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Diversity and the Media

Fall 2017

Tuesdays & Thursdays,

2:30 – 3:45 p.m.

202 Stauffer-Flint

Blackboard site: <http://courseware.ku.edu>

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Office Hours:

Tuesdays & Thursdays –

1 – 2 p.m.

Wednesdays,

1 – 2 p.m.

By appointment

What is diversity?

Welcome to J534, a course on diversity in the media. In this course we're going to take a look at how the mass media affect us—our points of view, our actions—and we'll consider the roles the media play in challenging or reinforcing the stereotypes we have about ourselves and the people with whom we live and work.

Webster's dictionary defines diversity as a "state of difference."

In this class we'll define diversity as difference, too—differences in perspectives and experiences. Our views of the world—and the world's view of us—may be affected by our race, sex, religion, sexual identity, socioeconomic status, geography, ethnicity, age, or physical abilities. We'll look at the roles mass media play in shaping our views of ourselves, as well as our views of others whose experiences and perspectives are different from our own.

In this class, we'll start to think carefully about the media images we see and hear. And we'll consider if or how those images are realistic and representative of the world in which we live. In this class, we'll study images and portrayals of African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, whites, women, men, gays and lesbians, the elderly, and the disabled. We'll consider how wealth and social status—or lack of it—affect our access to information.

Our primary focus will be journalism and strategic communications, which includes news, public relations, and advertising, but we'll take a look at entertainment media as well, including film, music, and television. We'll study historic and contemporary examples of media portrayals of diverse groups, and we'll discuss how those portrayals have changed and continue to change.

What will we learn?

Our goals in this class are to:

- Increase our understanding and awareness of how the mass media portray diverse populations.
- Think critically and carefully about the media's portrayals of diverse groups.
- Consider how media portrayals affect our personal views and professional practices.
- Examine diverse populations' use of mass media to disseminate information, provide entertainment, and practice "resistance" to mainstream ideas.
- Become skilled, thoughtful communication professionals by becoming more aware of diversity in news, entertainment, advertising, public relations, marketing, and digital media.
- Improve research, writing, and media presentation skills as we learn how to portray more accurately and fairly individuals and groups outside society's mainstream.
- Think about the relationship between diversity and ethics.
- Consider the needs of diverse audience, publics, and markets and think about how an understanding of diversity can help us best meet those needs.

How will we learn?

One way we'll learn is by reading what communication professionals and media scholars have written about diversity. There is one required textbook for this course. It is:

Lind, R. A. (Ed.) (2013). *Race/gender/media 3.0: Considering diversity across audiences, content, and producers* (3rd ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.

It is available in the KU student bookstore. There are older editions of this book, but they don't include some of the readings we'll discuss in class. You want the most recent edition.

We will also have readings online, and we'll watch videos. Those materials will be posted on the course Blackboard site.

You'll learn best in this class if you're actively participating, so please come to class prepared to discuss assigned readings and current media issues. Discussion should be the rule in this class, not the exception.

Because this class is about differences in perspectives and experiences, it is **essential** that we all **listen to** and **respect** each other. We will talk about some controversial topics, and we will read articles or see videos that challenge our ideas about how the media work. You don't need to agree with others in the class or to accept what you read as true. However, you do want to keep an open mind.

What will you do in this class?

To determine how well you are learning key concepts from readings and discussions and to determine how skillful you are in applying the concepts you've learned, you'll complete a series of assignments. This class is focused on research and analysis of media, so your assignments will reflect that emphasis. You also will receive a grade for attendance. The assignments are outlined below.

Quizzes.

We'll have three short quizzes on the readings this semester. This will include any videos posted on Blackboard, and they will include any additional readings we have for the class. I will post the quizzes online, and you'll have 24 hours to complete them. Each will be 10-15 multiple-choice questions. You will take the quizzes on Blackboard. They will be open-book. Tentative quiz dates are: **Tuesday, Sept. 19; Thursday, Oct. 26; and Thursday, Nov. 16**. These dates may change, but I'll announce any changes in class and I'll announce them well in advance.

