SYA 4930: Media & Culture

UF Online Course

Instructor: Grant Jones

Contact Methods

Email (**Preferred**): grant.jones@ufl.edu

Telephone: (270) 724-0320

Note: If you plan to reach me by phone, know that I may not respond to unknown numbers. If possible, give me a heads up via email that I may be expecting a call.

For technical issues pertaining to this online course, contact the UFL Helpdesk at http://helpdesk.ufl.edu or (352) 392-4357.

Office Hours

As this class is a fully-online class, I will have online office hours via Zoom every week on **Tuesdays** from **4:00 PM – 6:00 PM**. The Zoom link for these office hours will be available on our class's Canvas page, but if you are unable to find the link, please email me and I will gladly send the link for these hours to you.

Additionally, I greatly encourage you to email if you have any questions in this course. Though I have office hours only on Mondays at the time mentioned above, I will also be open to meeting with any of you by appointment. If you wish to meet via Zoom at any other time, just send me an email and let me know what possible days and times would work well for you. And of course, if you would rather just ask your questions via email rather than meeting on Zoom, you are more than welcome to do so.

Regarding the Course

Our class is held fully online and will not have any scheduled class meetings. Instead, lecture videos will be recorded and posted every Sunday (usually at 11:59 PM on the previous night). All assignments will be posted on Canvas, and none of this class's assessments will require any in-person proctoring.

Some assignments for this class may require students to be audio-visually recorded. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to

have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who participate verbally in certain recorded assignments are agreeing to have their voices recorded. Note that this likely will only apply to the group project, and if there are any concerns in this regard, feel free to contact me.

Course Objectives

The purpose of *Media & Culture* is to set a foundation of key concepts, elements, and terminology pertaining to modern media and its sociological connects and implications. Students will be shown how sociological thought and concepts apply to the world of digital media, and will also be shown examples of how the concepts discussed in this course manifest themselves in real life. The point of this course is to provide a broader understanding of media's role in a modern society through the lens of Sociology.

Class Attendance, Make-Up Exams, Etc.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

http://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Required Textbook

Rohlinger, D. (2019). *New Media and Society.* New York University Press.

UF Grading Policies

UF grading policies can be viewed here:

https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/

Grading Details

Grade	*Percentage (Points)*
A+	100 (1000)
A	92 – 99 (920 - 990)
A-	90 – 91 (900 - 910)
B+	88 – 89 (880 - 890)
B	82 – 87 (820 - 870)
B-	80 – 81 (800 - 810)
C+	78 – 79 (780 - 790)
C	72 – 77 (720 - 770)
C-	70 – 71 (700 - 710)
D+	68 – 69 (680 - 690)
D	62 – 67 (620 - 670)
D-	60 – 61 (600 - 610)
E	0 – 59 (0 - 590)

Weighting

Discussion Board	-	33%	(22 pts. x 15	| 330 pts.)
R.I. Responses	-	18%	(30 pts. x 6	| 180 pts.)
Quizzes	-	24%	(20 pts. x 12	| 240 pts.)
Group Project Stage 1	-	5%	(50 pts. x 1	| 50 pts.)
Group Project Stage 2	-	10%	(100 pts. x 1	| 100 pts.)
Group Project Stage 3	-	10%	(100 pts. x 1	| 100 pts.)

Total – 1000 pts.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at http://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at http://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

Types of Assessments

Note from the Instructor

  This syllabus will provide details on how I expect each of you to complete these assessments, but I also plan to post a video explaining my expectations to the Canvas page for this course. Furthermore, if you run into any issues or are confused about any requirements, do not hesitate to email me for further clarification.

Discussion Board

  Each week, you will be provided a unique discussion prompt in the discussion board on our course's Canvas page. These prompts will be related to the content discussed in that week's lecture video. In order to receive full credit for these posts, you must provide *at least* a **three to four paragraph** response to these prompts. Specific instructions on what is expected for each week's discussion requirement will be specified in the discussion board post for that prompt.

  Discussion prompts will be posted to the discussion board every week (post dates and deadlines on Canvas).

Reproducing Inequality (R.I.) Responses

  In each chapter of *New Media & Society* – the textbook for our class – the author includes a section called "Reproducing Inequality." These sections aim to provide some real-world context for the concepts being discussed in that chapter. As such, I believed it would be a beneficial endeavor to have you all provide a response to each of these – totaling 6 responses, one per chapter. These R.I. Responses will be assigned on the same day the last lecture for that chapter is posted. These dates will be outlined in the *Weekly Schedule* in this syllabus and on Canvas.*

  Each R.I. response should be approximately **four to five paragraphs** in length. For these responses, students should **provide their informal reactions** to the "Reproducing Inequality" section from that chapter, **discuss how prevalent** they think this inequality is in a modern society, and discuss what **examples of this inequality in the real world** that they have seen – from their own life, the lives of others around them, or in the news. In addition to this, students should find **one example video** from the media – television, film, the news, or in music – that

they believe fits this topic, then discuss how this form of inequality is well-showcased in that example.

