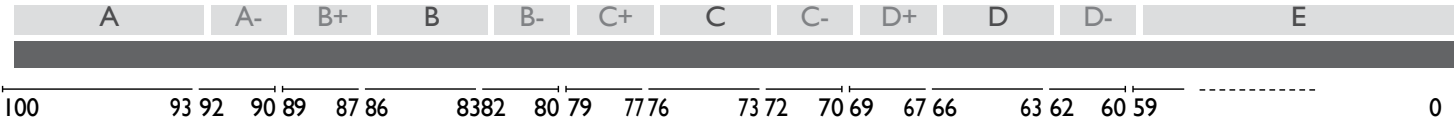
B+/- = Very good! A grade of "B" indicates successful completion of all assignment requirements with little room for improvement. Please note that all minimum requirements must be satisfactorily completed to earn a grade of "B" or better. Writing skills and overall performance are above average .

C+/- = Good! It indicates work in good standing. All minimum requirements are met, although some might need improvement. Writing skills are average to excellent.

D+/- = Passing...but below average. The assignment's minimum requirements are not met and/or quality of work is less than average.

E = Not passing. Minimum requirements are not met and quality of work is poor, or work displays plagiarism

UF grading policies are available [here](#).



COURSE POLICIES

COURSE STRUCTURE

This is an asynchronous online course. In other words, we have no scheduled meeting time. This can be convenient for you, but it also means that it is absolutely essential for you to be an organized, motivated student. The course will be managed through Canvas in eLearning, and is structured in a series of topic-based units. Do not let yourself fall behind!

COURSE TECHNOLOGY + TECH SUPPORT

You will need reliable Internet access and a reliable computer. You will also need word processing software. Discussions, assignments, and exams will be web based and submissions will occur electronically. If technology help is required, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- helpdesk@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

** Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request make-up work.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). Center webpage. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.

See the [UF Conduct Code website](#) for more information. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with me.

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated.

Plagiarism is to steal and use someone else's work as your own and is considered academic misconduct. When you use information (including images) from any source, you must cite it appropriately. ***All work submitted for this class must be your original work. You may not reuse assignments created for other purposes, including other courses. You may not turn in work that is not your own, including work generated by Chat GPT and other AI programs.*** Academic integrity violations will result in a failing grade for the course.

Treat Internet sources, including any news articles you read, like any other book, journal article or other print source. Make certain you cite correct reference information from a website, even if you're paraphrasing. You will need to include formal citations and references for all the sources for your learning activities and final project paper, following [APA style](#). This includes citing the chapters in your textbook. You may want to cite other sources in weekly discussion posts, but you can simply include hyperlinks rather than citations for the discussions.

COURSE EVALUATION

Students are requested to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens with instructions for completion.

RESOURCES

HEALTH + WELLNESS RESOURCES

I care deeply about the well-being of my students and recognize that anxiety and depression are on the rise on campuses across the United States. I also recognize that while navigating school it is difficult to keep up with all of our daily responsibilities due to various mental health issues and illnesses. At the same time, each of us has a responsibility to this course and to our participation in the university. Thus, I encourage any students struggling, or wanting to prevent the struggle, to access the mental health services offered by the university. Even if you do not identify as someone with anxiety, depression, or other mental health needs, the **Counseling and Wellness Center** provides helpful tools to take care of your mental, emotional, and physical well-being.

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the [Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).

University Police Department: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).

Dean of Students Office: If an emergency occurred and you need an accommodation please follow the directions at this website: <https://care.dso.ufl.edu/instructor-notifications/>

ACADEMIC AND CAMPUS RESOURCES

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: The *Writing Studio* is a free service for current UF students. Students have the opportunity to work one-on-one with a consultant on issues specific to their own particular development. 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. Book an appointment: <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>. I encourage all students to take advantage of this terrific resource.

NOTE: You are responsible for reading and understanding the syllabus in its entirety.