

Mass Communication 4971: Minorities and Mass Media

Spring 2002

Wednesday 7:40-10:30am

Room 127 Coates Hall

Instructor Sharon Weston Broome

Office Hours: upon appointment

Email – weston100@home.com

Course Description: The course will focus on several issues concerning minorities and the mass media. We will examine how minorities are represented in mainstream media (and the impact such representations have on society), the extent to which minorities participate (as writers, reporters, producers, etc.) in mainstream media; and alternative media, owned and/or operated by minorities.

Who are “minorities”? In this class we are referring to African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans and Latinos. (Women, gays and lesbians, and the handicapped also may fit into the category, but we do not focus on these groups in this course.)

Objectives: This course is designed to provide you with a basic understanding of the impact of media images and portrayals of individuals, groups and society as a whole. These opportunities will be provided through reading material, lecture, videotaped programs and guest speakers. The student will explore the theories concerning racial formation, stereotypes and the effect of mass communication.

The goal is to give you:

An awareness of the impact of media images and stereotypes.

An awareness of the interplay between the mass media and cultural attitudes about racism and multiculturalism.

An awareness of the historical development of racial stereotypes and images.

An awareness of the role of media in perpetuating or destroying racial myths and stereotypes.

Your Responsibility: Read all materials assigned. Keep up with the news, especially news involving minorities. Participate in class discussions. Complete assignments on time. Apply what you learn in this class to prevalent issues occurring in American society.

Assignment: You will be required to write two essays. Details of each essay will be distributed in class with enough notice to allow you to write a thoughtful and intelligent essay. Approximately 4-6 pages each. Typed 10-point or 12-point font. Double-spaced. Margins should be no larger than 1” and no smaller than 3/4”. The paper will be due (tentatively) on March 27 and April 24.

There will be unannounced quizzes throughout semester to ensure prompt and thorough examination of the readings and to give me feedback as to how well you understand the course material. There will be no “make-ups” for missed quizzes. If you are absent on the day of a quiz you will receive a zero for that quiz.

There will be two exams consisting of a mid-term and final.

Participation grades are based on thoughtful contributions to class discussions.

Grading:

There are a total of 1000 points possible in the course, broken down as follows:

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|--------------------------|-------------|
| Mid-term | 200 |
| Final Exam | 300 |
| Essay #1 | 150 |
| Essay#2 | 150 |
| Quizzes | 75 |
| Participation/Discussion | 125 |
| | 1000 points |

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date indicated on the syllabus.

Final course grades will be assessed using the following scale:

A = 90-100
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 63-69
F = 62 and below

Books: One book is required for this course: Clint C. Wilson and Felix and Gutierrez (1995), *Race, Multiculturalism and the Media* (2nd Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. This books is available through Amazon.com

Plagiarism and cheating: Please do not use information prepared by another writer or scholar and present it as your own work. To do so is academic dishonesty and can result in an “F” on the assignment and, possibly other penalties.

Consultations:

Do not hesitate to see me if you have a question or need additional information about anything involving the course. Please see me before or after class, email me, or phone me.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE
Minorities and Mass Media
Spring 2002
MC 4971

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|-------|---|
| 01/23 | Introduction to Course Test Your Racial Issues IQ |
| 01/30 | Discuss Wilson and Gutierrez, Chapter1 |
| 02/06 | Discuss Wilson and Gutierrez, Chapter 2 Video, Part I, “Color Adjustments” |
| 02/13 | No Class |
| 02/20 | Discuss Wilson and Gutierrez, Chapters 3 and 4 |

Video, Part II, “Color Adjustments”

- 02/27 Video, ABC News 20/20 “Acting White”
Prepare for class presentations
- 03/06 Class Presentations on Wilson and Gutierrez, Chapters 5, 6, and 7
Midterm Review
- 03/13 Midterm Exam
- 03/20 Discuss Wilson and Gutierrez, Chapter 8
GUEST SPEAKER(S)
- 03/27 ESSAY # 1 DUE
GUEST SPEAKER(S)
- 04/03 Spring Break
- 04/10 Discussion Wilson and Gutierrez, Chapters 9 and 10
04/17 Discuss Wilson and Gutierrez, Chapter 11
- 05/01 Class meets at 9:30 am – Final Exam Review
- 05/13-28 FINAL EXAM TBA