       * Note that the weekly schedule is subject to change if necessary, so it is encouraged to reference the schedule on Canvas rather than the one in this syllabus just in case a change occurs.

Quizzes

       There will be a **10 question** quiz posted each week (post dates and deadlines on Canvas). These quizzes will be open-note, open-text, and open-lecture, and largely serve to ensure students have acknowledged and have a basic understanding of the core concepts discussed that week.

Group Project

       As part of this course, you will be tasked with completing a group project. Students will be required to form groups consisting of approximately three people. This group project involves providing and analyzing examples from the media (TV, film, music, etc.) of different sociological concepts. Keep in mind that this project will be discussed in greater detail as we get closer to the end of the semester.

       Also note: All Group Project deadlines will be **posted on Canvas**. Since this schedule is subject to change, always make sure you confirm deadlines on the Canvas page.

This group project is separated into three stages:

       Stage 1: Students will be assigned groups and will be tasked with selecting **two concepts** discussed in the course up until that point. On Canvas, I will provide a list of which concepts you can choose from, though this list will likely include almost every major concept discussed up until that point in the class. If you would like to propose a unique concept that is not on that list, you may do so, but be sure to do so as soon as possible so that I can determine if that concept will work well for this project or not.

       The concepts chosen by each group member must be unique from the concepts chosen by the other group members, so discuss your concept choices with your group members before making a submission. I will then select **one of these concepts** to assign to each group member.

To be clear, each group member will submit two concepts, then each member will be assigned one of their own submitted concepts to use in the group project.

For **both** of the concepts specified, each student must also provide **two example videos**. Both of these example videos should showcase how their concept shows up in the media. For example, if you chose the concept "cyber family," you should find two videos that showcase cyber families, such as a clip from a television show that showcases how a family in that show maintains contact or keeps track of each other using social media, or a clip from a movie that shows how an obsession with digital media – such as phones – can distract the family members and weaken their relationship with each other.

Each concept has many potential examples you could include, which is why I give students a good amount of time to complete Stage 1. It is *highly encouraged* that students submit Stage 1 as soon as possible so that if there are any concerns with the concepts or examples chosen, they can be addressed and the student will have time to resubmit Stage 1.

(Note: If there is an upcoming concept that is not on the list *and* has yet to be discussed that a student wishes to use for this project, they must contact me as soon as possible in order to determine if that concept will be viable or not)

Stage 2: Each student will write their own portion of a group paper discussing their chosen concepts (only the concepts I assigned to you following Stage 1) and examples. In this paper, each student will first explain or define their concept as clearly as possible. After this, students will discuss how they have seen this concept in the real world – from their own life or in the lives of those around them. This first part of the paper should be at least **3 paragraphs** long.

For the second part of the paper, students will discuss their first example. For about **1 paragraph**, students will describe what their example is, stating what type of media the example is from, what the show / movie / song / etc. is about, and any other important details about this example. Then, students will provide about **2 paragraphs** describing how their concept shows up in this example and why they believe their example showcases their concept well. Following this, students will provide another **2 paragraphs** discussing why they think this chosen concept is important to learn about, research, or discuss in a sociological context. This process will then be **repeated for the second example**.

One each member has completed their section of the paper, each section must be combined into one group paper. The way you combine this paper is primarily up to your group, but I do specify that each paper should be:

• Double-spaced

• 12-point font

• Well-organized with headings and subheadings

I want to leave any other specifics fairly open ended to allow each group some freedom in how they format their papers, but if you have any other questions on formatting or if you want to confirm that your paper is formatted well, feel free to email me.

Stage 3: For Stage 3, your group will record a video presentation. In this presentation, you will informally present what was discussed in your group paper – explaining what your concepts are, how these concepts show up in the media, why these concepts are important to study, etc. Once you have recorded this video, you should upload it to some site that everyone will have access to and post this video to the discussion board. I will create a unique discussion board for these submissions around when Stage 3 is assigned.

Additionally – since it would be difficult to include these clips in the presentation itself without potentially running into copyright issues – each group is expected to include YouTube links for their examples in their discussion board post with their presentation video.

While not a requirement, I also encourage feedback on these presentation posts. Let the other groups know what you liked about their projects, or what you found interesting!

Stage 3 must:

○ Be at least 5 minutes long per group member (though students will often go far beyond the 5 minute mark)

○ Include a thorough description of key aspects of your Stage 2 paper (such as what the concept is, what your examples were, how the examples show the concept well, why the concept is important to study, etc.)

