

# MMC 2604: Media, Cultures, and Identity

**TIME:** Mondays: 11:44 -1:40 a.m.  
**PLACE:** Wednesdays: 12:50-1:40p.m  
**WEBSITE:** Weimer G030/MCCA3194  
**OFFICE:** CANVAS class site  
**HOURS:** Mon/Wed: 2:00-3:00 P.M.  
other times by appointment.

## What's in this syllabus

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## COURSE OBJECTIVES

### LEARNING GOALS:

- to analyze power dynamics in media representations of different groups and social and political issues.
- analytical skills to be culturally sensitive and responsible media consumers and practitioners.
- to understand the impact that media representations can have on public opinion, individual opinions and sentiments, and related behaviors.
- to reflect on issues of ethics in the media's representation of societal issues.
- to understand the role and importance of our own subjectivities and experiences in how we consume and produce media narratives.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores how media—across journalism, entertainment, advertising and digital platforms—plays a central role in constructing, challenging and enabling identities and cultural meanings. This course has three goals: 1. we will investigate how media represent (and mis-represent) issues of race, gender, sexuality, class, religion, nationality and ability; 2. we will examine how media representation reflect underlying power relations in both U.S. and global contexts, and 3. we will explore how these representations shape audience perceptions, attitudes and behavior. Drawing on social-scientific and cultural research traditions, the course emphasizes critique, reflection and responsible media consumption and production.

## REQUIRED READINGS:

Len-Ríos, M. E., & Perry, E. L. (Eds.). (2019). Cross-cultural journalism and strategic communication: Storytelling and diversity (Second Edition). Routledge. ISBN-13: 978-1138595224  
Additional articles posted on Canvas and linked in the syllabus.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

[The Reuters Institute](#)  
[Reporters Without Borders](#)  
[Committee to Protect Journalists](#)  
[International Journalists Network](#)  
[Global Investigative Journalism Network](#)

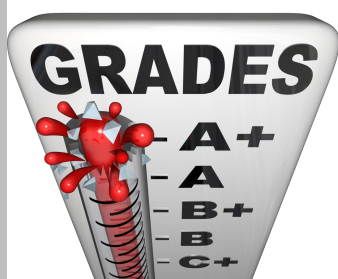


## NEWS SOURCES:

You will find it essential to stay up to date on current events for personal and professional reasons. You should choose at least two trusted news sources to get your daily information for local and national news. A list of reliable international sources of information *BBC World news*, *CNN International*, *Al Jazeera*, *Al Arabiya*, *Deutsche Welle English*, *Euronews*, *France 24 English*, *Africanews*, *CNC World* (China), etc. In addition, you should consult one of the following fact-checking organizations when in doubt of the information you receive, *PolitiFact*, *Factcheck.org*, *Snopes*, *Truth be Told*, *NPR Fact-Check*, *Lie Detector*.

*Credit: Paws Incorporated*

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS



Assignments	Weight	Dues Date
Exams	30%	TBA
Shot Essays	40%	TBA
Media events Critical Thinking	15%	
Class Participation	15%	Weekly
Total	100%	

**Exams.** You will have two exams, which will cover readings, lectures, class discussions, and media coverage. Requirements and guidelines will be announced in class one week before the exam is due.

**Media Events Critical Thinking:** Students, usually working in small teams, will tackle several media events and their coverage. Most of these assignments will be spontaneous (not announced ahead of time) and completed in class. The short time frame is designed to simulate the compressed time frames that are common in reporting.

**Short Essays.** There will be two short essay exams focused on the application of concepts to specific issues. Students will have to show their abilities applying the theoretical and analytical foundations to specific media examples.

**Class Participation:** Throughout the course, we will engage in team and individual activities designed to help you digest the readings and materials for this class. You might be asked to take short unannounced quizzes.

# CLASS & UNIVERSITY POLICIES

## WORK EXPECTATIONS

This class will be structured in a SEMINAR format. A seminar means you are expected to be active participants in your learning. I expect you to come to class informed and opinionated about issues we will discuss. You are expected to come to every class fully prepared, having completed the assigned readings and reflected on their implications before class. Our discussions will be driven by your informed perspectives, and your role is to contribute meaningfully, pose critical questions and challenge assumptions (including your own).

## CLASSROOM CULTURE

This class is designed to be a welcoming and inclusive space where a wide range of perspectives can be shared, explored, and thoughtfully discussed. My goal is for students from all backgrounds and experiences to feel valued, respected, and fully supported in their learning. We will engage in open, respectful dialogue, embracing our differences as opportunities to deepen our understanding. My goal is to maintain a classroom environment free from disrespectful language or behavior. If there's a way I can make this space more supportive, I welcome your ideas and feedback.

## GRADING POLICIES

In this course we will use a 4.0 GPA scale with letter grades that range from A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D- and F. To learn about the [UF grading policies for assigning grade points, please, check the link to the University grades and grading policies.](#)

## STUDENT ACOMODATIONS

Any student with a disability who is experiencing barriers to learning, assessment or participation is encouraged to contact the [University of Florida Disability Resource Center](#) to learn more about academic accommodations available to them. Students seeking academic accommodations will need to register as soon as possible and 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. Please contact the Disability Resource Center by visiting the website: <https://disability.ufl.edu/> calling (352) 392-8565, or emailing [DRC@ufsa.ufl.edu](mailto:DRC@ufsa.ufl.edu)

## ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

Attendance is MANDATORY. Your presence and participation is expected at each class meeting. Treat the class like a job. If you know you will be late, need to leave class early, or must miss class for any reason, contact me ahead of time via email. One absence without justification is tolerated, if you contact me ahead of time. After this, your course grade will be deducted 10% for each unexcused absence. Please read the [University of Florida Attendance policies](#) for details regarding reasons for excused absences, the approval process, and extended absences.



