

**ETHNIC DIVERSITY AND THE U.S. NEWS MEDIA**  
San Francisco State University Journalism Department

Journalism 611      λ      Fall 2007      λ      7:00 – 9:45

Professor: Dr. Cristina Azocar, Director  
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Office Hours: Monday 4 pm-5 pm

*Diversity must be regarded as a core journalistic value. If your coverage does not reflect your community, it's not accurate.* -- David Yarnold, Former Editor, San Jose Mercury-News

### **Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes**

This one-unit course will explore issues facing the U.S. news media as they struggle to understand and cover an increasingly diverse society. We will explore issues of how the practice of news-gathering influences social reality. Class sessions will include a historical overview of the problem, discussion on the current obstacles facing journalists, and news organizations' efforts to improve coverage and newsroom representation.

Inclusiveness in news coverage is important if indeed the news media is to follow its mission to reinforce the democratic process. Such inclusiveness is also important if news media wants to thrive. As some news organizations are learning, they must speak to a continually evolving American public.

Some critics have called diversity efforts as a form of Political Correctness. But as we will learn throughout the semester it is really a matter of accurate coverage, reflecting what is out there.

### **Instructional Methods**

The course will mainly be taught in lecture format with the Socratic method. This means the instructor will not only present information, but ask questions requiring you to work through to an answer. In some cases there is no one right answer. Classroom discussion is an important learning tool. As you listen to other perspectives, new ideas may come to you and help you form your own thoughts. For this format to work, we must respect the varying perspectives that we all bring. It is OK to disagree with people, just make every effort to understand perspectives that are different than your own. The whole idea of the class is to expose you to perspectives that are different than your own in order to develop cultural competency.

### **Student Assessment**

Students will be required to complete 1) a group content analysis project 2) a 5-7-page research paper, 3) weekly reading quizzes

1. The **Group Project**: Students will be assigned to a group the first day of class. Group presentations will be on **Sept. 25** and each group will have 15 minutes to present their findings of a content analysis of the coverage of a specific ethnic group or minority in mainstream media. Presentations will be based on a content analysis discussed the first and second class sessions. Each individual in the group will receive the same grade on the presentation.
2. The 5-7-page **Research Paper** will consist of the findings from the group project, a content analysis analyzing the coverage of a specific ethnic or minority group in mainstream media. The paper must be double-spaced and in 12 pt. type with 1 inch margins. We will talk about methods of analysis in class. Papers are due at **5:00 pm** one week after the official end of class on **October 2**. **Late papers are not accepted and will not be graded.**
3. It is **required** to use at **least two readings** in your paper. You may use readings from class, or others that you find from your own research. It is also **required** to relate the use of **demographic information for the ethnic or minority group AND the media outlet you are studying** and **other information** to show why your topic was important to examine, and why your coverage suggestions are important. **Proper attribution** is required. **I DO NOT ACCEPT PAPERS VIA EMAIL**

4. Reading **Quizzes** will occur during every session. Short answer, multiple choice, and true-false questions will assess how well the student paid attention to the reading. Quizzes will be given at the during class, students arriving after or leaving before the quiz has begun will not be allowed to take it. Quizzes cannot be made up.
5. I wish to make this course as accessible as possible to students with disabilities or medical conditions that may affect any aspect of course assignments or participation. You are invited to communicate with me at the outset of the course or at your discretion about any accommodations that will improve your experience of or access to the course. You can also contact the Disability Resource Center at 338-2472 (Voice/TDD).

