

Spring 2001
Journalism 19:165/19:215
African-American and Mass Comm
W425 Seashore 335-3361
Director: Dr. John Soloski

Dr. Venise Berry
Office hours:
M/T/W: 3-4 p.m.
U of Iowa

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

This course will address the African-American experience in four areas of mass communication; radio/music, television, cable, film, and print media. It will examine images and messages concerning African-American culture in the United States from a contemporary perspective.

TEXT:

Mediated Messages and African American Culture: Contemporary Issues at University Book Store edited by Venise Berry and Carmen Manning-Miller. Reserved Readings in Journalism Resource Center.

Each student will be expected to purchase and read the assigned text, as well as read all reserve readings. This material will be synthesized, debated, and critically evaluated through class discussions, critiques and presentations.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS:

1. Expect to better understand the contemporary development of mass communication images and messages in relation to African-American culture.
2. Expect to be able to better analyze values, beliefs, and stereotype pertaining to African-American image and messages in mass communication.
3. Expect to become more aware and sensitive to multi-cultural issues in mass communication.
4. Expect to be exposed to the nature and complexity of mass communication practices in American society from an African-American perspective.

NOTES:

** I would like to hear from anyone who has a disability which may need some modification of seating, testing in other class requirements so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Please see me after class or during my office hours.

**Attendance is mandatory. You will be allowed one week (one class) without penalty. A sign up sheet will be passed around during class. Make sure you sign it! Every class is important so please don't ask me permission to miss class.

**Any assignment not submitted on due date will lose one letter grade for every week it is late. It is your responsibility to turn in your assignments directly to the professor when they are due. If you turn in an assignment in some other way (under office door or in box) at some other time (before or after due date), I am not responsible if it is lost or misplaced, so keep a copy.

**You will be expected to complete all reading assignments and participate fully in class discussions.

**It may be necessary to make changes in the syllabus according to how readings, videos, assignments, and presentations flow throughout the semester.

****Warning-** If any of the videos shown in class are offensive you are not required to stay and view them. However, each video has been selected because of its appropriateness to the section studied. Let the professor know that you are leaving so that they can write down your name for attendance purposes.

GRADING:

Critiques 1&2	50pts each	100pts.	Graduate Student
Presentation	40pts	40pts	Final paper 100pts
Attendance	30pts	30pts	
Partic/Discus	30pts	<u>30pts</u>	
		200pts	

Grade Scale:	200-180 = A
	179-160 = B
	159-125= C
	124- 115= D
	below 115= F

****Must earn a minimum of 60% of possible points to pass course**

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

Critiques – 2 critiques, 5 pages each plus footnotes and/or bibliography at end. You will write one critique from the film/print segments of the class and a second from the television/cable and music/radio segments of class. Each will be prepared as a critical evaluation rather than a personal essay (see critique handout for details) based on a contemporary issue concerning African-Americans and Mass Communication. Critiques must be types in average size typeface and double-spaced. Critiques will be graded on clarity/logic, depth of critical analysis, structure/organization, grammar/other mechanics, endnotes/bibliography (MLA or APA style).

Graduate Student Final Paper – An additional 10 page research paper on an area on interest related to class topic. This paper should be an indepth critical analysis of a major idea of interest related to African-Americans and the media. It must be typed and double-spaced. ****All students will meet with the professor outside of class to discuss their proposed final paper no later than April 1st.**

Presentation – Each student will prepare a ten-minute presentation for class. Another five minutes will be allotted for questions-answers-discussion. A one page abstract/outline must be prepared and distribution to the class. Audio, Video, or print examples must be included.

COURSE OUTLINE:

Jan 16 – Syllabus/Overview

Video Analysis (Ethnic Notions and Color Adjustment)