CJ/WMNS 317-001, Diversity and Communication
Fall 2017

Tuesday/Thursday, 9:30-10:45, Hibbard 202

Contact Info

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Office Hours: Monday 2-4, Wednesday 1-2, or email for appointment

Description

At one level, a course called Diversity and Communication needs little justification. Although communication presupposes enough similarity—in terms of language, grammar, culture, etc.—to allow two or more individuals to speak, listen, and understand one another, it also presupposes difference. Whether we are consciously aware of it or not, diversity defines us. It is the infinite variety of differences among us that makes every individual unique. It is the differences in our minds, our life experiences, and our actions that makes communication necessary in the first place.

At another level, though, this course requires a lot of justification. I wish I could teach a course about all those little differences that make every individual unique. To speak of diversity in those terms is to speak of diversity among people who are all equal, who are all granted the same opportunities in life, and who are free to appreciate all of our idiosyncrasies. Alas, that is not the society that we live in.

This course is about diversity in a much narrower sense. For the most part, this course examines diversity in terms of race and ethnicity, gender, class, and sexual orientation because these four kinds of difference impose both significant advantages and significant disadvantages on individuals in our society. Depending upon how you classify yourself (and are classified by others) in relation to these four types of difference, the conditions of your life and your communicative interactions will be very different.

Thus, the primary objective of this course is to examine how communication both structures and is structured by race and ethnicity, gender, class, and sexual orientation. This means that we will devote a good portion of the class to discussing what these four kinds of difference are and how they operate. And although we will get a glimpse of how these diversity dynamics play out in interpersonal communication, most of the course focuses on communication in organizational and mass media contexts.
In other words, this course will not teach you how to develop good micro-level communication skills—how to say the “right” things and avoid saying the “wrong” things when in the company of diverse others; this course will help you develop an understanding of the larger, macro- and meso-level forces of culture, media, and organizational structure that can create, compound, undermine, or even eliminate differences and inequalities. By the end, it is my hope that you will have the capacity to think through all of the ways that diversity and inequality, power and privilege, and culture and communication are intertwined. It is this capacity that, practiced continually and reflexively, will help you be a better communicator.

Practically speaking, this course is divided into two units. During the first unit, “Diversity, Power, and Inequality in Communication” we will consider three different definitions of diversity, examine the realities of race/ethnicity, gender, class, and sexual orientation in the United States, and discuss how these kinds of difference both affect and are affected by communication. During the second unit, “Media Representations,” we will focus specifically on the mass media, discuss different theories of how media representations affect reality, and think through how media representations are shaping our globalizing world.

Liberal Education and Program Learning Outcomes

The UW-Eau Claire Liberal Education (LE) Core curriculum serves as a strong foundation for all of our academic programs. Our LE Core embodies the Power of [AND] in its design. It has been developed to ensure that you acquire the knowledge AND skills AND responsibility that you will need to actively engage in a global society. Through meeting the requirements of the LE Core you will develop the ability to think critically, creatively and independently. You will learn to integrate and apply your knowledge and develop the values essential to becoming a constructive global citizen. The outcomes below will empower you and prepare you to deal with complexity, diversity, and change in multiple settings. They will also develop highly marketable skills and lead to life-long learning and civic engagement.

This course helps students meet the following LE learning outcomes:

- **Knowledge Outcome 3 (K3): Humanities.** Use knowledge, historical perspectives, analysis, interpretation, critical evaluation, and the standards of evidence appropriate to the humanities to address problems and explore questions.

- **Responsibility Outcome 1 (R1): Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity.** Use critical and analytical skills to evaluate assumptions and challenge existing structures in ways that respect diversity and foster equity and inclusivity.

These outcomes will be assessed using different components of the exams, essays, and reading summaries that you will turn in during this class.

If you are pursuing a degree using requirements from an undergraduate catalog prior to 2016-17, this course counts toward fulfillment of the GE IA Communication-Language Arts requirement.
Additionally, this course meets the following student learning outcomes of the Communication Studies Program in the Communication/Journalism Department:

- Students will explain what it means to communicate ethically
- Students will apply discipline-specific theories in order to explain human communication
- Students will make and support claims about communication artifacts

This course also advances the program goals of Women’s Studies by:

- Using feminist pedagogical techniques and feminist theoretical perspectives
- Linking theory with practice, activism, and social change
- Advocating gender justice on campus and in the larger community

Readings

There are two required books. Both are available for purchase at the University Bookstore. The first is available for rental, and the second book will be on reserve at McIntyre Library:


In addition, there will be a number of readings on D2L. These are required readings; you may print them, read them electronically, or whatever you prefer. Please don’t hesitate to talk to me about reading or note-taking strategies for different methods of dealing with these electronic files.

