

Do not copy without the instructors express written consent.

Racism in Communication

A Global Learning Foundations Course



COM 3423, 3 Credits

Fall 2021

Time: Every other Wednesday (Hybrid Course) at 12:30 p

Dr. Rokeshia Renné Ashley, PhD

Public Relations, Advertising & Applied Communications

rashley@fiu.edu and Canvas Messaging

305-919-4164

Office/Zoom Hour & By Appointment: Wednesdays from 11 a -12 p
(the best way to reach me is through Canvas Messaging)

Course Description

This is a Discipline-specific Global Learning course that counts towards your FIU Global Learning graduation requirement. Race is a social construct that supersede geographical boundaries. Although race may be conceptualized differently in different time periods, spaces, and by different people, it is a global concept that is crucial in many Westernized or colonized spaces. In this course we will collaboratively assess race, gender, and class and how such concepts manifest in various sectors of communication, their interconnectedness to global ideas and misrepresentation, and how to rectify issues of race, gender, and class in communication. This course will take you through a process of understanding the differences and "otherness" of non-dominant groups, and how to critically think about and problem solve issues of race, gender, and class in communication on a local, regional, national, hemispheric, and global scale. Thus, this course's primary assumptions are grounded in the following thoughts:

- Race, gender, and class are boundless constructs that govern global access to information and impact the production of information. As time progresses, remnants of the construction of such concepts are reviled and reified as there is ongoing tension on how to dismiss historical notions concerning the concepts while others practice such functions of racism, genderism, and classism.
- Individuals personal identifications of themselves are completely reasonable to assign ones gender, race, and class. It is more reasonable to distinguish that the fluidity of such classifications are not monolithic and are manifested differently for every person and group. It is also necessary to respect the classifications of others although it may conflict with your own notions of how they may identify based on societal norms.

This course is completely bound to the concepts of race, gender, and class but will use concrete examples of their interplay among a variety of communication productions that draw from global cultures and globalized interpretations of the concepts. As we explore such cultural misrepresentations of the concepts we will critique and provide structural solutions for communication.

Note: I am committed to maintaining an environment in which all students can express their views and perspectives without discrimination. I believe in and stand by Academic Freedom and the First Amendment. We can disagree without being disagreeable. We can dislike the message without attacking the messenger. Sometimes we may vehemently disagree with another person's perspective that is part of the academic enterprise. I expect that we will challenge, push and push back on positions and perspectives that may be new to us or provide a perspective with which we are unfamiliar. In the learning environment in which we aspire to create, we must feel free to express our views, hear perspectives of others, disagree and critique. As such, in this course we will use words and concepts with which you may be unfamiliar. If unfamiliarity with information makes you uncomfortable, please contact me separately so that we can discuss your concerns and find a resolution.

Objectives & Student Learning Outcomes

This course introduces race, gender, and class through communication and theoretical explanations using contextual examples that extend through various cultures. Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

Course Learning Outcomes

- Define and explain the concepts of race, gender, and class through the lens of communication.
- Critically analyze and apply theoretical and conceptual propositions about race, gender, and class to everyday communication.
- Identify and deconstruct issues that stem from race, gender, and class that hinder the transaction of

Do not copy without the instructors express written consent.
information.

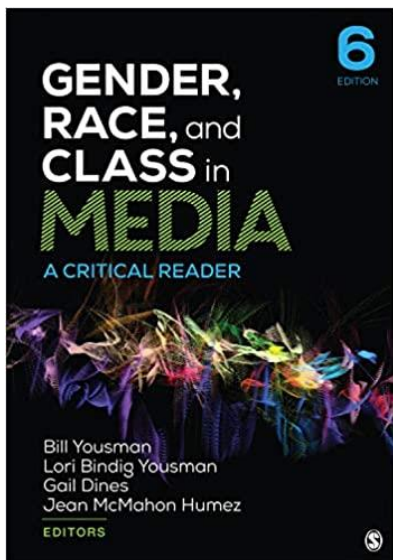
- Understand how to transform communication through a critical examination of race, gender, and class.

