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Course Syllabus

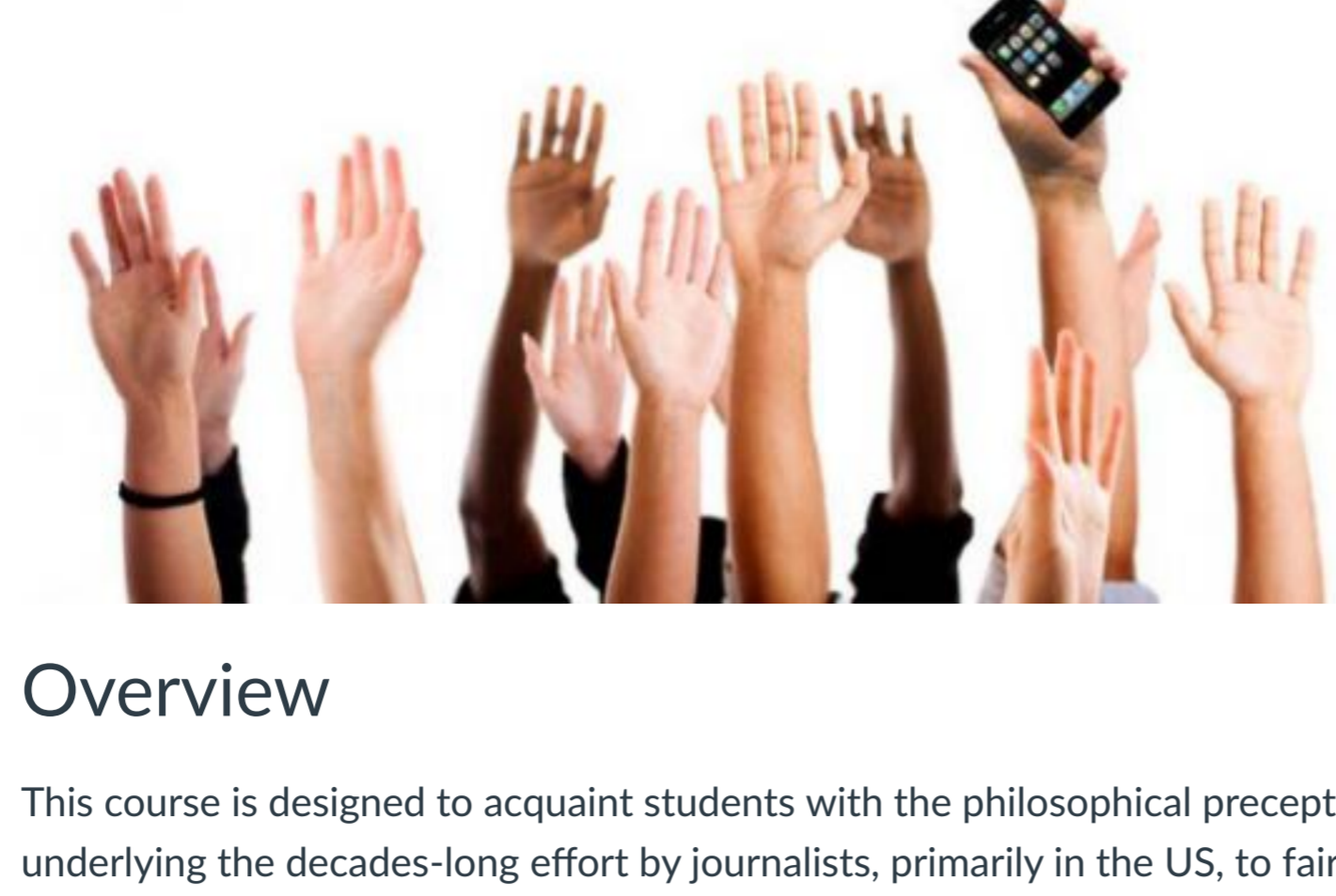
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JPW 321/AAS 321:

Race, Gender and the News Media

Spring, 2021
 Tuesdays and Fridays 11am-12:30 pm online
 Office hours M-Th 9:30-11:30am via [Zoom](#) or by appointment

Instructor: [Kim Pearson](#)
 Associate Prof.
 Journalism/Professional Writing
 Office: A1MM 303
 Google Voice: 215-253-8624
 Email/Gchat: kpearson@tcnj.edu