The full bibliographic citations of these readings, in the order in which we will encounter them, are below:

• Campbell, Bradley and Jason Manning. 2014. “Microaggression and Moral Cultures.” 
  *Comparative Sociology*, 13, pp. 692-726.

• Martin, Joanne and Debra Meyerson. 1998. “Women and Power: Conformity, Resistance, 
  and Disorganized Coaction.” Pp. 311-348 in *Power and Influence in Organizations*, 
  Publications.


  Age.” Pp. 29-45 in *Mass Media and Society*, edited by James Curran and Michael 

• Jenkins, Henry. 2012. “‘Never Trust a Snake’: WWF Wrestling as Masculine 
  Melodrama.” Pp. 541-558 in *The Gender and Media Reader*, edited by Mary Celeste 

  Studies in Class Analysis*. Cambridge University Press.

• Hochschild, Arlie Russell. 2016. “Traveling to the Heart” and “The Deep Story.” Pp. 3- 
  23 and 135-151 in *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American 

• McCabe, Janice, Emily Fairchild, Liz Grauerholz, Bernice A. Pescosolido, and Daniel 

• Schiappa, Edward, Peter B. Gregg, and Dean E. Hewes. 2006. “Can One TV Show Make 
  a Difference? Will & Grace and the Parasocial Contact Hypothesis.” *Journal of 
  Homosexuality*, 51, 4, pp. 15-37.

• Crane, Diana. 1999. “Gender and Hegemony in Fashion Magazines: Women’s 
  541-563.

• Guo, Lei and Summer Harlow. 2014. “User-Generated Racism: An Analysis of 
  Stereotypes of African Americans, Latinos, and Asians in YouTube Videos.” *Howard 

• Gilens, Martin. 1996. “Race and Poverty in America: Public Misperceptions and the 

  from the National Organization for Women.” *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 17, 
  4, pp. 341-362.

• Cuillier, David and Susan Dente Ross. 2007. “Gambling with Identity: Self-
  Representation of American Indians on Official Tribal Websites.” *The Howard Journal 
  of Communications*, 18, pp. 197-219.

**Assignments/Grading**

**Essay 1: Diversity and Racism (15%)** After the first month of the course, there will be a take-
home essay exam measuring your knowledge, comprehension, and critical application of the
material covered during Topics 1 and 2. It will be 5 pages, double-spaced, and it will consist of two structured essays that require you to respond to specific prompts about the course material. The exam will be due in class on Thursday, October 5. In completing this exam, you may use all notes, readings, library, and web-based materials that are available to you; you may NOT work or consult with other students in the class to complete the exam.

**Essay 2: Gender, Class, and Intersectionality (15%)** There will be a second take-home essay exam, much like the first, measuring your knowledge, comprehension, and critical application of the material covered during Topics 3 and 4. It will be 5 pages, double-spaced, and it will consist of two structured essays that require you to respond to specific prompts about the course material. The exam will be due in class on Thursday, October 26. In completing this exam, you may use all notes, readings, library, and web-based materials that are available to you; you may NOT work or consult with other students in the class to complete the exam.

**Essay 3: Media Analysis (25%)** At the end of Topic 7, (Thursday, November 30), you will turn in an analytic essay covering one example of mass media of your choice and how it relates to diversity and communication. In the essay, you will choose one mass media text (a television show, a song, a news story, etc.), describe its content, and then analyze its meaning using two theories or concepts that we discuss during the first half of class. In essence, this essay will assess your knowledge/understanding of different theories of diversity in communication, your ability to apply them critically to a media text of your choice, and your ability to make an argument about the significance of that media text. The essay will be 5-7 pages in length (double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins).

**Essay 4: Media Representation and the Global Imagination (15%)** Essay 4 is your final exam, and it will consist of one 5 page (double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins) review and critique of the book we will read for Topic 8: *Media Representation and the Global Imagination*, by Shani Orgad. It is due at the designated final exam time. You will have about one week to complete it. In completing this essay, you may use all notes, readings, library, and web-based materials that are available to you; you may NOT work or consult with other students in the class to complete the exam.