Core Curriculum

- Describe how concepts of race, gender, and class are displayed in communication and are central to how societal values and cultures are informed.
- Explain how concepts of race, gender, and class are malleable in time, space, and cultural development.

Global Learning Course Outcomes

- Identify the interrelated nuances of global and international cultural significations and exploitations of racial, gendered, and classist difference. (Global Awareness)
- Interact and interchange examinations beyond their own understandings and experiences of race, gender, and class to develop multi-perspective understandings. (Global Perspective)
- Apply critical analyses to global communication and show a willingness to engage in rectifying messages that misrepresent or recontextualize facts related to race, gender, and class. (Global Engagement)



Course Text

Gender, Race, and Class in Media: A Critical Reader (6th Edition)
by Bill Yousman, Lori Bindig Yousman, Gail Dines, Jean McMahon Humez
ISBN-13: 978-1544393421
ISBN-10: 1544393423

Class Participation & Late Policy

Active participation is integral to any course. You are expected to complete **EVERY** assignment by the respective deadline. **If there are University-approved reasons (i.e., students' athletic trip, and observance of a major religious holy day), students may petition Dr. Ashley for early submission of an assignment or late submission (within one week of original deadline). For medical or personal emergencies when prior notification is impossible, documentation of the reason must be provided within three days for Dr. Ashley to consider modifying the submission deadline or grade penalty.** Students are responsible for all information on the Canvas site including any special announcements or syllabus revisions. **This class will call for your informed participation on a regular basis.** Therefore, students are expected to have completed the assigned readings and are capable of applying them in assignments.

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place via **Canvas**. If you have questions that would be useful for all students, you can also post them on the **general discussion board** so that everyone can benefit from the responses. Everyone can read the discussion postings; therefore, *do not post private information*. Please note that I'm always happy to communicate with students about any issue or topic. If you have ANY questions that are not answered with the syllabus or course content (readings, lectures, or supplementary material) email me. If you do not hear back from me within 48 hours, please Canvas message me again to make sure I saw your original message. **If you can not make it to Zoom Office Hours, feel free to schedule an individual appointment with me via Zoom or phone (305-919-4164). Schedule your appointment by emailing me through Canvas.**

Course Assignments

Do not copy without the instructors express written consent.
All assignments are due the week indicated on the schedule **by Sunday midnight E.T.** (i.e. posted at 11:59PM), unless indicated otherwise. Assignments should be submitted via the appropriate link on Canvas and should **NOT** be sent to the instructor as email attachments. Below are brief instructions for assignments. More information is provided in the description on Canvas.

Participation & Attendance (10 points)

The course is designed for active participation. Each student is expected to participate in meaningful discussions throughout the semester that indicate knowledge of the course material. Your participation grade (Z) is calculated by your attendance (X) and active participation (Y) in class. There are XX scheduled classes, thus, corresponding to the following formula:

$$X+Y=Z$$

?? points attendance (how many times I attend class/number of classes)??= X*
?? points in class participation (how many in class participation points I earn/number of classes)??= Y*

Initial & Final Essential Questions Assessments (5 points each; 10 total points)

This assignment responds to the Global Perspective Awareness: Identify the interrelated influences of global and international cultural significations and exploitations of racial, gendered, and classed difference.

The first assessment will give you the opportunity to examine your ideas about race, gender, and class and its connections to communication. These questions align with the course learning outcomes. At the end of the course you will assess your growth by comparing and contrasting the answers to the initial assessment. The assessments will be completed during class and posted to Canvas discussion board. Following your post, we will have a class discussion.