Reflection papers. There are three short papers, in which you write about your reactions to readings or thoughts about diversity in media. The goal of these papers is to help you think about if / how you see diversity in everyday life and if / how you see diversity in the media.

- *Media diary.* For this assignment, you'll keep track of the media you watch or listen to for two weeks, and you'll write your observations about whether you do or don't see examples of diversity. You want at least eight short entries (about one to two paragraphs

each), and your goal is to think about the presence or absence of diversity in the media. This assignment is due at the beginning of class on **Tuesday, Sept. 12.**

- *Difference paper.* Think back to a time when you were in a group and you felt different from the others. Or think about a time when you were part of a group and you noticed someone who felt like an outsider. Write a two-page paper on what you saw and how you felt. This is due at the beginning of class on **Thursday, Sept. 28.**
- *Listening post.* For this assignment, you need to go to a place you don't normally visit. This should be a place where people gather to talk, work, or socialize. You want to observe and talk with people you meet. If you're a journalist, you want to think about a news or feature story you might write. If you're a strat comm person, think about how you might advertise or communicate with the people you saw. This assignment is at the beginning of class on **Thursday, Oct. 12.**

News feature story.

You'll interview someone who is not like you. You'll write a short (3-5 page) story about the person. You don't have to focus on the difference between you and the other person, but you do want to explain how this person fits into the category of "different" from you. After you've interviewed the person, you want to write a short profile story or a story about an important event in this person's life (first day at KU, visit to a new place). Make this work match your interests. If you prefer to shoot video, to think about an ad for a product, or plan a PR message, you can do that. See me to discuss details. This assignment is due at the beginning of class on **Thursday, Nov. 9.**

Final research report.

Media Advocacy Project. Instead of a final exam, you will turn in a report on mass media and diversity. You'll monitor some aspect of the media over a set period of time, then you'll write a report for the person who produces the media, explaining how well the media did or did not incorporate diversity. You'll use information that you learned in class in your report, but this will primarily be your own observations and thoughts, based on careful analysis.

This is an opportunity for you to write about something you're really interested in and to focus on a form of media that appeals to you. Past reports have included analyses of: minority characters in soap operas; images of men in photos in a health magazine published over a three-month period; images of women on the sports pages of three different newspapers; photos of racial minorities in USA Today; and racial diversity among news sources in the Kansan.

Start thinking about this now since you may want to see movies, watch television shows, or read magazines over several months. You need to submit an idea for your final project by 5 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 2. The final project is due by **5 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 12.**

In all of the writing assignments, grammar and spelling count. Please follow Associated Press style guidelines. Your work must be original, accurate, and on time.

Attendance. There are numerous studies that show that students who receive the highest grades in class are also the students who attended class most often. It's a simple concept: If you show up, you'll learn more, and you'll get a higher grade. To encourage you to attend class regularly, I'll take attendance.

I will start taking attendance Sept. 5 to give people time to drop and add the course. Afterward, we will have 25 class sessions, and you will receive four points for each class you attend. Everyone gets one "free" absence, so even if you miss one class, you can still get a 100 on attendance.

I will circulate a sign-up sheet during every class session. Please sign your name. Signing for another person constitutes academic dishonesty, and you will be expelled from the class if you do so.

A few words about your assignments.

- Because deadlines have been announced in advance, **late papers will not be accepted. They. Will. Not. Be. Accepted.** Broken computers, lost jump drives, dysfunctional printers, or an interviewee's failure to call you back are not excuses for missing the deadline. If you anticipate a problem meeting a deadline, let me know ahead of time.
- Please keep electronic and hard copies of all your work. That way if a paper is lost (because of you or me), we can solve the problem quickly. Please keep any copies of graded papers that are returned to you. That way, if there is a discrepancy as grades are posted, we can check and resolve the problem right away.
- If you type your paper on library or lab computers, save your papers to a jump drive. The computers are "cleaned" every night. If you don't save your paper electronically, you'll lose it.

How will your work be evaluated?