**Discussion Board Posts (15%)** Twelve times throughout the semester, you will be required to post a question or comment about the readings or class discussion to the appropriate discussion board on D2L. Each post will be **due by Thursday at 8:00 a.m.** to give me time to read them and incorporate them into our class discussion each Thursday. You may either start a new post or reply to someone else’s post. Each post will receive 1 point if it is both substantive (thoughtfully engages the material) and on time; it will receive ½ point if it is either/or; it will receive 0 points if it is neither/nor. Even if you are not going to be in attendance that day, you are still required to post.

**Attendance and Participation (15%)** They say that in real life, about 75% of it is just showing up. In this class, it’s more like 8% (I have higher standards). I will take attendance in every class. You get 1 free absence; beyond that, you will be penalized proportionately to the number of classes you miss (it works out to be about 0.3% per class). [Please let me know if you will miss class or have difficulty with assignments for religious or athletic reasons, and we will work
something out.] You are all adults, so I am not going to monitor lateness and your comings and goings; however, if you are consistently late or disruptive in class, it will harm your participation grade—because you are degrading the learning environment.

As a general rule, make ups for missed in-class activities, quizzes, exams, etc. will be provided only when due to an authorized absence. It is the student’s responsibility to inform the instructor of such situations and to provide appropriate documentation. Students will need to consult with the instructor regarding the nature of the make ups and due dates. Work that is late for non-authorized reasons will not receive full credit and if it is too late, it will not receive any credit. Although students will not be penalized when absences are authorized, it is important to understand that in some cases the make up work may be significantly different from the original assignments, exams, etc.

Here’s how participation works. It’s worth 7%. Everyone starts off in the middle, at 4 out of 7. Positive contributions to the class are rewarded, while negative contributions to the class are penalized. Smart questions, dumb questions, and smart comments (but not dumb comments) make your participation grade go up. Disruptions (verbally or bodily) and other actions that have negative effects on the classroom environment (see below) make your grade go down.

I update participation grades periodically throughout the semester, and my grading is cumulative. In other words, it’s no big deal if you don’t actively make positive contributions on a daily (or even weekly) basis. A good rule of thumb is that as long as you are doing what you are supposed to do, not being disruptive in any way, and make actively make positive contributions periodically, you should earn full credit.

**Final Grade Scale**

Your final letter grades will be calculated as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-91</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82-87</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-81</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>72-77</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-71</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>68-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>62-67</td>
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<td>D-</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 60</td>
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If you are “borderline” between two grades, I will follow the rules of rounding. For example, if you have a final grade of 89.5, I will round up to A-; but if you have 89.4, I will round down to B+. Nevertheless, I reserve the right to adjust the grade upward (I will never adjust it downward) if my subjective judgment of your performance throughout the class merits it. An example of a case in which I might do this is if you demonstrate significant and continuous academic improvement throughout the semester.

**Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity in the Classroom**

**Classroom Environment** You know why college is awesome? Because there is no other institution in society in which the **free and responsible** discussion of controversial topics is not merely permitted, but is integral to the purpose and mission of the institution. The classroom is a
sacred space for those who value the free and responsible exchange of ideas. Especially in a class about diversity, controversial topics, theories, beliefs, and values can and should be expressed. I actually go out of my way to do so. Remember that both you and everyone else in this class has a unique experience of the world—we will inevitably have different understandings of reality and different opinions about it. So that we can hopefully preserve this sacred space, please make every effort to do the following:

- Please speak respectfully to others, as you would want others to speak to you.
- Please speak responsibly to the class. There is no such thing as pure freedom of speech—there never has been and never will be. Freedom must always be balanced with responsibility. Before speaking, please consider whether or not your comment or question will be educational and respectful of others.
- Please respect others’ feelings, and never deny the validity of their feelings.
- If you are worried that something you said might have offended someone, apologize.
- When others speak, listen. Don’t just hear the person; try to understand them.
- If you encounter a difference of opinion, try to see the world from their eyes before judging their opinion.
- If you wish to disagree with something someone said, please disagree with the idea, not the person. Instead of using accusatory “you” language (“YOU said….”), try using agentic “I” language (“I heard you say… and I disagree…”).
- If something that I, the professor, say or do in class bothers you, please tell me. Privately or publicly, verbally or written—I want to know.

