 MMC 6615 Race, Class, Gender, and Media (Section 183G)  
Spring 2014  
Tuesdays, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., 1074 Weimer Hall  

Instructor: Dr. Cory L. Armstrong  
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Office Hours: Wednesday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
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**Course Description:** A theoretical course focusing on the media constructions of ethnicity, class and gender that shape people’s personal, social and political worlds, using a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methodologies.  

**Class Format:** This is a reading-heavy course. I have assigned a number of articles and book chapters each week and I expect them to be read before class. As graduate students, I assume that you are attending class to learn and that you want to be challenged. As a professor, I plan to engage in thoughtful discussion and enjoy differing viewpoints.  

The course format will be primarily discussion, focusing on readings and other materials. The end goal will be a research proposal for a study that would extend our thinking about how journalism fits into society.  

In terms of each class session, the course will be split into two parts: on most days, I will lead discussion on key topics for the week, which will be followed by active class discussion through student-led questions and ideas. I strongly encourage student participation. Some weeks will include guest lectures or discussions/presentations of final projects.  

**Course Behavior:** This course requires continuous cooperation among students—thoughtfulness and sensitivity toward diverse views are essential. Attendance and arriving on time for class is also necessary—especially because the class meets only once a week. **In the case of an absence, a student is responsible for finding out about any missed material.**  

**Books/Readings:** The following two books are required reading for the course. They are available at most local bookstores.  
- Many articles and other readings will be available via e-reserve at the University of Florida library system, [https://ares.uflib.ufl.edu/](https://ares.uflib.ufl.edu/). The reserves are listed only for MMC 6615  

**Grading:** Grading for the course will consist of six components:  
- **REACTION PAPERS:** Each student will write FOUR response papers throughout the semester, responding or reflecting upon the readings for that week. These are not summary comments, but a brief examination of the topic for the week and a reaction to it. 

These two-page, double-spaced papers must demonstrate an understanding of the reading material for that week, and they cannot be written on a week in which the student leads discussion. They must be completed by April 1 and must be turned in at the beginning of the class in which the reflection is being completed.

- **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS/PARTICIPATION:** Each week, students will be asked to post to the Discussion Board in SAKAI two discussion questions or comments about the week’s readings. To receive credit, this must be completed by 6 p.m. on Mondays (before Tuesday’s class). Further, students are expected to participate in weekly discussions during class meetings. Those who do not participate in discussions on a regular basis will not receive full credit for this portion of the class.

- **DISCUSSION LEADERS:** Each student (individually or in pairs) will be asked to lead discussion one time during the semester. Discussion will focus on the readings of the week and may also include a topical issue that illustrates that issue. Presentations will likely be 40-45 minutes in length. Students are encouraged to bring CDs or DVDS or other media that may illustrate their points.

- **TOPIC PROPOSAL/ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Each student will be required to produce a 1-2 page (double-spaced) paper topic for their final paper for the class. As part of this assignment, the student will include an annotated bibliography of at-least five scholarly articles on the subject of their final paper. The articles must have been written in 2008 or later for the annotated bibliography and cannot be required readings assigned in the syllabus; however, supplemental readings are fine with the assignment.

- **RESEARCH PROPOSAL/PAPER:** Students will develop a research proposal/study (roughly 13-20 pages) to examine an issue discussed within the class. The paper will include a literature review, hypotheses and method of study. Doctoral students in the College of Journalism and Communications will be required to produce an advanced study and present original scholarship.

- **RESEARCH PRESENTATION:** Each student will give a 10-minute presentation of their proposed research topic.

- **GRADE BREAKDOWN:** Your final grade will be based on the following:
  - Reaction papers—100 points
  - Discussion Leader—100 points
  - Weekly posts to SAKAI Discussion Board—100 points
  - Participation/Attendance—100 points
  - Presentation—100 points
  - Paper topic/annotated bibliography—100 points
  - Research paper—100 points

- **FINAL GRADING:** Final grades will be tallied using the following scale:
  - A = 92-100
  - A- = 90-91.99
B+ = 88-89.99
B = 82-87.99
B- = 80-81.99
C+ = 78-79.99
C = 72-77.99
C- = 70-71.99
D+ = 68-69.99
D = 62-67.99
D- = 60-61.99
Below 60 = E
The university’s grading policy can be found here: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

Assignments and Readings: All assignments must be turned in at the BEGINNING of class or earlier. No exceptions. All readings are to be completed before the start of lecture on the day assigned. Readings listed as supplemental are recommended; however, it is assumed that PhD students will have read those materials as part of their normal coursework.