Here is how your grades will be calculated:

Attendance – 100 points
 Quiz 1 – 20 points
 Quiz 2 – 20 points
 Quiz 3 – 20 points
 Media diary – 25 points
 Difference paper – 25 points
 Listening post – 50 points
 Interview – 100 points
 Advocacy project – 200 points

You can earn a total of 560 points in this class. To get your final grade, I'll divide the number of points you earned by the total number for the class. For example, if you earned 445 points in the class, your final grade will be 79.4 or C+ ($445 / 560 = 79.4$). If you earned 490 points, your grade will be 87.5 or B ($490 / 560 = 87.5$). If your grade is .5 or above, it will be rounded up to the next number. If it's .4 or lower, it will not be rounded up.

You will receive a numerical grade on each project you complete. Specific instructions and evaluation sheets for each writing assignment are posted on Blackboard. Generally, your research and writing will be evaluated this way:

A (90 to 100) = Excellent. Wow, wow, and wow! You hit it out of the park! The assignment is well-written or well-presented. It's clear, and concise. The student's approach shows originality and creativity. The assignment refers to concepts and ideas discussed in class and in the readings. The assignment demonstrates that the student clearly understands these concepts. The assignment is thorough; there are no unanswered questions. The student has done an excellent job researching, reporting, and presenting. Quotes and information are attributed. Sources are credible and clearly identified. Grammar and spelling are close to perfect. The author follows Associated Press style.

B (80 to 89) = Above average. Really nice job. The student's work shows a high level of originality and independent thought. The student has gone above and beyond what was expected of her / him. The student has presented the material well, but there may be minor unanswered questions or organizational problems. The student has done a good job researching, reporting, and presenting. However, the student may not have identified clearly all sources or may not have used the most credible sources. There may be some minor grammar, spelling, or style mistakes. The student shows a good understanding of the ideas and concepts discussed in class or in the readings, although there may be some minor errors or explanations may not be clear.

C (70 to 79) = Satisfactory. Okay job; you cruised. The student has done the minimal amount of work expected in the assignment. There are significant unanswered questions for the reader / viewer. The article / report is not well-organized. The writing is not clear or succinct. There are technical problems with photos or videos, and they do not work to tell a story. There are numerous grammar, spelling, or style errors. There are numerous cases when information and quotes are not attributed. Many sources are not credible. The student has not demonstrated a clear understanding of ideas or concepts discussed in class.

D (60 to 69) = Unsatisfactory. Are you kidding me? The work is below average. The quality of the writing and research is poor. The student did not use credible sources or did not attribute sources. There is no indication the student put much thought or effort into the work. Grammar and spelling errors make this story incomprehensible. Photos or videos are of such poor quality, it's hard to tell what's going on. They don't work together to tell a story. The student demonstrates little understanding of the ideas or concepts discussed in class. (If you are taking this class, you should not get this grade.)

F (59 or below) = Failing. Back to the drawing board. The student did not complete the assignment on time or did not do what was expected. (You don't want this grade either.)

Your final grade for this class will be a letter grade. Here's the grading scale.

A	560 – 520	C	430 – 408
A-	519 – 504	C-	407 – 392
B+	503 – 487	D+	391 – 375
B	486 – 464	D	374 – 352
B-	463 – 448	D-	351 – 336
C+	447 – 431	F	335 and below

Class policies

It's my responsibility to make this class a positive learning experience for you and to help you do well on your assignments. My responsibilities are to be in class on time, to give you feedback on your assignments in a timely way, and to create a classroom atmosphere in which you feel you can safely express your ideas and opinions. You have responsibilities to make this class a good learning experience, too, for yourself and your classmates.

- You should complete the assigned readings before you come to class. That way, you'll be able to participate actively in the discussions.
- **Everyone** in this class should participate in the discussions. Everyone should feel free to express ideas, opinions, and questions. I will work to make sure we all feel comfortable talking and that no one, including me, dominates the conversations.
- We are going to discuss some controversial topics in this class, and these discussions may make us feel angry, annoyed, hurt, guilty, or confused. While it's normal to feel emotional, we want to keep our discussions civil and respectful. We want to listen to what others have to say, even if we don't agree, and to give everyone an opportunity to speak. I expect everyone in the classroom to be tolerant and open to new ideas.
- I expect you to be here every day, and I expect you to be on time. If you are going to be absent, or if you're going to be late or need to leave early, please let me know in advance.
- Do not wander in and out of class. Take restroom and water breaks before or after class.
- Please turn off cell phones when class begins. Don't check phone messages or text messages in class. If your cell phone rings, I will ask you to leave.
- No computers in class.
- Don't work on other assignments in this class. Don't work on crosswords or Sudoku puzzles. Again, if you do this, I'll ask you to leave.
- Keep personal conversations to a minimum. Your ideas are important, so be sure to share them with the entire class.