1. What is critical global race theory?
2. How is race, gender, and class defined?
3. How are theoretical/ conceptual propositions about race, gender, and class connected with our everyday communication?
4. What are the issues that evolve from race, gender, and class that impede the successful transaction of information?
5. How do we reconstruct race, gender, and class to develop visibility for the plurality of voices?
6. What are the possibilities for transformation in communication through the examination of race, gender, and class?

6 major quizzes (5 points each; 30 total points)

You will have 6 major quizzes, 1 quiz per module. Each quiz will be 5 questions each. You will have ONE attempt on each quiz for 30 minutes. *Please check your internet connection prior to completion. Please do not take the quiz 30 minutes before it's due because the assignment may shut you out.*

6 Autoethnographic Diary Entries (5 points each; 30 total points)

This assignment responds to the Global Perspective Objective: Interact and interchange examinations beyond their own understandings and experiences of race, gender, and class to develop multi-perspective understandings.

You will have 6 autoethnographic diary entries. This course offers an autoethnographic approach to understand the course outcomes and to engage with critical analyses of communication products. As a communicator, it will be necessary and beneficial for you to continuously assess your personal development, confront your weaknesses, and acknowledge your strengths. The purpose of this assignment is to grant each of you the opportunity to personally, politically, and intellectually reflect on the content of this course and your experiences (or lack of experiences) as a racialized, gendered, or classed being. As scheduled, you are expected to maintain a continuous narrative reflecting upon your personal journey through our course. In your entries, I expect that you will utilize course readings, discussions, presentations, etc...to reflect. Within your reflections, please consider addressing areas of personal resistance, new knowledge/perspectives, change, and/or insights. To inspire your thoughts, please consider questions such as:

1. How have my communication experiences been racialized, gendered, or classed?
2. How have my life experiences contributed to my understanding of myself and others as racialized, gendered, or classed beings?
3. What significant life experiences have I had that have contributed to my perceptions of racial, gender, sexual orientation, class, etc. identities in communication?

While it is required for you to explore your race, gender and class identity given the nature of our course, please incorporate additional aspects of your identity as well. Keep in mind that your discussion forum postings will likely be seen by other members of the course. Care should be taken when determining what to post. Use at least three references from the chapter readings in your post and at least two different references from the chapter readings when you respond to a peer (use in-text citations and reference list, both in APA style). **Write a minimum of 300 words for your post and respond to at least one of your peers thoroughly (minimum of 200 words).** I expect you to engage with another peer by asking more questions or providing a response that will continue conversation beyond agreement or repeating what they originally stated. Both your response to the prompt and response to a peer are due at the same time. **Try to submit your original post early so that**

Do not copy without the instructors express written consent.
your peers (and you) will have time to respond to each other. You will not be able to see any of your peers' posts until you've posted to the discussion board.

Op-Ed (20 points)

This assignment responds to the Global Engagement Objective: Apply critical analyses to global communication and show a willingness to engage in messages that misrepresent or recontextualize facts related to race, gender, and class.

For your final assignment you will write an opinion editorial (op-ed) to be submitted to an outlet. Personal or explanatory essays, commentary on news events, reflections on cultural trends and more are all welcome. It should be well-written with a fact-based viewpoint we believe readers will find worthwhile that is timely and relevant. Your Op-Ed piece should address: Why does your topic matter? Why does your topic matter today? Why should the reader care what you, of all people, have to say about it? Write broadly without jargon. Provide your opinion with a clear thesis, supported by evidence that is persuasive. Do not write in passive voice, be clear and confident in your writing. Offer opposing arguments that can contradict yours and refute them. Be sure to defend every single word. Ensure that everything is factual and accurate. Short sentences, don't use cliches and write 1,200 words. Your initial submission will be returned to you with suggestions for you to improve your piece to submit to the news organization. Your original grade will remain.

Grading

Grading Policy: Each assignment has guidelines. The guidelines tell you what is expected of each assignment. In order to get full points you can do more than what is required but never less. You will not be permitted to submit any late assignments.