Overview

This course is designed to acquaint students with the philosophical precepts and practical challenges underlying the decades-long effort by journalists, primarily in the US, to fairly cover America's communities in all of their diversity. The class begins with an overview of some of the current issues confronting news organizations as they attempt to present a comprehensive, fair picture of American life. Then, we explore basic philosophical concepts in journalism that help explain why the news industry concerns itself with diversity at all. After that, we explore the history of the concepts of race and gender, and examine how those ideas became incorporated into American journalism in ways that unconsciously promoted white supremacy and patriarchal norms. We move on to explore efforts to reform journalistic practices, their results, and the criticisms leveled against the news industry by those who think that the commitment to diversity in newsroom staffing and coverage has undermined the quality of journalism. Finally, we will engage in a culminating research and reporting project, described in more detail in the "Collaborative Project" section below.

Online format

Classes and office hours will be conducted remotely, using the Zoom platform. If there is a Zoom outage, I will email you an invitation for Google Meet as an alternate platform. We will meet twice a week as per the class schedule in PAWS. I do not intend to record classes. If you are unable to attend during the class time, please let me know and we can make arrangements to ensure that you get the information you need in order to do your coursework.

Learning goals

As a result of this class students should be able to:

- Discuss scholarship on the role that news coverage plays in the social construction of race, class and gender
- Identify and discuss professional standards, practices and initiatives designed to prevent biased and stereotypical reporting
- Raise questions and draw conclusions about the ethics and impact of their own practice and development as journalists, and as informed citizens.

LIBERAL LEARNING GOALS

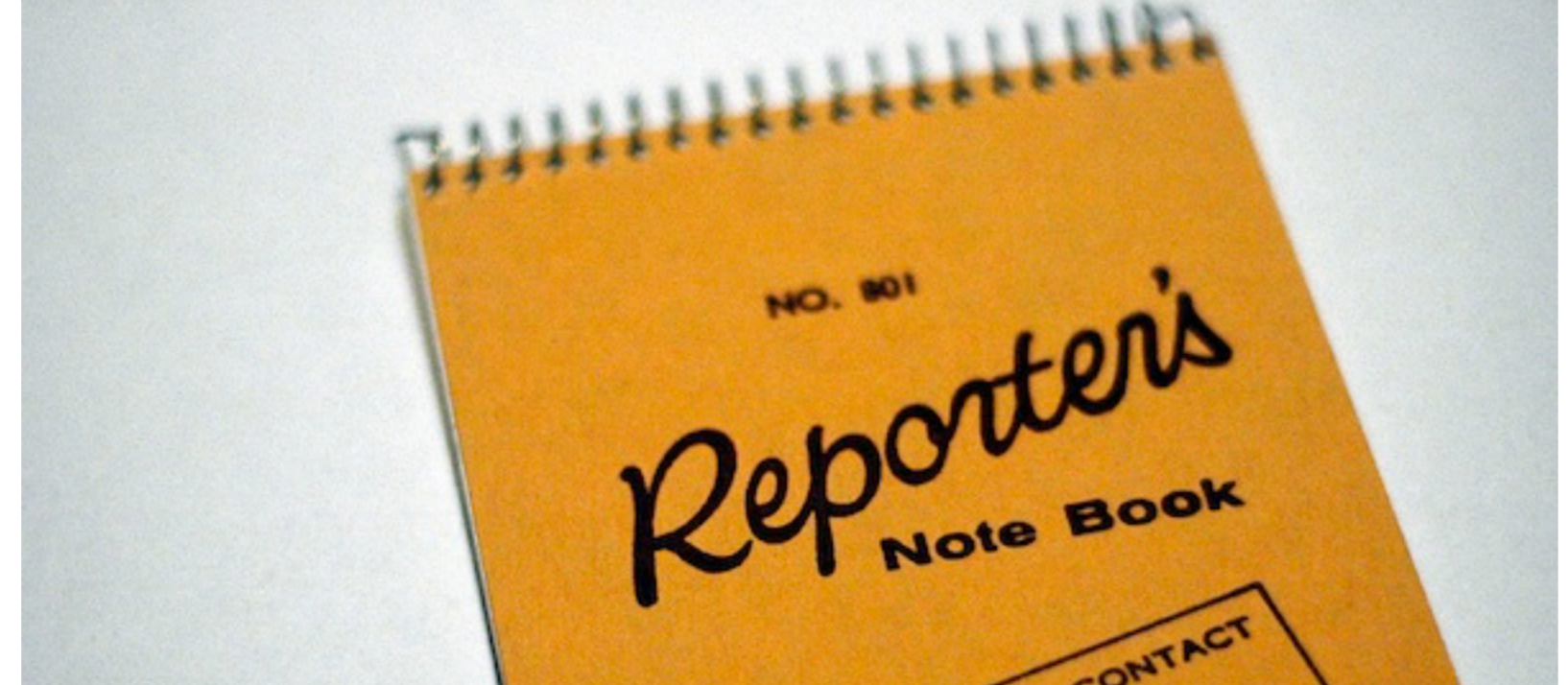
This course can be taken to fulfill major and minor requirements in either Journalism and Professional Writing or African American Studies. It can also be taken to fulfill either the "Gender" or "Race and Ethnicity" liberal learning requirement. As such, this course [supports](#) the following Liberal Learning goals:

