

**MC 7999**  
**Race & Gender in Political Communication**

**Fall 2010**

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**Course Description**

This course explores the role of race and gender in political communication, and the role of political communication in reinforcing or challenging prevailing stereotypes and attitudes about matters of race and gender. “Political communication” for our purposes pertains to all the many communicative interactions among political actors, media, and citizens.

The first segment of the course focuses on research that explores the roots of American attitudes about race and gender, providing a foundation for our discussions and research. The second segment of the course zooms in on elections, examining how racial/gender attitudes shape how voters vote and thus how candidates run; we will also examine research on how and to what degree election news is inflected with racial and gender frames. In the last segment of assigned readings, we turn to questions of how race and gender influence policy debates, and how ethnic media matter to American politics and participation. The final weeks of the class will be devoted to student presentations on current or past candidacies involving racial and/or gendered dynamics (more about that assignment below).

My goals for this course are the following:

- That we deepen our understanding of the role of race and gender in American political culture, while also recognizing ways that negative racial and gender stereotypes may be transcended in public discourse.
- That we maintain lively and open lines of communication, allowing us to learn from one another as we exchange ideas about inevitably controversial questions.
- That we identify questions worthy of research, and that each of you will take steps toward answering those questions.

## Readings

The following books will be required reading for this course; students should plan to obtain these from bookstores, online booksellers, or libraries:

Sue Carroll & Richard Fox, *Gender & Elections* (2d edition)  
Robert Entman & Andrew Rojecki, *The Black Image in the White Mind*  
Regina Lawrence & Melody Rose, *Hillary Clinton's Race for the White House*  
Keith Reeves, *Voting Hopes or Fears?: White Voters, Black Candidates, and Racial Politics in America*  
Paul Brewer, *Value War: Public Opinion and the Politics of Gay Rights*

A number of additional readings will be provided electronically on the course Moodle site.

## Course Requirements

Your final grade for this course will consist of the following:

1) Weekly reading summaries: All students will be expected to attend each class meeting having read the assigned material for that week; a class of this size can only be successful if all students truly engage with the material. To facilitate that engagement, each student is required to come to class with a 1-page response to the week's readings. In only one page, your responses cannot be expected to summarize all the week's material. Instead, you should raise a question from or about the readings: Something that puzzles you, something that bothers you, something you did not understand, or something you think you see at work in—or contradicted by—current events. (10% of final grade, cumulatively)

2) Discussion leader for two weeks of the term: For each week you choose, be prepared to *lead* discussion for (roughly) the second half of class. I will usually begin each class by presenting a general orientation to the week's readings and background material; the student discussion leader(s) will then generate discussion by presenting their responses to the week's readings (see criteria in previous paragraph). Discussion may be facilitated with a brief visual presentation, an online example from current events, etc. You should strive with your question(s) to *generate thoughtful discussion and debate*. (10% percent each of final grade)

3) Mid-term paper: Demonstrate mastery of materials presented through week #5 by answering a question (to be provided) about major determinants of Americans' attitudes about race and gender. (20% of final grade)

4) Case Study: Analyze the political communication surrounding a campaign contest of your choice from the 2010 election season or from the past. You may focus on a local, state, or federal contest. You may take one of two approaches: a) Analyze the

candidates' communications strategies in light of the materials presented in this class (e.g. challenges a candidate faces due to race and/or gender, including both general challenges and particular challenges given the demographics and electoral history of their constituencies; how candidates are employing [or not employing] racial/gendered appeals; etc.); or b) analyze media coverage of the contest, again in light of materials presented in this class (note that this will be more challenging with some races, depending upon the amount and availability of news coverage). All students should submit a research plan by September 14<sup>th</sup> for my approval. In addition to presenting your findings in class, each student must hand in a written summary of their findings by November 9<sup>th</sup>, and, after making their presentation, all students must submit a copy of the power point or handouts used in their presentation. (25% of final grade)

5) Final exam: A comprehensive take-home exam question will be distributed in the final weeks of class. Students will write an approximately 8-page essay in response to the exam question. (20% of final grade)

6) General participation (5% of final grade)

Due dates for major assignments are as follows:

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
1-page Research Plan for Case Study	September 14 <sup>th</sup> , 1:00 p.m.
Mid-term Paper	Sept. 28 <sup>th</sup> , 1:00 p.m.
Case Study	Nov. 9 <sup>th</sup> , 1:00 p.m.
Final Take-home Exam	December 7 <sup>th</sup> , 4:00 p.m.

Please note that late assignments will not be accepted except in truly extenuating circumstances, so please plan your schedule accordingly.