Course Requirements	Percentage of course grade
Participation & Attendance	10%
Initial & Final Essential Questions Assessments	10%
6 Major Quizzes	30%
6 Autoethnographic Diary Entries	30%
Op-Ed	20%
Total	100%

Course Grade Percentage Range

Letter	Range (%)
A	93 - 100
A-	90 - 92.99
B+	87 - 89.99
B	83 - 86.99
B-	80 - 82.99
C+	77 - 79.99
C	70 - 76.99
D	60 - 69.99
F	59.99 or less

Course Schedule

Make sure you review this syllabus at the beginning of EVERY WEEK to stay updated with the material and deadlines. The instructor reserves the right to revise it at any time.

Module 1 What is critical global race theory?

Week 1

Read:

Do not copy without the instructors express written consent.

- Class syllabus

Assignments due:

- Complete initial essential questions assessment

Week 2

Read & Watch:

- Weiner, M. F. (2012). Towards a Critical Global Race Theory. *Sociology Compass*, 6(4), 332.
- Stuart Hall's lecture "Race: The floating signifier" 7 part series on YouTube
- Crenshaw, K. (2011). Twenty years of critical race theory: looking back to move forward. *Connecticut Law Review*, 43(5), 1253-1352.
- Bell, D.A. (1992). Racial realism. *Connecticut Law Review*, 24(2), 363-380.
- Class syllabus

Assignments due:

- Complete major quiz & diary entry

Module 2 How is race, gender, and class defined?

Week 3

Read:

- Smedley, A. & Smedley, B.D. (2005). Race as biology is fiction, racism as a social problem is real: Anthropological and historical perspectives on the social construction of race. *American Psychologist*, 60(1), 16-26.
- Chapter 11 Media, Gender, and Feminism
- Chapter 34 Class Shaming In Post Recession U.S. Advertising

Week 4

Read & Watch:

- Crenshaw, K. (1990). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43, 1241.
- TEDTalks: Kimberlé Crenshaw: The Currency of Intersectionality
- Chapter 18 The "Rich Bitch": Class and Gender on the *Real Housewives of New York City*
- Chapter 50 Why Television Sitcoms kept Re-creating Male Working-Class Buffoons For Decades

Assignments due:

- Complete major quiz & diary entry

Module 3 How are theoretical/ conceptual propositions about race, gender, and class connected with our everyday communication?

Week 5

Read

- Chapter 4 Hegemony
- Chapter 12 The Whites of Their Eyes: Racist Ideologies and the Media
- Chapter 59 The Political Economy of Facebook

Week 6

Read

- Chapter 66 #Ferguson: Digital Protest, Hashtag Ethnography and the Racial Politics of Social Media in the United States
- Chapter 3 The Economic of the Media Industry

Week 7

Read

- Chapter 5 The Internet's Unholy Marriage to Capitalism
- Chapter 44 Disney: 21st Century Leader In Animating Global Inequality
- Chapter 35 Pornographic Values: Hierarchy and Hubris

Assignments due:

- Complete major quiz & diary entry

Module 4 What are the issues that evolve from race, gender, and class that impede the successful transaction of information?

Do not copy without the instructors express written consent.

Week 8

Read:

- Chapter 15 Dissolving the Other: Orientalism, Consumption, and Katy Perry's Insatiable *Dark Horse*
- Chapter 25 Black Women and Black Men In Hip Hope Music: Misogyny, Violence, and the Negotiation of (White-Owned) Space

Week 9

Read:

- Chapter 26 "[In]Justice Rolls Down Like Water...": Challenging White Supremacy in Media Constructions of Crime and Punishment
- Chapter 21 Resisting, Reiterating, and Dancing Through The Swinging Closet Doors of Ellen DeGeneres's Televised Personalities

Assignments due:

- Complete major quiz & diary entry
- Assign op-ed

Module 5 How do we reconstruct race, gender, and class to develop visibility for the plurality of voices?