- This is a journalism class, so deadlines are important. Please turn in assignments on time.
- Because this is a journalism class, grammar and spelling are important. Not paying attention to grammar and spelling will adversely affect your grade.

Helping you learn

The University of Kansas is committed to helping all students learn. If you have a need that may affect your learning, please contact me as soon as possible. I want to work with you to make learning in this class accessible.

Please be aware that the KU Office of Student Access Services coordinates accommodations and services for all students who are eligible. You will need to provide documentation to the office, and a staff member will contact me. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted this office, please do so as soon as possible. Information about services can be found at: <https://access.ku.edu/> Or you can visit the office at 22 Strong Hall. The phone number is: 785-864-4064 or email: achieve@ku.edu. Please contact me privately regarding your needs in this course.

Academic integrity and professionalism

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism and fabrication. Neither do I. If you plagiarize or fabricate material, you can expect to get a zero on the assignment. You also can expect to fail the course and possibly to be expelled from the journalism school.

Here's some more information that may clarify these issues.

Plagiarism is taking someone else's ideas, thoughts, or opinions and passing them off as your own. This includes print and electronic materials (no matter how old they are), as well as materials from the Internet. If you cut and paste materials from the Internet, and you don't attribute your work, you've committed plagiarism.

If you use secondary sources—that is, research that someone else has already done—you must attribute the sources in your papers.

You don't have to attribute commonly known facts (broccoli is a vegetable) or historical facts (Donald Trump is president of the United States).

Fabrication is making up something and presenting it as true. This includes making up a statistic, a fact, or a figure. It also includes making up quotes for interviews or “fudging” on quotes to make them sound more interesting. It's okay in fiction; it's not okay in a journalism course.

If you have questions about plagiarism or fabrication, see me.

Also, please note that all your work must be **original** for this class. Don't recycle assignments from past or current classes, including high school (this actually happened). If you write your own blog, work for campus media, or have another class that is discussing diversity, don't use work from those projects to meet the requirements of this class or vice versa.

The course Blackboard site

We'll use the course Blackboard site throughout the semester: <http://courseware.ku.edu>. I will post grades on the site (only you will be able to see your grade), and I'll use the site to send class e-mails. Many of your assigned readings will be posted on the Blackboard site. Also, we'll use the site to post class announcements, to post some of your excellent work, or to post interesting articles or links to relevant articles and Web sites. Please check the site frequently.

A final word

Diversity is more than a way of thinking; it's a job skill. Diversity is an important topic in mass media, and on that is sparking considerable debate within the communication professions. This class offers you a chance to get in on the discussions: to consider how the media shape our perspectives of ourselves and others. It also gives you an opportunity to start thinking about how you might want to change or challenge the way the media work. In the future, you'll be making the rules. This class offers you a chance to think about mass media images and how you might change those images when you become a media producer.

Have some fun!

Readings and Assignments

Below is the list of topics we'll discuss in class and the readings that will help you prepare for the discussions.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Please read this before you come to class.</i>
<i>Introduction to diversity</i>		
Aug. 22	Introduction to the class	Why are we here?
Aug. 24	Why study diversity?	Lind, "Laying a foundation ... " pp. 1–12.
Aug. 29	Us and Them	Lind, "The social psychology stereotypes," pp. 17–30.
Aug. 31	In groups, out groups	"In groups, out groups and the psychology of crowds." See Blackboard to read this article.
<i>Different identities, different views</i>		
Sept. 5	Feminism: What is it and should I be afraid of it?	Lind, "Framing feminism," 140 – 148.
Sept. 7	Macho, macho man: Images of masculinity in media	"Common stereotypes of media." "Boys to men ..." See Blackboard.
Sept. 12	Man. Woman. Advertising	Lind, "The more you subtract ...," pp. 179 – 185. Lind, "Man up: Viewer responses..." pp. 63 –68. Media diary due at beginning of class.
Sept. 14	The contrast in black and white	"White privilege." "Black fear." "Explaining white privilege broke white person." See Blackboard.
Sept. 19	Microaggressions: Is this a thing?	"What are microaggressions" "Was that racist?" Readings on the course Blackboard site. KU alum Hannah Wise, an editor in Dallas, Skypes in. First quiz due by 4 p.m. Sept 20.