**A final note: All written materials will be evaluated in terms of the Manship Writing Essentials appended to the end of this syllabus. Please take time to review these guidelines before submitting your written work for this course.**

## Course Schedule

Week #1 Aug. 24

### Introduction & Icebreakers

Week #2 **TBA**

### Foundations: Stereotypes and the Social Construction of Race

Lippman, selections on stereotypes, from *Public Opinion* (1922)

Entman & Rojecki, *The Black Image in the White Mind*, chapters 1 – 5

“Race as a Social Construct,” <http://anthropology.net/2008/10/01/race-as-a-social-construct/>

Excerpts from Omi & Winant, “Racial Formation in the United States,”

<http://aad.english.ucsb.edu/docs/Omi-Winant.html>

Waters, “The Social Construction of Race and Ethnicity: Some Examples from Demography”

Week #3 Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>

### Foundations: Stereotypes and the Social Construction of Gender & Masculinity

Fiske, Cuddy & Glick, “Universal Dimensions of Social Cognition: Warmth and Competence”

Jost & Hamilton, “Stereotypes in our Culture”

Jost & Kay, “Complementary Gender Stereotypes”

Lorber, “The Social Construction of Gender”

Connell, “The Social Organization of Masculinity”

Week #4 Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> [Research plans due today]

### Foundations: Race and Gender in American Political Culture

Smith, “Beyond Tocqueville, Myrdal, and Hartz: The Multiple Traditions in America”

Locke, “From Three-Fifths to Zero: Implications of the Constitution for African American Women”

Jamieson, “The Binds that Tie” and “Double Bind Number Two: Silence/Shame,” from *Beyond the Double Bind* (1995)

Hochschild, “What Is the American Dream?” and “The Future of the American Dream,” from *Facing Up to the American Dream*

Wong, “Preface” and “Blurring the Color Line,” from *Boundaries of Obligation* (2010)

Week #5 Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>

### Political Demographics: How race & gender shape voting behavior

*Gender & Elections*, Introduction plus chapters 3 - 6

Reeves, *Voting Hopes or Fears?*, chapters 1-5 (chapter 6 optional/recommended)

McDermott, “Race & Gender Cues in Low Information Environments”

Week #6 Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> [Mid-term papers due today]

### Catch Up Week/Requests

Week #7 Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>

### Gender & Political Candidacies: How women run, and how they win or lose

*Gender & Elections*, chapters 7, 9 & 10

Dolan, “Women as Candidates: The Continuing Impact of Sex and Gender”

Dolan, “Do Women Candidates Play to Gender Stereotypes?”

Chang & Hitchon, “When Does Gender Count?”

Week #8 Oct. 12<sup>th</sup>

**Media and Minority Candidates**

Entman & Rojecki, *The Black Image in the White Mind*, chapter 8

Caliendo & McIlwain, “Minority Candidates, Media Framing, and Racial Cues in the 2004 Election”

Valentino et al, “Cues that Matter: How Political Ads Prime Racial Attitudes during Campaigns”

Kinder & Sanders, “The Electoral Temptations of Race,” from *Divided By Color* (1996)

Mendelberg, “A Theory of Racial Appeals,” from *The Race Card: Campaign Strategy, Implicit Messages, and the Norm of Equality* (2001)

Wu & Lee, chapters 2, 3, and 5 from *Media, Politics and Asian Americans* (2009)

Golebiowska, “When To Tell?: Disclosure of Concealable Group Membership, Stereotypes, and Political Evaluation”

Week #9 Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>

**Gender and Presidential Politics in Campaign 2008**

*Gender & Elections* chapter 1: “Presidential Elections: Gendered Space and the Case of 2008”

Lawrence & Rose, *Hillary Clinton’s Race for the White House*

Week #10 Oct. 26<sup>th</sup>

**Racial/Gender Attitudes and Public Policy Debates**

Kinder & Sanders, “No Single Sovereign Theory Will Do: Multiple Interpretations of Public Opinion” and “Framing the Issue: Elite Discourse and Public Understanding,” from *Divided By Color* (1996)

Pride, “Redefining the Problem of Racial Inequality”

Hopkins, “Flooded Communities: Explaining Local Reactions to Post-Katrina Migrants”

Brewer, *Value War: Public Opinion and the Politics of Gay Rights*, chapters 2, 3, 5, 6, & 7

Week #11 Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>

**Special Event: The 2010 Breaux Symposium: The Influence of Ethnic Media on Politics and Participation (Location: International House Hotel, New Orleans)**

Readings to be announced.