Week 10

Read

- Chapter 17 Transgender Transitions: Sex/Gender Binaries in the Digital Age
- Chapter 14 "From Fizzle to Sizzle!": Televised Sports News and the Production of Gender-Bland Sexism

Week 11

Read

- Chapter 16 "She Invited Other People to That Show": Audience Habitus, Place, and Social Justice In Beyonce's *Lemonade*
- Chapter 64 The Reverberations of #Metoo on Pop Culture And Politics: How the Movement Is Shaking Patriarchal Power Structures

Week 12

Read

- Chapter 63 #GirlsLikeUs: Trans Advocacy and Community Building Online
- Chapter 62 Making Space in Social Media: #MuslimWomensDay in Twitter
- Chapter 60 Todo Mejora en el Ambiente: An Analysis of Digital LGBT Activism in Mexico

Assignments due:

- Complete major quiz & diary entry
- Work on op-ed

Module 6 What are the possibilities for transformation in communication through the examination of race, gender, and class?

Week 13

Read:

- Chapter 33 Un/Celebrity "It" Girls As Public Relations-Ised Humanitarianism
- Chapter 51 "Kaitlyn Jenner 'Likes' Ted Cruz But The Feelings May Not Be Mutual": Trans Pedagogy and *I Am Cait*
- Chapter 39 Resistant Masculinities In Alternative R&B?: Understanding Frank Ocean and the Weekend's Representations of Gender

Week 14

Read

- Review previous reading

Assignments due:

- Complete major quiz & diary entry
- Submit op-ed

Week 15

Read:

- Review previous reading

Assignments due:

- Submit op-ed to news organization

Do not copy without the instructors express written consent.

In collaboration with the Health, Safety, and Welfare Committee of the FIU Faculty Senate and the Healthy Panthers Council, the Provost encourages each faculty and student to take a proactive role in their safety, personal health, and well-being.

Through viewing the "Staying Safe and Healthy" video series, you will learn:

- How to respond to an active shooter situation
- Care of an unconscious person
- Care of the bleeding person
- Panther's Care Initiative
- How to enhance your personal health and well being

These 3-5 minute videos and related resources can be found for:

- On Campus Students in the Student Starter Kit in Canvas
- 2.0 Fully Online Students in Panther Den in Canvas
- Faculty in the Faculty Starter Kit in Canvas

This video series and related resources can make a difference in promoting the safety and protecting the health of all members of the FIU community. These resources are available any time you have a few minutes to watch them and you can refresh your memory about their content at any point in time. STAYING SAFE AND HEALTHY requires the commitment of each of us as Panthers.

Policies

Please review the [FIU's Policies](#) webpage. The policies webpage contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU, as well as additional information about acceptable etiquette for online courses. As a member of the FIU community you are expected to be knowledgeable about the behavioral expectations set forth in the [FIU Student Code of Conduct](#).

Technical Requirements & Skills

One of the greatest barriers to taking an online course is a lack of basic computer literacy. By computer literacy we mean being able to manage and organize computer files efficiently, and learning to use your computer's operating system and software quickly and easily. Keep in mind that this is not a computer literacy course; but students enrolled in this course are expected to have moderate proficiency using a computer. Please go to the ["What's Required"](#) webpage to find out more information on this subject. Please visit our [Technical Requirements](#) webpage for additional information.

Accessibility and Accommodation

The Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and sustainable. The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities the necessary support to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students. If you have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize academic accommodations, please contact the Center at 305-348-3532 or visit them at the Graham Center GC 190.

Please visit our [ADA Compliance](#) webpage for information about accessibility involving the tools used in this course. For additional assistance please contact FIU's [Disability Resource Center](#).

Academic Misconduct Statement

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Academic Misconduct includes: **Cheating** – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. **Plagiarism** – The use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is responsible for plagiarism. Learn more about the [academic integrity policies and procedures](#) as well as [student resources](#) that can help you prepare for a successful semester.