Date	Topic	Please read these assignments by the time you come to class
Sept. 21	Don't give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses: Immigration.	"What's in a name," Lind, p. 134–148. "Key findings ..." (Skim this article on the course Blackboard site).
Sept. 26	New markets, old stereotypes: Advertising and minorities	Advertising and Hispanic culture," Lind, pp. 172–178.
Sept. 28	The "good" minority: Images of Asian-Americans	"Outwhiting the whites," Lind, pp. 148–55. "Negotiating the mediascape," Lind, pp. 56–62. Difference paper due at the beginning of class.
Oct. 3	The T-word: Religion and discrimination	Lind, "How TV makes Arabs and Muslims feel about themselves," Lind, pp. 68–7
Oct. 5	J-Generations	KU alums Chelan David and Mark McCormick speak to class. This is an opportunity to learn and network!
Oct. 10	"Nobel savages:" Native Americans and mass media	"Arguing Over Images," Lind, pp. 87–94. "Mass Media, Mass Media, Indians, and American Indians," Lind, pp. 203–207.
Oct. 12	Where have all the poor people gone? Class and wealth in the media	"Living on \$2 a day." "Poverty less than .02 percent lead media coverage." On Blackboard. Listening post paper due at the beginning of class.
Oct. 17	No class	Happy fall break!
Oct. 19	Ageism: You're not getting older, you're getting invisible	"9 reasons why what you think about ageing matters." "It's not easy to be old in America." On Blackboard
Oct. 24	Out of the closet: Gays and lesbians in media	"Exploring gay / straight relationships..." Lind, pp. 229–299. "15 ads that changed the way we think about gays and lesbians" On Blackboard site.

Date	Topic	Please read these assignments before you come to class.
Oct. 26	Transitions: The T and the B in LGBT.	<p>“GLAAD calls for increased accurate coverage of transgender murders.”</p> <p>“LGBTQ characters on television are still overwhelmingly white and male.”</p> <p>On Blackboard site.</p> <p>Second quiz due by 4 p.m. 27.</p>
Oct. 31	Temporarily Able Bodied: Advertising and disabilities	<p>“Finding new diversity in an increasingly diverse world.”</p> <p>“Disabled people reveal awkward moments for new campaign.”</p> <p>On Blackboard.</p>
<i>Diversity: Does it really matter?</i>		
Nov. 2	SCWAMPed: Analyzing media images	<p>Lind, “He was a black guy,” 24–30.</p> <p>Idea for final project due 1 p.m.</p>
Nov. 7	Sour notes: Does music matter?	<p>“Gender and Race as Meaningful Systems,” Lind, pp. 274–28</p> <p>“Exclusive: Eminem responds to ‘rap god’ homophobia accusations.”</p> <p>See Blackboard.</p>
Nov. 9	Fact, fiction, blurred lines: Do media stereotypes affect children?	<p>“Race, hierarchy, and hyenophobia...,” pp. 192–19</p> <p>“Bella’s choice,” Lind, pp. 1203.</p> <p>News / feature story due at beginning of class.</p>
Nov. 14	New heroes? Hollywood and Diversity	<p>“Why Wonder Woman is a masterpiece of subversive feminism.”</p> <p>“Hollywood Diversity Report (Just read the executive summary, pp. 1–3.)</p> <p>On Blackboard.</p>