Week #12 Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>

[Case study write-ups due today]

**Student presentations/Discussion**

Week #13 Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>

**Student presentations/Discussion**

Week #14 Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup>

**NO CLASS**

Week #15 Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>

**Final meeting: Synthesis & Prep for Final Exam**

# A Manship Education

Your degree in Mass Communication should signify two things:

- You understand the core values underlying the various mass communication professions.
- You've become competent in specific skills vital to success in today's media industries.

This means that each of your MC courses should help you learn *some combination* of these core values and skills.

## I. CORE VALUES

In keeping with its emphasis on media and politics, the school is dedicated to promoting democratic discourse. Here are four elements integral to that thrust.

- **FREE SPEECH** Understand the principles of free speech and press – including the right to criticize power.
- **HISTORY** Understand the role of people and institutions in shaping the media landscape over time.
- **ETHICS** Understand the principles underlying the various media professions - and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity.
- **DIVERSITY** Understand how the mass media act as vehicles of culture, and the implications this has on diverse groups of people across the globe.

## II. COMMUNICATION SKILLS

The primary goal of a communication professional is to acquire knowledge and convey it to others effectively. The better you can do these two activities, the more successful you'll be.

With that in mind, your Manship courses will give you the opportunity to learn the skills that are crucial to both of these goals:

com · mu · ni · cate \ke-'myü-nə-kāt\ verb  
From Latin: communicatus, past participle of communicare-to impart, participate  
1. to convey knowledge of or information about  
2. to transmit information, thought, or feeling so that it is satisfactorily received or understood  
*Source: Merriam-Webster*

### ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE

- **UNDERSTAND CONCEPTS AND THEORIES** Learn about and understand concepts and theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- **THINK CRITICALLY** Think critically, creatively and independently. Hone your problem-solving abilities.
- **USE (AND DO!) RESEARCH** Learn how to do research and – perhaps more importantly – be able to evaluate the validity of research that's presented to you.
- **APPLY NUMBERS & STATS** Learn how to understand and apply basic statistical concepts.
- **USE MEDIA TOOLS & TECHNOLOGY** Gain proficiency in using the informational resources and software applications used in the media industries.

### CONVEY IT TO OTHERS EFFECTIVELY

- **WRITE CLEARLY** Become “fluent” in the written word – writing clearly, without mechanical errors, in the style appropriate for media professions and audiences.
- **EDIT & EVALUATE WRITING** Learn to critically assess your written work and the work of others for accuracy, fairness, clarity, grammar, and style.

## III. MASTER'S PROGRAM

- **BUILD KNOWLEDGE** Contribute to knowledge appropriate to the communication professions.

**Manship School of Mass Communication**  
**WRITING ESSENTIALS**

Writing skills are essential for all of our students, and writing is a skill to be developed in all courses offered in the Manship School of Mass Communication. Manship faculty will evaluate student writing with consideration for these fundamental writing concepts.

<p><b>WORD CHOICE</b></p>	<p>The following words are often confused or misused in writing. Make sure you understand the difference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accept, except</li> <li>• a lot</li> <li>• all right</li> <li>• affect, effect</li> <li>• among, between</li> <li>• anxious, eager</li> <li>• because, since</li> <li>• due to, because of</li> <li>• farther, further</li> <li>• fewer, less</li> <li>• its, it's</li> <li>• media (plural), medium (singular)</li> <li>• principal, principle</li> <li>• stationary, stationery</li> </ul>	
<p><b>ACTIVE/PASSIVE VOICE</b></p>	<p>English sentences have three basic elements: a subject, a verb, and an object. In active voice sentences, the verb is the action element of the sentence, the subject is the "doer" of the action, and the object is the recipient of the action. In passive voice sentences, the subject is not "doer" of the action; the object becomes the "doer" of the action. These sentences flip-flop the subject and the object. In general, active voice sentences are preferred because they focus the reader's attention on the "doer of the action." Active voice is also more concise because it usually involves fewer words. Although there are situations where passive voice is proper, reliance on passive voice produces a cumbersome text.</p>	<p><b>Active:</b> The executive committee <u>approved</u> the new policy.</p> <p><b>Passive:</b> The new policy <u>was approved</u> by the executive committee.</p>
<p><b>ANTECEDENT/PRONOUN AGREEMENT</b></p>	<p>A pronoun usually refers to something earlier in the text (its <u>antecedent</u>) and must agree in number — singular/plural — with that to which it refers. A pronoun's antecedent may be either a noun or another pronoun, but it <i>must</i> be clear what the antecedent is in either case.</p> <p>A pronoun should have only one possible antecedent. If there is more than one possible antecedent for a personal pronoun in a sentence, make sure that the pronoun refers only to one of them:</p> <p>Also, please note that countries and organizations are NOT people. In a sentence in which a country or organization is the subject, the second reference is to "it" (singular) and "its" (singular possessive).</p>	<p><b>Incorrect:</b> If a student loses their books, they should go to lost and found.</p> <p><b>Correct:</b> If students lose their books, they should go to lost and found.</p> <p><b>Incorrect:</b> Jerry called Steve 12 times while he was in Reno.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The pronoun "he" could refer either to "Jerry" or to "Steve."</p> <p><b>Incorrect:</b> McDonald's</p>