Students should have an understanding of the nature of race and ethnicity and the impact both have on our lives in modern communities.

- Students should be able to explain the broad spectrum of human racial and ethnic experience. They should understand the differences and similarities between race and ethnicity as concepts.
- Students should understand the arbitrary and socially defined nature of race as well as analyze the ways race and racism maintain positions of class, power, and privilege in America.
- Students should develop thoughtful and equitable personal, ethical, and political decision-making abilities when considerations of race and ethnicity are involved. They should identify the limits of ethnocentric and parochial thinking.

Students should be able to explain how gender and sexuality shape our daily lives. They should understand how gender is a central category of analysis that informs our interpretation of human experience.

- Students should understand that gender is socially constructed. They should be able to analyze family, education, labor, religion, and government as they are shaped by gendered constructs. Further, they should be able to explain how gender intersects with other constructed patterns of influence and oppression in society, such as race, ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation.
- Students should develop skills in the application of gender research and theory to problems in the contemporary world.
- Students should have an understanding of gender and the impact it has on our lives in modern communities.



COLLABORATING ACROSS BOUNDARIES STUDY

This course is part of a National Science Foundation-sponsored project ([Award #1914869](#)) testing the value of course-based community-engaged interdisciplinary collaborations for improving undergraduate students' science literacy. You will be invited to participate in several short assessments at various points on the semester. You are not required to participate in these assessments. Neither your participation nor the content of your responses will affect your grades. Your professor will not see your individual responses.

To be part of this study, students must sign a consent document that will be explained and distributed before the first survey. Students will earn 10 points towards their project grade for participating in the pre- and post-test evaluation of their experiences with the collaborative project. Points will be awarded to all students who submit their PAWS IDs on the pre- and post-tests, regardless of whether you complete all the questions. The CAB research team only provides PAWS IDs to collaborating professors during the semester, and professors are made aware of who has signed consent documents and completed the instruments only after the semester grades are submitted on PAWS. TL; DR: We hope you will participate in this research evaluation because it will help improve undergraduate education at TCNJ and beyond, but participation is your choice.

Collaborative Project:

How should the news media cover food justice?

We will be working in teams composed of students from Race Gender and the News and Environmental Anthropology. Each team will choose a specific vulnerable population within our food system on which to focus - for example, farmworkers, restaurant employees, small farmers, gig workers, etc. Each team will apply skills and content knowledge from each class - along with guidance and feedback from our community partner, Free Press, to accomplish the following:

- Through primary and secondary research including ethnographic interviews, we will identify the information needs of specific sets of vulnerable stakeholders in our local food system.
- Through research and interviews, we will identify experts capable of addressing how journalists can overcome structural impediments to explaining the links between food insecurity and climate change.
- We will curate examples and convene conversations about how local journalists and news organizations address those information needs while avoiding the pitfalls of [extractive journalism](#) - described by Lewis-Raven Wallace as "reporting on communities without input or accountability."

The **project deliverables** will take the form of a **final report** with research findings and recommendations, as well as a **webinar** including the perspectives of journalists, civil society leaders and community members who can speak to the issues that you have identified in your research. Each team will produce a report and a webinar related to the specific aspect of the food system that you have chosen to study. More details are provided in the lab section of the class.