Important Notes on the Group Project

A group project format was chosen over an individual project format for a few reasons. First, for an online setting, I find many students benefit from having other group members to

bounce ideas off of and ask questions to. Having this option has helped a lot of my students get the work done for this more easily and by the deadlines. Additionally, I find that the planning phases of the three group project stages go a lot more smoothly than they have when I've offered this as an individual project, largely because students can collaborate on things like how to format the group paper, what visual aid to use on the group presentation, how long everyone's presentation should be, etc.

It is also important to note that I am mandating full participation from each member of the group. In the event that a group member does not cooperate, assuming you have first discussed this with the group member and attempted to resolve this issue within the group, contact me. I will decide if the level of participation demonstrated by the group member(s) justifies a reduced evaluation **for that particular member**. Even if a group member fails to participate, you are still responsible for completing the project, but you will **not** be penalized as a group if a member does not participate.

On Group Project Scheduling Concerns

The only downside I've heard from students about the group format pertains to scheduling, so I want to make this clear up front: First and foremost, I will make sure everyone has an opportunity to get any of the work for this course done, even if life / work / school obstacles can get in the way of established deadlines. You can always contact me if you run into any issues with deadlines, especially when it comes to the three group project deadlines.

Since it is difficult for some students to coordinate these group projects in an online setting, I will say this: First, the only parts of the group project that require any major collaboration are (1) making sure your concept choices do not overlap with those chosen by your group members, (2) organizing the group paper into one cohesive paper, and (3) recording the presentation. The first two matters of collaboration are often accomplished through email or group messaging, so this should not present a scheduling concern for most – if not all – groups. Recording the presentation is the only part that usually must be done simultaneously over some video conferencing software (Zoom, Skype, etc.), though previous groups have used other resources – such as VoiceThread – to asynchronously record their group presentation. While I do highly encourage you to find a time to record this presentation as a group, if organizing this sort of group meeting proves to be too difficult, there certainly are other options! Please reach out to

me if you run into any issues during the group project and I will do everything in my power to help the process go smoothly.

Exams

      There will be **no exams** for this course!

Other Information

Plagiarism

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit umatter.ufl.edu/ to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit counseling.ufl.edu/ or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit shcc.ufl.edu/.

University Police Department: Visit police.ufl.edu/ or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services career.ufl.edu/.

Library Support: cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. teachingcenter.ufl.edu/

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/

Student Complaints On-Campus: sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor- code-student-conduct-code/

On-Line Students Complaints: distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/ /

Weekly Schedule

Note: All listed times are in EST

Note 2: Discussion Board Posts and Quizzes are due by **11:59 PM** on **Sundays** unless otherwise specified

Note 3: This schedule is *subject to change*. If any change occurs, it will be corrected on Canvas.

Intro –   Class Introduction
- *Assigned*: Discussion Board Post

Week 1 –   Chapter 0 (Introduction of Textbook)
- *Assigned*: Quiz, Discussion Board Post

Week 2 –   Chapter 1 – Part 1
- *Assigned*: Quiz, Discussion Board Post

Week 3 –   Chapter 1 – Part 2
- *Assigned*: Quiz, Discussion Board Post
- *Assigned*: R.I. Response (Ch. 1) – due **Saturday, 9/17 @ 11:59 PM**

Week 4 –   Chapter 2 – Part 1
- *Assigned*: Quiz, Discussion Board Post

Week 5 –   Chapter 2 – Part 2
- *Assigned*: Quiz, Discussion Board Post

Week 6 –   Chapter 3
- *Assigned*: Quiz, Discussion Board Post

Week 7 –   Chapter 4 – Part 1
- *Assigned*: Quiz, Discussion Board Post

Week 8 –   *Spring Break – No Class*

Week 9 –   Chapter 4 – Part 2
                 • *Assigned*: Quiz, Discussion Board Post

Week 10 –   Chapter 5 – Part 1
                 • *Assigned*: Quiz, Discussion Board Post

Week 11 –   Chapter 5 – Part 2
                 • *Assigned*: Quiz, Discussion Board Post

Week 12 –   Chapter 6 – Part 1
                 • *Assigned*: Quiz, Discussion Board Post
                 • *Assigned*: Group Project - Stage 1

Week 13 –   Chapter 6 – Part 2
                 • *Assigned*: Quiz, Discussion Board Post
                 • *Assigned*: Group Project – Stage 2

Week 14 –   Video Games & Society*
                 • **No quiz**
                 • *Assigned*: Discussion Board Post
                 • *Assigned*: Group Project – Stage 3

Week 15 –   Digital Divide* & Wrap-Up
                 • **No quiz**
                 • *Assigned*: Discussion Board Post

*These discussions do *not* have corresponding chapters in the textbook. Any necessary articles or information will be posted on Canvas for these weeks.

Group Project Deadlines

       Stage 1: Wednesday, 4/5 @ 11:59 PM

       Stage 2: Saturday, 4/22 @ 11:59 PM

       Stage 3: Saturday, 4/29 @ 11:59 PM