		<p>cancelled all of their advertising, and they later regretted doing so.</p> <p><b>Correct:</b> McDonald's cancelled all of its advertising, and it later regretted doing so.</p>
<b>PARALLEL CONSTRUCTION</b>	<p>An article or a preposition applying to all the members of a series must be used either before the first term or be repeated before each term.</p> <p>Correlative expressions (both, and; not, but; not only, but also; either, or; first, second, third; and the like) should be followed by the same grammatical construction.</p> <p>When making comparisons, the things you compare should be couched in parallel structures whenever that is possible and appropriate.</p>	<p><b>Incorrect:</b> The French, the Italians, Spanish and Portuguese</p> <p><b>Correct:</b> The French, the Italians, the Spanish and the Portuguese</p> <p><b>Incorrect:</b> It was both a long ceremony and very tedious.</p> <p><b>Correct:</b> The ceremony was both long and tedious.</p> <p><b>Incorrect:</b> My income is smaller than my wife.</p> <p><b>Correct:</b> My income is smaller than my wife's.</p>
<b>ATTRIBUTION/ CITING</b>	<p>Presenting ideas and phrases from another writer as your own is plagiarism and is unacceptable.</p> <p>In journalistic writing, attribution is indicating your source for a piece of information. You must attribute any judgment or opinion statements. You should not attribute known facts.</p>	
<b>PUNCTUATION OF QUOTES</b>	<p>Commas and periods always go inside quotation marks. Semi-colons and colons do not go inside quotation marks. If a statement ends in a quoted <u>question</u>, allow the question mark within the quotation marks to end the sentence. On the other hand, if a question ends with a quoted statement that is <u>not</u> a question, the question mark will go outside the closing quotation mark.</p>	<p>"I like to go swimming," she said, "but I am afraid of getting sunburned."</p> <p>May asked her daughter, "Who are you going out with tonight?"</p> <p>Who said, "Fame means when your computer modem is broken, the repair guy comes out to your house a little faster"?</p>

<b>SUBJECT/VERB AGREEMENT</b>	Singular subjects need singular verbs; plural subjects need plural verbs. Collective nouns (herd, team, board, faculty, etc.) take singular verbs.	My brother <u>is</u> a nutritionist. My sisters <u>are</u> mathematicians.
<b>PREPOSITIONS</b>	A preposition describes a relationship between other words in a sentence. Examples are: after, at, beside, between, during, into, on, with, etc. In everyday speech we often use prepositions where they are not necessary. Eliminate unnecessary prepositions, particularly those at the end of sentences.	The book fell off <del>of</del> the desk. Where did they go <del>to</del> ? Where is your college <del>at</del> ?

**For more help with writing style, the following Web sites and books are recommended:**

The Guide to Grammar and Writing - <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/>

The Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue University - <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

*Latest edition of* Strunk, W., White, E. & Angell, R. *The Elements of Style*, Longman.

*Latest edition of* The Associated Press *Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law*

Lawrence  
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### Guidelines for Writing a Strong Paper

Most papers you write for upper division social science courses are “argumentative” essays.

Argumentative essays are NOT:

- “Reports” or purely descriptive papers. They do not simply regurgitate class lectures and readings. Instead, they utilize those materials to fashion a plausible analytical argument.
- “Feeling” papers or “opinion” papers. In high school (and in some branches of the university) students are asked to express how they “feel” about an issue, but are not required to back up those feelings with evidence, examples, or analysis. Argumentative essays, in contrast, require you to present evidence and analysis. In fact, it is the quality of this evidence and analysis on which your grade largely depends.

#### Crucial elements of argumentative essays:

1. A precise thesis statement. The thesis statement functions like a blueprint for the rest of your paper. It lays out exactly what you will argue in the paper, in one or two concise sentences. A thesis statement is an *assertion*. Think of it as your response to a pointed question.