Texts

Required for purchase:

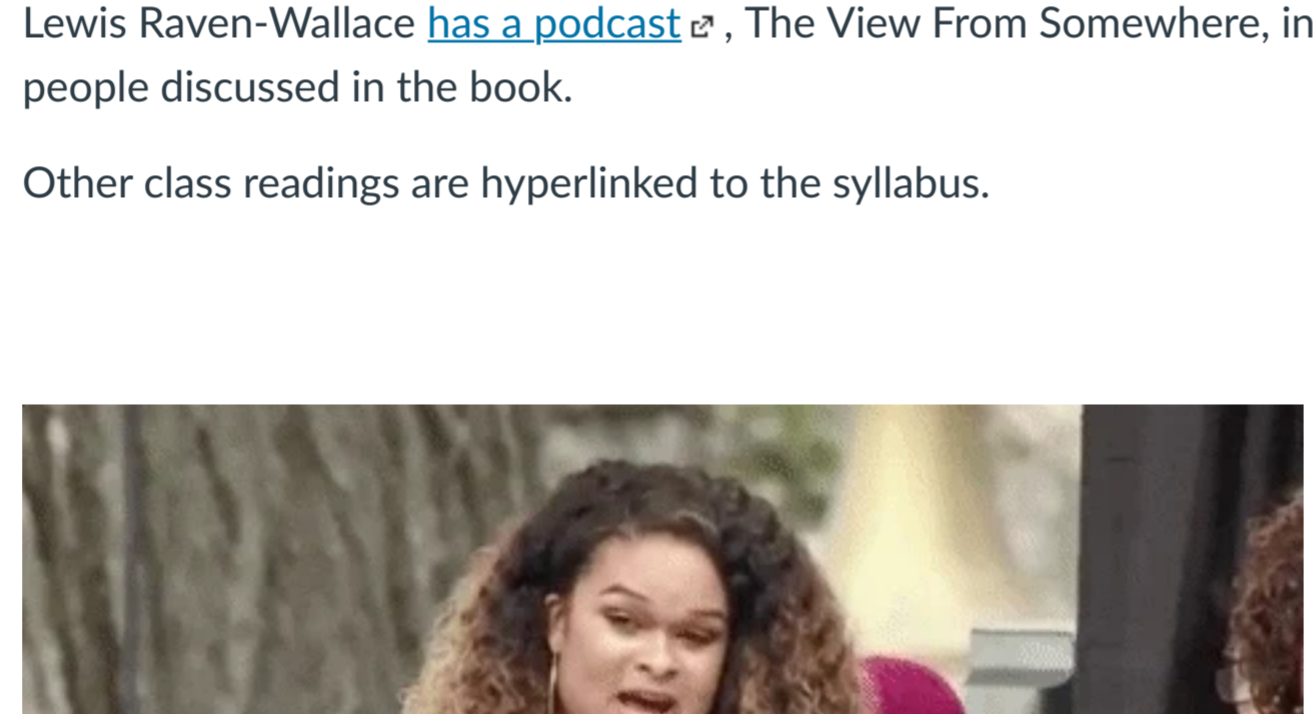
[Race, Gender, Class and Media: Studying Mass Communication and Multiculturalism](#) by Sharon Bramlett-Solomon and Meta G. Carstarphen, Kendall Hunt Publishing, 2017. Please note that an [eBook version](#) of the text is available at this link for \$75.00. (Referred to as RGCM in the syllabus)

[The View From Somewhere: Undoing the Myth of Journalistic Objectivity](#) by Lewis Raven-Wallace, University of Chicago Press, 2019 (Referred to as Wallace in the syllabus.)

Recommended

Lewis Raven-Wallace [has a podcast](#), The View From Somewhere, in which he interviews many of the people discussed in the book.

Other class readings are hyperlinked to the syllabus.



via [GIPHY](#)

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT: (adapted from a [statement](#) written by Prof. Monica Lindan and Mary Wright, Phd. Brown University) I

n an ideal world, journalism would be objective. However, much of journalism is subjective and is historically built on a small subset of privileged voices and sources. In this class, we will make an effort to access texts from a diverse group of journalists, but limits still exist to this diversity. I acknowledge that it is possible that there may be both overt and covert biases in the material due to the lens with which it was written, even though the material is primarily rooted in journalism and the social and natural sciences. Integrating a diverse set of experiences is important for a more comprehensive understanding of journalism.

Please contact me (in person or electronically) or submit anonymous feedback if you have any suggestions to improve the quality of the course materials.

Furthermore, I would like to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.)

If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official TCNJ records, please let me know!