Attendance/Participation: Attendance is expected and more than one unexcused absence from meetings will result in grade reductions. Students who miss class for excused absences (with written documentation and defined by university policies) must make arrangements with the professor IN ADVANCE of the absence. In addition to attendance, I expect students to participate in discussions and add to the intellectual content of the course. Both of these criteria must be met to receive the full points of credit in this portion of the class.

Course evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on class instruction during the last two weeks of class each semester. This can be found at: https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/

Plagiarism; Cheating or other Academic Misconduct: Each graduate student signed an Academic Integrity Statement when they entered the college of Journalism and Communications. In addition, all students are bound by the university’s Honor Code Policy at http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/honestybrochure.php. Anyone who violates these policies in this course will receive failing grade and face further sanctions from the college and university.

Special needs: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students will provide documentation of the necessary accommodation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor within the first two weeks of the semester. This course conforms to all requirements of the ADA and handles with sensitivity all matters related to gender, race, sexual orientation, age, religion or disability. Please alert the instructor if any issues arise.
TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

January 7
Week 1: Getting Started
Course overview
Set up discussion leaders
Expectations
Media production vs. Media audiences
Qualitative vs. Quantitative study

January 14
Week 2: Introduction to Gender, Ethnic and Class study
Social vs. biological constructions of gender and race
Cultural norms and values
Defining class

Readings:
1. Armstrong, preface and introduction (pp. xi-13)
2. Deggans, (pp. 1-16).

January 21
Week 3: Traditional Media and Issues
Ownership
Diversity in the newsroom
White professions

Readings:
1. Armstrong (Chapters 1 and 3 pp. 15-26; 39-53)
2. Deggans (Ch. 2, 6, pp. 41-64; 135-154)

January 28
Week 4: Specializations and Politics
Where are the women?
White/black power
Working/Ruling class

Readings:
1. Armstrong, Chapters 4-5 (pp. 55-83).
2. Deggans, Chapters 1 and 6 (pp. 17-40; 89-108)

**February 4**

*Week 5: Images and Messages: Informational media*

Social construction of reality
The truth in news
What we see
Who we see

Readings:
1. Armstrong, Chapters 6 and 12 (pp. 87-98; 177-190)
2. Deggans Chapters 3 and 5 (pp. 65-88; 109-134)

**February 11**

*Week 6: Images and Messages: Entertainment Media*

News vs. Entertainment
“Reality” TV
Putting on a good show

Readings:
1. Armstrong, Chapters 7 and 9 (pp. 99-114; 133-145)
2. Deggans, Chapters 7-8 (pp. 155-202)

**February 18**

*Week 7: Images and Messages: Persuasive Media*

Sex and advertising
Race in ads
Targeting audiences

Readings:
1. Armstrong, Chapter 8 (pp. 115-132).
February 25
Week 8: Effects and Implications
Policy implications
Stereotypes
Cultivation theory

Readings:
1. Armstrong, Chapter 13 (pp. 191-203).
2. Deggans, Chapter 10 (pp. 223-242)

March 4
Week 9: Spring Break, no class.

March 11
Week 10: Class Distinctions
**Topic Proposal/Annotated Bibliography Due**
“Middle class”
Who and what drives content?
Critical Theory

Readings:
1. Deggans, Chapter 9 (pp. 203-222)

March 18
Week 11: Individual meetings, No class

March 25
Week 12: International Perspectives
Global Media
Cultural difference
Readings:
1. Armstrong, Chapters 10 and 11 (pp. 149-175)

April 1
Week 13: Other Disparities, Advocacy and Future Study
Women and Media Advocacy
Racial profiling
Where do we go from here?

Readings:
1. Armstrong, Chapters 14 and conclusion (pp. 205-225)

April 8
Week 14: Research Presentations/Work Day

April 15
Week 15: Research Presentations/Work Day

April 22
Week 16: Research Presentations/Work Day

Research papers due by noon April 23 in 3045 Weimer Hall

Syllabus Updated Dec. 11, 2013