In short, learning happens best when we have the kind of classroom in which people exercise both freedom and responsibility in both speaking and listening. The goal is not to avoid conflict or avoid discomfort; it is to confront it in a safe, respectful way. As part of a college education, it is important that you confront uncomfortable truths about ourselves and our society. In doing so, the ultimate objective is to make ourselves and our society better, stronger, and wiser.

Civility and Inclusivity In this class, I strive to be both civil and inclusive of all students, and I ask you to join me in adhering to norms of behavior that respect the dignity and freedom of others. In college, we encounter a tremendous amount of diversity, and it is my firm belief that we should value that diversity—whether it be race, ethnicity, gender-identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, ability, age, religion, political beliefs, lifestyle, or anything else. Sometimes when we encounter difference for the first time, we react negatively: it seems strange, incomprehensible, and irrational. But please do not treat one another that way; after all, you seem strange, incomprehensible, and irrational to others, too! Instead, please do your best to be welcome and courteous to each other so that we can all learn from one another.

Miscellaneous

Students Needing Accommodations Any student who has a disability and is in need of classroom accommodations, please contact both myself and the Services for Students with Disabilities Office in Centennial Hall 2106 at the beginning of the semester. I will make every effort to accommodate the practices of different religious faiths, physical, emotional, or learning
disabilities, cultural differences, or athletic requirements. But if accommodations are necessary, I need you to tell me. Please let me know about anything that might make your full participation in this class difficult, and we will figure out how we can enable you to be an equal participant.

**Writing Resources** Contrary to what you might think, writing well is, for most people (including me), one of the most difficult things to learn how to do—not just in terms of grammar and mechanics, but also in terms of style, organization, clarity, effectiveness, and originality. If you want to improve your writing (even if you don’t get bad grades on essays), you should visit the Center for Writing Excellence in the Student Success Center (Centennial 2104). Check out their website to learn about hours and their multiple locations, the wonderful people who are there to help you, and the services and resources that they offer: [http://www.uwec.edu/Writing/](http://www.uwec.edu/Writing/).

**Academic Misconduct (i.e. Plagiarism and Cheating!)** I consider any academic misconduct in this course to be a serious offense, and I will pursue the strongest possible academic penalties for such behavior. I follow the Blugold Student Code of Conduct in cases of academic misconduct, which it defines as “an act in which a student:

- Seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
- Uses unauthorized material or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
- Forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- Intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- Engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student’s academic performance; or
- Assists other students in any of these acts.” (Section II, 14.03.1)

Please note: academic misconduct isn’t something that only “bad” people do. Even good, honest people plagiarize and cheat. Well-respected scholars have had their careers ruined because they forgot to put a citation into their research notes, thus inadvertently taking credit for another person’s ideas. Even straight-A students do not always recognize acts of plagiarism and commit academic misconduct with the best of intentions.

**D2L** I use D2L for most communications and resources related to the class. All printed materials that I hand out will be posted there, and all discussion boards are there. I will use the website for posting announcements and grades; and several readings and web resources will be posted there.

**Technology in the Classroom** Different professors have different policies on the use of electronic devices in the classroom. The dilemma is simple: laptops and tablets can be fantastic learning resources, but they can be equally fantastic distractions to you, me, and every other student in the classroom. I do not want to ban technology outright, but past experience has taught me that I cannot count on students to police themselves. Therefore, I have devised the following policies:

- **No Cell Phones.** Cell phones must be turned off or silent and put away. You may not use your cell phone under any circumstances unless authorized by me ahead of time.
- **Laptops and Tablets.** Students are permitted to use laptops and tablets in class only for educational purposes. You may use these devices for note-taking, reading, small group work, and looking up information relevant to the class; you may not use them for email, social media, or work unrelated to this class. Please be aware that abuse of this policy will result in deductions in your participation grade.
Important Dates The last day to drop a class with no record is Tuesday, September 19. The last day to withdraw from a class or from the university is Tuesday, November 14.
## Calendar