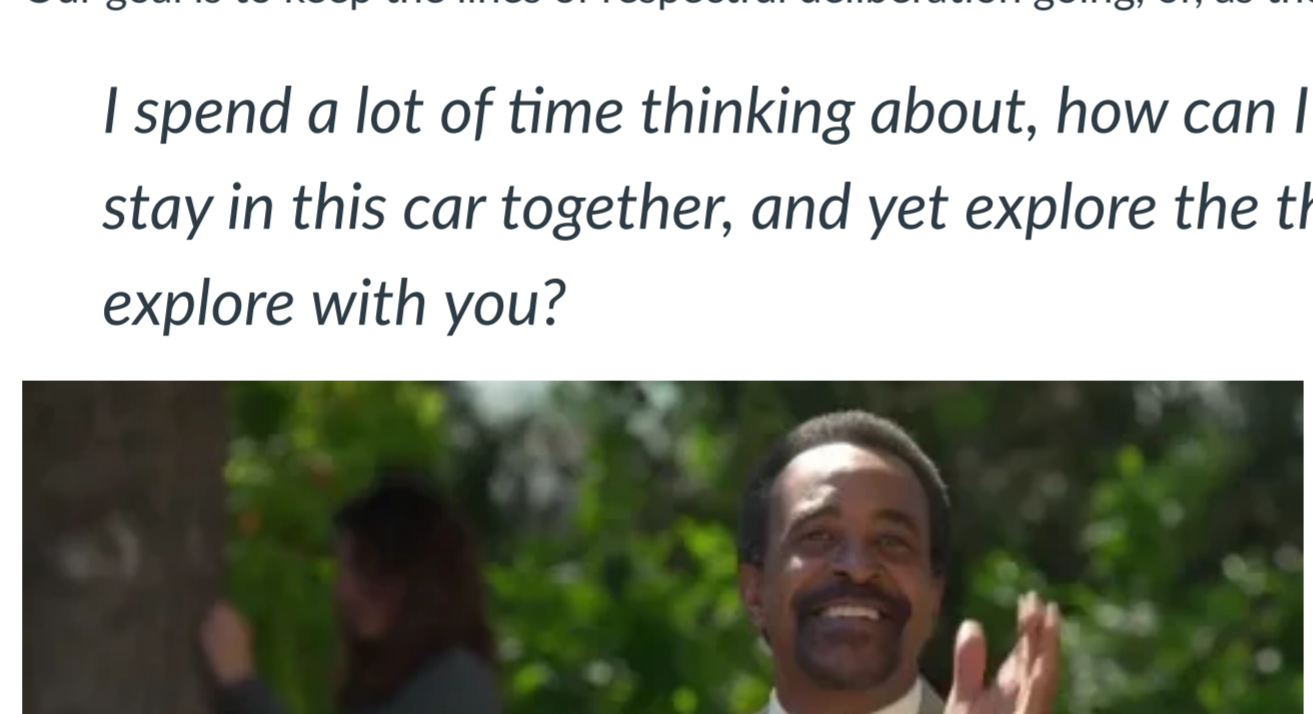
If you feel as if your performance in the class is being affected by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you. Remember that you can also submit anonymous feedback (which will lead to an invitation to a conversation about the best way to address your concerns). If you prefer to speak with someone outside of the course, here are some resources that may be helpful:

- To [request help if you are in crisis](#) or if you are concerned about a friend
- To [report discrimination or harassment](#)
- To [request counseling or psychological services](#)

I (like many people) am still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said in class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it. (Again, anonymous feedback is always an option.)

As a participant in course discussions, you should also strive to honor the diversity of your classmates. Our goal is to keep the lines of respectful deliberation going, or, as the poet Claudia Rankine put it:

I spend a lot of time thinking about, how can I say this so that we can stay in this car together, and yet explore the things that I want to explore with you?



via [GIPHY](#)