**JOURNALISM DEPARTMENT POLICY ON PLAGIARISM**

*Plagiarism, the passing off of someone else's work as your own, is a serious offense against scholarship, journalism and honesty. It is regarded as a serious offense by this university and this department.*

*In journalism, the object is to develop one's own original body of work, based on one's own reporting and research, and delivered in one's own "voice"--in one's own writing--in an effort to give the reader as faithful a rendition of the truth of things as we are capable. By contrast, plagiarism delivers what someone else has researched and written under the pretense that it is one's own work. The plagiarist lies to the reader by pretending the stolen writing is original, depriving the real author of credit, and denying readers the right to form opinions based on the real sources of information. To call this a disservice to journalism is putting it in the mildest terms. When a journalist steals someone else's work, it damages the credibility of all his or her associates, calling into question the integrity of the newspaper or magazine in which the plagiarized work is published. Plagiarists fail their readers, their profession and themselves. San Francisco State University calls plagiarism "literary theft" and treats it as a disciplinary issue. Journalism Department professors regard plagiarists as liars and thieves and read their assignments with a disbelief beyond skepticism.*

**Attendance:** You will be allowed one absence, excused or unexcused. If after that you have an emergency or are sick let me know. If you miss more than one classes your grade will be lowered by one grade (e.g. A to A-).

**Grading:** Your total grade will consist of the following:

|                             |            |      |
|-----------------------------|------------|------|
| Research paper              | 45points   | 45%  |
| Group Project               | 40 points  | 40%  |
| Quizzes (3) - 5 points each | 15 points  | 15%  |
| Total                       | 100 points | 100% |

## SCHEDULE

| SESSION   | READING   |
|---|---|
| <b>Session 1 -----August 28</b>   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrollment, announcements, course overview and requirements.</li> <li>• Diversity overview: Identifying and discussing the problems.</li> <li>• Conducting a content analysis</li> <li>• Past examples</li> <li>• Group assignments/group arrangement time. Presentation examples, Reading Red Report</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>Session2 ----- September 4</b>   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading quiz 1</li> <li>• Discussion: Native Americans/Redlake</li> <li>• Discussion: Authentic Voice</li> </ul>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Weston, Mary Ann “Attitudes and Mindsets Hinder Journalists in Their Coverage” (PDF)</li> <li>2. Rave, Jodi “Challenges Native and Non-Native Journalists Confront” (PDF)</li> <li>3. Moore, Michael “Taking Time Understand the Story to Be Told” (PDF)</li> </ol>   |
| <b>Session3 ----- September 11</b>  |   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reading quiz 2</li> <li>2. Discussion: Asian Americans/Virginia Tech</li> <li>3. Discussion: Authentic Voice</li> </ol>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Media Advisory: Virginia Tech<br/><a href="http://www.aaja.org/news/aajanews/2007_04_16_01/printable">http://www.aaja.org/news/aajanews/2007_04_16_01/printable</a></li> <li>2. 2. Asian Pop: Angry Asian Men<br/><a href="http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/g/a/2007/05/08/apop.DTL">http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/g/a/2007/05/08/apop.DTL</a></li> <li>3. Women and Minorities in the Newsroom<br/><a href="http://www.rtnda.org/communicator/pdfs/072007-20-25.pdf">http://www.rtnda.org/communicator/pdfs/072007-20-25.pdf</a></li> <li>4. J-School Administrators<br/><a href="http://www.journalism.umd.edu/newsrel/07newsrel/jmcsurvey07.html">http://www.journalism.umd.edu/newsrel/07newsrel/jmcsurvey07.html</a></li> </ol> |
| <b>Session4 ----- September 18</b>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading quiz 3</li> <li>• Discussion: African Americans/Imus</li> <li>• Discussion: Authentic Voice</li> </ul>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Imus apology too little too late<br/><a href="http://www.nabj.org/newsroom/news_releases/story/53029p-81732c.html">http://www.nabj.org/newsroom/news_releases/story/53029p-81732c.html</a></li> <li>2. The Imus test<br/><a href="http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/24/AR2007042402496.html">http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/24/AR2007042402496.html</a></li> <li>3. Diversity slips in newsrooms<br/><a href="http://www.asne.org/index.cfm?id=6506">http://www.asne.org/index.cfm?id=6506</a></li> <li>4. ASNE President:<br/><a href="http://www.poynter.org/column.asp?id=34&amp;aid=127733">http://www.poynter.org/column.asp?id=34&amp;aid=127733</a></li> </ol>                          |

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| <b>Session5 ----- September 25</b> |  |
| <b>GROUP PROJECT PRESENTATIONS</b> |  |