Date	Topic	Please read these assignments by the time you come to class
Nov. 16	Game on / off: Sports, diversity, and media	“The year in racism and sports” “Why don’t people watch women’s sports.” Nike “Equality” ad. “This Girl Can” PR campaign Third quiz due by 4 p.m. Nov. 17.
Nov. 21	No class!	Happy Thanksgiving!
Nov. 28	Advocacy journalism: Changing the world one story at a time.	“Lynch laws in America” “Killers’ confession.” See Blackboard.
Nov. 30	Public relations for a cause.	“#MorethanMean. Women in sports face harassment.” “Whirlpool – Care Counts.” “#LoveHasNoLabels.” “Not special needs.” On Blackboard.
Dec. 5	Wanted: Change	Budweiser’s “Born the hard way” ad. Airbnb “We accept” ad. Coca-Cola “Pool boy” ad. ATF “Bold” ad. On Blackboard.
Dec. 7	No class.	Meet with Prof. Barnett to discuss final projects.
Dec. 12	Final projects due by 5 p.m.	

Guidelines for Reflections Papers

Diversity is everywhere in the media – or is it? You’ll write three response / reaction papers this semester in which you discuss examples of diversity you see in mass media.

- The first is a media diary in which you think about the media you consume (TV, news, ads, tweets, movies, music, etc.) and you think about whether or not you see diversity in those media. You want to write at least eight entries about what you’ve seen or heard. Keep the entries short—about one paragraph for each entry. As you write think about these three questions for each entry:
 - What media did I see / hear?
 - Did I see examples of diversity?
 - What examples did I see or what was missing?
 Be sure to include examples of ideas we’ve discussed in class or we’ve read about in our textbook.

- For the second assignment, you want to think about difference. We all have times when we feel that we’re not part of the majority. Think about a time when you felt you were definitely in the minority. This could be a time when you were the only young person among a group of older people, the only non-drinker at a party, the only straight person among a group of gay people. (Alternately, you can think about a time when you observed someone who was part of a minority and how they were treated.) You want to identify the difference, then think about how this difference made you feel. Include information from our class readings and discussion. Also, think about how this difference is portrayed in the media. You’ll want to write no more than two pages, double-spaced.

- The third assignment is a “listening post.” You want to go someplace that you usually wouldn’t go. For example, in the past, students completing this assignment have taken a train ride to St. Louis, gone to a yoga class, visited a knitting club, gone to a religious service outside their faith, or gone to senior citizens’ party. You want to think of yourself as an “ethnographer”—someone who has entered another culture. You want to write about what you observe and try to answer these questions:
 - Who comes here?
 - What can I learn about the community from this place?
 - What stories, ads, or PR campaigns might I develop based on my visit to this place, the people who come here, or the things I’ve learned from looking around?
 - How might the people I encounter here challenge or reinforce stereotypes?

The goal of these response papers is to make you aware of diversity in media and to help you analyze what you see or hear. The assignments are designed to help you think critically and creatively.

Grading Rubric For Media Diary

At least eight entries (about a paragraph each) are due by the beginning of class on Sept. 12.

_____ **Presentation** – The assignment followed directions. It was turned in on time. It keeps the focus on diversity. (5 points).

_____ **Writing** – The paper is written clearly and concisely. The paper is well-organized. The ideas are easy to understand. The author has paid attention to word choices. (5 points)

Excellent Good Fair Poor Unacceptable

_____ **Content** – The student has answered these questions in each of his / her diary entries. (5 points)

- What media did I see / hear?
- Did I see examples of diversity?
- What examples did I see or what was missing?

_____ **Evidence** – The writer has included different media in the report. S/he has provided concrete examples of the presence or absence of diversity in the media. The writer has explained if / how the media challenge or reinforce stereotypes. (5 points)

Excellent Good Fair Poor Unacceptable

_____ **Connection** – The author refers back to ideas we've discussed in class. The writer links what s/he has seen to some aspect of our discussions on diversity. The writer understands diversity, difference in perspective. (10 points)

Excellent Good Fair Poor Unacceptable

Grading Rubric for Difference Paper

Your two-page paper is due at the beginning of class on Thursday, Sept. 28.

_____ **Presentation** – The assignment follows directions. It was turned in on time. It keeps the focus on diversity. (5 points).