## CELL PHONES & LAPTOPS

Screens are a distraction from conversations in class. It is also disrespectful to the instructor and other students to text or take calls during class, or to be distracted by your cell phone. NO CELL PHONE use is allowed during class. While you can use your laptop to take notes, if I see that you are surfing the web, shopping, using social media, doing work for another class, or not paying attention, I will ask you to leave class and you will be considered absent for the day.

## COURSE EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluer.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

## Title IX/Sexual Misconduct

Per the UF Sexual Misconduct Policy, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and state law and must report incidents of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual intimidation, intimate partner violence, or stalking) about which they become aware to the Title IX office. Please know there are places on campus where you can make a report in confidence. You can find more information about resources on the Title IX website at <https://titleix.ufl.edu/about/title-ix-rights/>

# ACADEMIC HONESTY

## Plagiarism

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 the instructor. All students and faculty of the University of Florida are responsible for being familiar with this policy.

## Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

There are situations within this course where you will be allowed to use AI tools to explore how they can be used for academic purposes. For permitted assignments, any student work submitted using AI tools should clearly indicate what work is generated by the AI. Outside of those circumstances, you are discouraged from using AI tools to generate content that will end up in any student work that is part of your evaluation in this course.

Any text-generating software (such as ChatGPT, iA Writer, Gemini, Copilot) is not permitted when **writing** your reflection papers and research project and it will be treated as plagiarism under UF policies and result in an F in the course!! The information derived from these tools is based on previously published materials. Therefore, using these tools without proper citation constitutes plagiarism. Additionally, the information derived from these tools is often inaccurate or incomplete. If any part of this is confusing or uncertain, please reach out to me!

# HELP & RESOURCES

## ACADEMIC RESOURCES

### 1. Come see me

One of the keys to student success is regular contact with faculty. You are encouraged make an appointment to meet during my office hours. Many questions and issues can be easily resolved this way.

### 2. Resources for Online Learning

The University of Florida is committed to student success, and provides information to optimize the online learning experience. Please visit this website E-learning technical support: [Contact the UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)

### 3. Career Connections Center

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

### 4. Library Support

Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Call 866-281-6309 or email [ask@ufl.libanswers.com](mailto:ask@ufl.libanswers.com) for more information.

### 5. Teaching Center

1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

## MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS RESOURCES

### 1. U Matter, We Care

If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto: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.

### 2. 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.

### 3. 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](#).

### 4. 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](#).

### 5. GatorWell Health Promotion Services

For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273- 4450.

#### 6. Writing Studio

Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138 | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

#### 7. Academic Complaints

Office of the Ombuds; Visit the [Complaint Portal webpage](#) for more information. Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): View the [Student Complaint Procedure webpage](#) for more information.

#### 6. University Police Department

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

## ABOUT YOUR PROFESSOR



My name is **Dr. Lindita Camaj** and I am an associate professor in the Journalism Department, College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida. I received my PhD at the Indiana University. My broad research interests include news media role in politics and democratization, global journalism, digital journalism, access to information, and state–press relationships in South East Europe. As a multi-method scholar, I explore individual and societal factors that determine the impact of mass media on how we perceive and engage with the political world and examine the role of news media in the democratization processes. My scholarly work has been awarded by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) and published at numerous high impact journals at the intersection of mass media, technology, politics, international communication and journalism studies. Before entering the academia, I worked as a journalist for multiple national and international media organizations in South East Europe, including Radio Free Europe and Institute of War and Peace Reporting. I specialized in public affairs reporting, electoral coverage, and judiciary affairs.

Learn more about my research and teaching at [www.linditacamaj.com](http://www.linditacamaj.com)

**OFFICE: 3040B**

**PHONE: TBA**

**E-MAIL: [lindita.camaj@ufl.edu](mailto:lindita.camaj@ufl.edu)**

**OFFICE HOURS: Mondays & Wednesdays: 2:00-3:00p.m.**

**Other times by appointment**



## Tentative Schedule

Week	Date	Class agenda
W1	Jan 12-14	Intro to the Course Contemporary audience practices
W2	Jan 21	Context of Media Production and Content
W3	Jan 26-28	Communicating across difference
W4	Feb 2-4	The importance and impact of representation on the self and on society
W5	Feb 9-11	Social Class Representation
W6	Feb 16-18	Media, race, and religion
W7	Feb 23-25	Global issues in the media
W8	Mar 2-4	Representation of otherness
W9	Mar 9-11	TBA
W10	Mar 16-21	<i>Enjoy Spring Break!</i>
<b>W11</b>	Mar 23-25	Active audience theory
<b>W12</b>	Mar 30- April 1	Media effects theory
<b>W13</b>	April 6-8	Media effects theory
<b>W14</b>	April 13-15	Media effects theory
<b>W15</b>	April 20-23	Media effects theory
Finals Week		