Not a thesis statement:

*"In this paper I will analyze the legal and economic structure of the mass media."*

This statement does not present an argument.

Minimally acceptable thesis statement:

*"The legal and economic structure of the mass media in America do not allow for truly free expression."*

This statement is an assertion. However, it is a bit vague. There are many ways in which this thesis statement could be supported in the paper, and so the blueprint is fairly fuzzy.

Precise thesis statement:

*"The first amendment protections granted to the mass media in the United States do help to protect and promote freedom of expression, but they are undermined by the profit motive that drives most news organizations."*

This statement is an assertion, and a very clear and specific one. The reader knows exactly what to expect from the paper. And the writer knows exactly what s/he must argue.

2. Good use of evidence and analysis. The content of the paper should support the thesis statement, showing the reader that the argument is plausible and should be taken seriously.

Evidence can include:

- Facts and arguments taken from course readings and lectures
- Examples from real-world events
- Logical deduction ("If X is true, then Y must also be true")

Analysis shows that you have thought critically about your argument. To analyze is to work with concepts; to break down readings, arguments, and real-world events into their component conceptual parts; to apply course concepts to new situations; and even to critique the assumptions underlying key concepts.

3. Well-focused paragraphs (paragraph focus), each contributing an important piece to the argument (paragraph function), all arranged in a logical order (paragraph order).

Paragraph focus: Each paragraph should be constructed to make one point and one point only. You should be able to summarize the point of every paragraph in a single sentence. If you can't summarize a paragraph in your paper with a single sentence, that paragraph suffers probably from a lack of focus.

Paragraph function: Each paragraph should have a specific *purpose* in making your argument. You should be able to identify why each paragraph is necessary to the argument (i.e. because it defines a key concept, because it provides an example, because it concedes a point to critics, etc.) If you can't identify a single clear purpose for each paragraph, you need to think more carefully about what your argument is and how to support it.

Paragraph order: Finally, each paragraph should be arranged in relation to the others so that there is a logical “flow” to your argument. Each paragraph should, as much as possible, build on the one before.

4. A clear sense of the “audience” for whom you are writing.

How much do you have to explain about basic concepts? Do you need to write the paper in such a way that any of your friends could understand it because you have explained every key term and concept that might not be familiar to someone outside the class? It is always a good idea to check with your instructor to see who your assumed audience should be. You should also keep in mind that papers are like tests—they test your knowledge of readings, lectures, and concepts. Always be sure to show in your writing that you know what key concepts really mean.

In my classes, you should write as though other classmates in this class were going to read your paper—you can assume that they will be familiar with basic terms (e.g. “opinion surveys,” “representative democracy”), but you should explain enough to make your argument persuasive to your classmates and to show me that you really understand key concepts.

Writing Tips:

From my years of teaching student writing and grading student papers, I strongly recommend you do the following:

1) Assume that when you first sit down to write a paper, you don't know exactly what you think. Writing is a learning process. From the process of constructing a clear, plausible argument, we learn more about the material we're working with and about what we really think. Treat writing as a learning process, and don't assume that a clear argument is just waiting to flow from your brain to your fingers. Writing well is hard work. Respect the learning process. Expect to struggle.

2) Allow yourself to make a nuanced argument. Few questions in the social sciences have simple black-or-white answers. And most of us find ourselves “in the middle” on big social and political questions, agreeing with some elements of each side of a debate. That's okay. In fact, that can make for more nuanced arguments that are ultimately more persuasive. For example, the example of a “precise” thesis statement above acknowledges the importance of First Amendment protections for freedom of the press, but also says that the benefits of these freedoms are threatened by the profit motive. This author agrees both with defenders and with critics of the contemporary media, but offers more than a “wishy-washy” argument.

3) Plan to write at least one rough draft before turning in your paper. Despite myths to the contrary, most people cannot write a strong paper from scratch the night before it is due. Good writers generally write well because they allow themselves time to write well. And papers ALWAYS get better with re-writing. So, write a rough draft a few days before your paper is due. Then put it away. Allow your mind to mull it over, and come back to it fresh. Read it critically as if it were someone else's paper. Check for paragraph focus, function, and order. *Whatever you do, don't write it from scratch and turn it in.*

4) Look for your thesis in your concluding paragraph. Quite often by the time we complete our first draft, we've worked out more clearly what we are trying to say than when we started. Therefore, get in the habit of comparing your concluding paragraph with your thesis statement. Are you saying the same thing in both places, or has your thesis actually changed by the end of the paper? If it's changed, is the thesis at the end of the paper a better fit with the body of the paper? If so, move that thesis to the beginning, or re-think your argument.