### Unit 1: Diversity, Inequality, and Power in Communication

#### Topic 1: What is Diversity? Three Views

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day/Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignments/Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R (9/7) Introduction</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>T (9/12) Diversity in the U.S.</td>
<td>RSM 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>R (9/14) Intersectionality</td>
<td>D2L, Crenshaw, “Beyond Racism and Misogyny”</td>
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<tr>
<td>T (9/19) Vulnerability</td>
<td>D2L, Rodriguez, “A Story from Somewhere”</td>
<td><strong>Discussion Board Post due</strong></td>
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#### Topic 2: Communicating Structural Racism

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<tr>
<th>Day/Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignments/Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T (9/26) Privilege</td>
<td>D2L, McIntosh, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack”</td>
<td><strong>Discussion Board Post due</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T (10/3) Microaggressions: Perpetrators and Victims, Bystanders and Critics</td>
<td>D2L, Campbell and Manning, “Microaggression and Moral Cultures”</td>
<td><strong>Discussion Board Post due</strong></td>
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#### Topic 3: Gender, Feminism, and Organizational Communication

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<tr>
<th>Day/Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignments/Activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>R (10/5) Hegemonic Masculinity and the Microprocesses of Power</td>
<td>D2L, Martin and Meyerson, “Women and Power”</td>
<td><strong>Essay 1 due</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T (10/10) Organizational Demands</td>
<td>D2L, Van Zoonen, “Media Production and the Encoding of Gender”</td>
<td><strong>Discussion Board Post due</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R (10/12) Flavors of Feminism</td>
<td>D2L, Boyle, “Feminism Without Men: Feminist Media Studies in a Post-Feminist Age”</td>
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<tr>
<td>T (10/17) Feminism for the White Working Class</td>
<td>D2L, Jenkins, “Never Trust a Snake”</td>
<td><strong>Discussion Board Post due</strong></td>
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### Topic 4: Class, Capitalism, and Politics

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<th>Day/Topic</th>
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<th>Assignments/Activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>R (10/19)</td>
<td>What is Class? D2L, Wright, “Class Analysis”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>T (10/24)</td>
<td>Political Intersections: Class, Race, and Gender D2L, Hochschild, “Traveling to the Heart” and “The Deep Story”</td>
<td>Discussion Board Post due</td>
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### Unit 2: Media Representations

#### Topic 5: Mass Media Representations and Media Effects

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<th>Day/Topic</th>
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<th>Assignments/Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R (10/26)</td>
<td>Representations vs. Reality RSM 2</td>
<td>Essay 2 due</td>
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<tr>
<td>T (10/31)</td>
<td>Stereotyping with Intent RSM 3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>R (11/2)</td>
<td>20th Century Media Representations RSM 4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>T (11/7)</td>
<td>Gays and Lesbians in Mass Media D2L, Shiappa, Gregg, and Hewes, “Can One TV Show Make a Difference?”</td>
<td>Discussion Board Post due</td>
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### Topic 6: Advertising, the Internet, and Social Media

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<tr>
<th>Day/Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignments/Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R (11/9)</td>
<td>Diversity in Advertising RSM 7</td>
<td>Discussion Board Post due</td>
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<tr>
<td>T (11/14)</td>
<td>Resisting Mass Media Messages D2L, Crane, “Gender and Hegemony in Fashion Magazines”</td>
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<tr>
<td>R (11/16)</td>
<td>Will the Internet Set us Free? D2L, Guo and Harlow, “User-Generated Racism”</td>
<td>Discussion Board Post due</td>
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### Topic 7: News, Framing, and the Social Construction of Reality

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<tr>
<th>Day/Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignments/Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T (11/21) Race and Gender in the News</td>
<td>RSM 6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>R (11/23) Thanksgiving!</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No class. Be thankful for what you have, but reflect on what this holiday means to Native American Indians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T (11/28) Stories that News Tells</td>
<td>D2L, Gilens, “Race and Poverty in America”</td>
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### Topic 8: Media Representation and the Global Imagination

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<tr>
<th>Day/Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignments/Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T (12/5) The Global Imagination</td>
<td>Orgad Intro &amp; Ch. 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>R (12/7) Media and Distant Suffering</td>
<td>Orgad Ch. 2</td>
<td>Discussion Board Post due</td>
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<tr>
<td>T (12/12) Imagining Immigration</td>
<td>Orgad Ch. 4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>R (12/14) One World or Many?</td>
<td>Orgad Ch. 5 &amp; 7</td>
<td>Discussion Board Post due</td>
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**Essay 4 due during scheduled exam period**