_____ **Writing** – The paper is written clearly and concisely. The paper is well-organized. The ideas are easy to understand. The author has paid attention to word choices. (5 points)

Excellent Good Fair Poor Unacceptable

_____ **Evidence** – The writer has focused on difference. The article clearly explains a time when the writer or someone s/he knew experienced difference. The article details how that difference made him or her feel. (5 points)

Excellent Good Fair Poor Unacceptable

_____ **Connection** – The author refers back to ideas we've discussed in class. The writer links what s/he has seen to some aspect of our discussions on diversity and considers how this difference is portrayed in media. The writer understands diversity, difference in perspective. (10 points)

Excellent Good Fair Poor Unacceptable

Grading Rubric for Listening Post

Your two-page paper is due at the beginning of class on Thursday, Oct. 12.

 Presentation – The assignment followed directions. It was turned in on time. It keeps the focus on diversity. (5 points).

 Writing – The paper is written clearly and concisely. The paper is well-organized. The ideas are easy to understand. The author has paid attention to word choices. (10 points)

Excellent Good Fair Poor Unacceptable

 Evidence – The writer clearly explains where s/he went and why this place was out of the ordinary for him/her. The writer gives a detailed description of the setting and the people there. The writer makes us feel we are there. The writer answers questions outlined in assignment directions. (10 points)

Excellent Good Fair Poor Unacceptable

 Connection – The paper shows a solid understanding of diversity issues. The author refers back to ideas we've discussed in class. The writer links what s/he has seen to some aspect of our discussions on diversity. The writer understands diversity, difference in perspective. (15 points)

Excellent Good Fair Poor Unacceptable

 Ideas. The paper includes solid ideas for future stories, ads or PR campaigns. These ideas flow logically from the listening post description. The ideas are presented clearly and concisely. (10 points)

Excellent Good Fair Poor Unacceptable

Directions and Grading Rubric for News Feature

Your three- to five-page article is due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, Nov. 7.

Whether you're in news, advertising, or public relations, you'll have to interview people. Interviewing people—one-on-one or through focus groups—can be an important part of the research you do.

In this assignment, you'll interview someone who is not like you, and you'll write a short story about them. Think of this as a news feature story. Some ideas: You might interview an international student if you were born the United States; you might interview someone who supports abortion if you are pro-life; you might interview someone who is older than you; or you might interview someone who grew up in a different region of the country. Think creatively about this.

If you focus on one person, you can write this as a profile—what makes them interesting. Or, you might write about a special event in the person's life (maybe their first day at KU, their wedding, a bar mitzvah.)

You can interview more than one person if you like. If you do this, you might focus on an issue instead of an individual. For example, you might select a topic (ads in fashion magazines, media coverage of an athlete) and get reactions from three to five people. You might even “crowd source” through social media. You'll write a story about what you learned.

This story should be three to four typed, double-spaced pages. You can mention yourself in the story—your thoughts or your reactions—but don't make yourself the focal point of the story. This should be about the person the person you interviewed. Be sure to explain that this is not for publication; the story is for a class assignment that only your professor will see. Be sure to include the date and time you of your interview, and be sure to include the names and e-mails or phone numbers of the people you talked with.

Grading Rubric for Interview

 Presentation – The paper follows directions. The story focuses on the person interviewed. The student has included the date and time of the event. He/she included quotes from sources and contact information for sources. The student met deadlines. (5 points)

Excellent Good Fair Poor Unacceptable

 Grammar and spelling – The paper is free from grammatical and spelling errors. It follows AP style. (10 points).

Excellent Good Fair Poor Unacceptable

 Writing – This paper is well-written and well-organized. Writing is concise and clear. The lead is inviting and draws the reader into the story. The student tells a story in an interesting way. There are no unanswered questions for the reader. (25 points)

Excellent Good Fair Poor Unacceptable

 Content – The student has explained well why s/he chose to interview his subject. The author clearly explains how s/he and the interviewee are different. The writer provides good quotes from sources; quotes are illustrative of how the person feels and thinks. The focus is on the interviewee, not the author. (25 points)

 Diversity. The student has included relevant and interesting information that informs and educates about diversity. The paper shows the student has an understanding of the key concepts and theories we have discussed in class and has applied those concepts to research and writing. This paper shows originality and independent thought. The paper shows that the student is thinking critically and carefully about diversity. (25 points)

Excellent Good Fair Poor Unacceptable

 Creativity. The student has taken an unique approach to the assignment. The story shows originality in terms of topic and interviewee. The student tells an interesting story. (10 points)

Media Advocacy Report

Plan due by Tuesday, Nov. 2, at 5 p.m.