Class policies

- Readings and assignments are due on the calendar dates. Please read the syllabus at least one week ahead so that you can plan to devote sufficient time to class assignments.
- This class is fully online and will meet synchronously. If you have technology, access issues or other impediments to participation, please let me know as soon as possible and I will try to help you resolved the issue. Please note the College's [policy](#) with regard to absences:
 - "When a student must be absent from classes due to extended illness, a death in the family or a similar genuine emergency, the Dean of Student Life should be informed immediately so that the appropriate notice can be provided to individual instructors. Students who must miss classes due to participation in a field trip, athletic event or other official college function should arrange with their instructors for such class absences well in advance. The Office of Academic Affairs will verify, upon request, the dates of and participants in such college functions. In every instance, however, the student has the responsibility to initiate arrangements for makeup work"
- Late assignments will not be accepted unless you have obtained prior permission, or you have a documented emergency. If you obtain an extension and fail to hand in your assignment by the extended due date, you will lose 1/2 grade for each class period that the assignment is delayed.
- Students requiring accommodations for differing abilities are encouraged to register with the [Accessibility Resource Center](#) and bring documentation to me at the beginning of the semester. [http://differingabilities.pages.tcnj.edu/](#)
- yourself with the College's Academic Integrity Policy. (Policy: [Academic Integrity.pdf](#) and Powerpoint slides [College Academic Integrity PowerPoint 2014.ppt](#))
- Please speak up early and often - but appropriately and professionally, if there are questions or concerns. Everyone here has something to teach, and something to learn. That includes me.
- This course has a final evaluation that consists of a final essay, in accordance with [College policy](#).
- All 4-credit courses in the Journalism and African American Studies Departments require students to attend a regularly scheduled 4th hour of class meeting time (as indicated in PAWS) OR to complete additional work outside of class that constitutes the equivalent of a 4th hour of class meeting time (in the form of group work, attendance at campus events, rigorous reading assignments and/or research, field trips, community-engaged learning, internships, and/or other academic work as stipulated by the individual instructor). This course adheres to a combination of field trips, group work and additional academic work; please see below for specific course assignments, requirements, and due dates.
- The College of New Jersey Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace/Educational Environment governs the college's commitment to and expectations of having an environment that respects the diversity of all members of the campus community. The link to this policy is:

<http://policies.tcnj.edu/policies/digest.php?docid=9122>

Grading Scheme

Name:	Range:
A	100 % to 94.0%
A-	< 94.0 % to 90.0%
B+	< 90.0 % to 87.0%
B	< 87.0 % to 84.0%
B-	< 84.0 % to 80.0%
C+	< 80.0 % to 77.0%
C	< 77.0 % to 74.0%
C-	< 74.0 % to 70.0%
D+	< 70.0 % to 67.0%
D	< 67.0 % to 64.0%
D-	< 64.0 % to 61.0%
F	< 61.0 % to 0%

Course Summary:

Date	Details	
Tue Feb 2, 2021	Course overview: What is systems thinking?	11am to 12:20pm
Fri Feb 5, 2021	Read part 1 of Bramlett-Solomon: Foundations and Critical Concepts	due by 11:59pm
Tue Feb 9, 2021	First meeting with Anthropology students - use the collaboration space zoom link	11am to 12:20pm
Fri Feb 12, 2021	Read Bramlett-Solomon p. 2: The maintenance of whiteness and racial stereotypes	due by 11:59pm
Tue Feb 16, 2021	Racialized Rhetorics of Food Politics	due by 11:59pm
Fri Feb 19, 2021	Read Bramlett-Solomon Part 3: The Fourth Estate	due by 11:59pm
Tue Feb 23, 2021	Second team meeting - use Collaborative space link	11am to 12:20pm
Fri Feb 26, 2021	Harvest of Shame	due by 12:20pm
	Reconsidering "Harvest of Shame"	due by 12:20pm
Tue Mar 2, 2021	Check in conversation about proposals and readings so far	11am to 12:20pm
Fri Mar 5, 2021	Read and discuss: Wallace - Introduction and chapter one	due by 11:59pm
Tue Mar 9, 2021	Team presentations - Use Collaboration space Zoom link	12am
Fri Mar 12, 2021	Read and discuss: Wallace, Chapter 2: The Deviants: Race, Lynching and the Origins of 'Objectivity'	due by 11:59pm
Tue Mar 16, 2021	Webinar production workshop	11am to 12:20pm
	Spring day off	12am
Thu Mar 18, 2021	Spring day off	12am
Tue Mar 23, 2021	Disability and accessibility	due by 11:59pm
Fri Mar 26, 2021	Gender and journalism - technological and cultural contexts	due by 11pm
Tue Mar 30, 2021	Spring day off	12am
Fri Apr 2, 2021	Interviewing 101: The Sit Down	due by 11:59pm
Tue Apr 6, 2021	The Reconstruction of American Journalism	due by 11:59pm
Fri May 7, 2021	Collaborative project	due by 11:59pm
	Read and discuss: Gender and Journalism - historical contexts	

February 2021						
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	7	8	9	10	11	12

Assignments are weighted by group:

Group	Weight
Homework	50%
Collaborative Project - Collaboration space for details	50%
Total	100%