



蘇州大學
Soochow University

COM 441 Media, Representation, and Cultural Diversity

Winter 2024

Course Credits: 4

Contact Hours: 56 hours

Instructor: TBA

Email: TBA

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course explores complex relationship between media, culture, and social dynamics, focusing on how media both shapes and is shaped by various forms of social difference, such as social class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender. We explore the concept of representation as a cultural system that constructs and organizes cultural identities, feelings of belonging, and social positions based on these differences. Through the examination of historical and contemporary case studies, we will analyze cultural struggles involving domination, marginalization, and inequalities within the realm of media and representation.

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of how media influences and is influenced by social class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender.
2. Evaluate the concept of representation as a cultural system for constructing and organizing cultural identities.
3. Apply advanced critical thinking skills to assess the impact of media on cultural identities and social structures.
4. Demonstrate the ability to analyze media texts and content from diverse perspectives, considering the intersections of social differences.
5. Develop the skills to engage in informed, critical, and constructive discussions and debates about media's role in shaping society and culture.



PREREQUISITES

N/A

GRADING

Grades will be determined by accumulating points, with 100 points being the maximum, as follows:

ITEM	POINTS
Essay 1	15 Points
Essay 2	15 Points
Essay 3	15 Points
Group Project/ Presentation	25 Points
Final Paper	30 Points
Total	100 Points

Late submissions will be graded at the end of the course. Grades will be assigned according to the following rule:

$A \geq 90 > B \geq 80 > C \geq 70 > D \geq 60 > F$.

We reserve the right to make adjustments to the overall grading policy.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Texts:

There is no required textbook for this course.

Recommended (Optional) Texts or Other Materials:

Assigned readings will be provided in accordance with class activities.

COURSE TOPICS

MODULE	TASKS
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Module 1	<p>Topics: Topic 1: Introduction: Media, Culture, and Social Dynamics Topic 2: Culture, Industry, Genre Topic 3: Cultural Economics and Politics Topic 4: Identity and Difference Case Studies and Discussions#1 Assessments: Essay#1</p>
Module 2	<p>Topics: Topic 5: Representation as a Cultural System Topic 6: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices Topic 7: Media and Identity Politics Topic 8: New Ethnicities, New Identities Case Studies and Discussions#2 Assessments: Essay#2</p>
Module 3	<p>Topics: Topic 9: Intersectionality Topic 10: Media and Social Movements Topic 11: Globalization and Media Topic 12: Diversity, Difference, and Multiculturalism Case Studies and Discussions#3 Assessments: Essay#3 Group Project</p>
Module 4	<p>Topics: Topic 13: Media Literacy and Critical Analysis Topic 14: Sexuality and Gender in Media Topic 15: Critical Whiteness Studies Topic 16: Cultural Struggles in Media Representation Assessments: Group Project Presentation</p>
Module 5	<p>Topics: Topic 17: Digital Media and Algorithmic Bias Topic 18: Post-truth and Fake News Topic 19: Media Literacy and Activism Topic 20: Media, Censorship, and Freedom of Expression Assessments: Final Paper</p>



ATTENDANCE

1) Class attendance is required. Missing classes without permission will lead to decrease in overall grade.

Missing less than two classes: no penalty.

Missing more than two classes: 7% will be taken off from the overall grade.

If the instructor reports a student's frequent missing of class to the Soochow University Academic Administration Office, the student might get a written warning and might be prohibited from attending final exam.

2) Participants in this course are expected to arrive in class promptly and adequately prepared. The primary objective of this course is to critically engage with the readings and the subject matter. Therefore, course participants are expected to have completed the reading prior to class and prepare thoughtful reflections/commentaries to share with fellow colleagues.

LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Late assignments are not acceptable and are subjected to grade deductions.
- 2) Assignments submitted in the wrong format will be counted as not submitted.
- 3) Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.
- 4) Make-up for midterm and final exams only with valid excuses, as defined by the University.
- 5) In order to earn a Certificate of Completion, participants must thoughtfully complete all assignments by stated deadlines and earn an average quiz score of 50% or greater.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

The use of electronic devices in class is distracting, both for the user and for the rest of the class. Only non-programmable calculators can be used in the tests and exam. Any attempts to use cell phones and other electronic communication devices will be seemed as cheating. Laptops are discouraged, unless you use them for activities DIRECTLY related to the course (e.g., note taking, reading course documents).



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ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Soochow University highly values the academic integrity and aims to promote the academic fairness, honesty and responsibility. Any academic dishonesty behaviors and any attempts to cheats and plagiarism will be reported to the university administration office. A written warning and the relevant penalties will be imposed. The record might be shown on the official university transcript.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

Soochow University is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that students with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at Soochow University. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access to and/or participation in this course are welcome.

Note:

Please contact the University Administrative Office immediately if you have a learning disability, a medical issue, or any other type of problem that prevents professors from seeing you have learned the course material.