Final project due Tuesday, Dec. 12, by 5 p.m.

Ever wish you were in charge of what's in the media? Now's your chance to speak out.

In this assignment, you'll work as a media monitor. You'll write a report explaining what you see and explaining how the media could better incorporate diversity. Your report will acknowledge what the media producer is doing well and make suggestions for how the producer could change the product. Your goal is to write logically and persuasively. You want to advocate for change.

Start by thinking about a group you want to advocate for—a group you think is underrepresented or misrepresented in the mass media. This could be gays, the elderly, women, Muslims, or any of the groups we've discussed in class. Then think about a form of media in which you're interested—Twitter, books, TV, magazines, newspapers, ads, news releases.

Now combine the two and write a report on what you've learned. Some examples: Images of masculinity in Bud Light commercials, body image of women in *People* magazine, the presence or absence of African-Americans on *The Real Housewives of New York*, depictions of the elderly in Oscar-nominated movies. In your paper, you'll want to explain why this is an important topic.

To start, do some research on the broad topic you've chosen. You'll want to spend some time in the library and on the Internet looking for articles to give your report some background. For example: If you study ads targeted at Hispanic voters, you want to do some research on the Hispanic population in the United States, voting patterns, and ad campaigns for minority populations. You can use the articles to provide context and background for your report. Also, you may use some of the materials as evidence to support the arguments you make. Just be sure to attribute the information to the correct sources.

Once you've decided upon your topic, determine how you will study or monitor the subject. You won't be able to watch every TV show or see every movie about your topic. Instead, select a small "sample" that you feel is representative of what you're studying. This might be a week's worth of newscasts or newspapers, several months worth of magazines, a month of NFL games, five different Web sites. In your paper, you'll want to explain why studying this particular topic and medium is worthwhile (*Monday Night Football* has an audience of 2 million viewers; or, these five Web sites each receive more than 10,000 hits per month).

Develop a worksheet to help you keep track of what you watched, heard. Don't rely on memory. **You must turn in your worksheets with the assignment.**

You want this report to be addressed to a specific individual. It must be a real person. Somewhere in your report, indicate why you're writing to this particular individual. (As the executive producer for *The Daily Show*, you . . .)

In your report, tell the media producer what you think s/he is doing well. Give specific examples from your media monitoring notes. Tell the producer what s/he can improve to incorporate diversity. Again, give specific examples from your media monitoring notes. Finally, tell the producers what you'd like them to do from now on and be specific. Do you want him / her to add a Latina character to the cast of *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*? Hire a woman to cover sports for the Lawrence Journal-World? These suggestions should flow logically from the research you've done.

The tone of your report can be serious or sarcastic. You can use humor, or you can play it straight. Just be sure your paper demonstrates that you have systematically monitored the media, that you understand the concepts we've discussed in class, and that you have a point to your writing. Don't just rant.

Your final report should be 10 to 12 pages, typed and double-spaced. Don't go over 12 pages. The paper is due **Tuesday, Dec. 12, by 5 p.m.**

A word of caution from someone who spent many years of her life as a student: Give yourself plenty of time to research and write this assignment. Don't wait till the week before and frantically try to put your paper together. You want to monitor the media, so give yourself some time (at least a few days) to think about what you saw and heard before you start writing. You are welcome to ask someone else, including students in this class, to read a draft of your paper.

____ **Persuasiveness** – The paper uses evidence (from secondary research and personal observations) to make critical points. Arguments are logical, well-thought-out. If I were the media producer, I'd be convinced, and I'd start making changes. (50 points)

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

Unacceptable

____ **Writing.** The paper is well-written and well-organized. Ideas are clearly and concisely stated. The student has anticipated and answered audience questions. The paper is easy to read and understand. (15 points)

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

Unacceptable