Office Hours and Contact Information

Instructor: Adam J. Sharples

Class: T/Th 9:30-10:45, Bidgood 121

Email: ajsharples@crimson.ua.edu

Office Hours: T/Th 2-3:00, or by email 24/7

Office: Reese Phifer 442

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Prerequisites

UA Course Catalog Prerequisites
Prerequisite(s): COM 100 or COM 101.

COM 100 (undergrad) with a minimum grade of C
COM 101 (undergrad) with a minimum grade of C

Course Description

UA Course Catalog Information

Study and analysis of issues of diversity as they relate to groups in society and in communication fields. Emphasis is on the media's treatment of various groups in society. Writing proficiency is a requirement for passing the course. W designation for University core curriculum.

Core Designations:

Writing
Student Learning Outcomes

This course gives students the opportunity to develop a comprehensive understanding of some of the major concepts related to diversity and communication, as well as the relationship between diversity and communication. This approach combines theory, fundamental concepts, and analytical skills with personal experience in order to achieve the following objectives:

☼ Students will develop a more fundamental understanding of difference and how individual identities and social perceptions shape attitudes and behavior toward individuals with a variety of differences.

☼ Students will examine critical aspects of identity including gender, race, social class, sexuality, ability, and age, but also to extend the discourse of identity beyond these individual elements. (SLO: content)

☼ Garner and appreciation for the resistance, empowerment and possibilities of Africa American discourse in U.S. socio-political contexts (SLO: content)

☼ Students will increase their self-awareness as well as awareness of those who are different from them. (SLO: Communication)

☼ Participating in seminar-style discussions through leading class discussions and presenting final research projects.

Required Texts

UA Supply Store Textbook Information

- ALLEN (RENTAL) / (RENTAL) DIFFERENCE MATTERS (RENTAL)
- (E-BOOK) ALLEN / DIFFERENCE MATTERS (Choose One)
- ALLEN / DIFFERENCE MATTERS (Choose One)


(B) Readings posted on Blackboard

Blackboard & Writing Designation

BlackBoard:

Be sure to consult – on a weekly basis – our course’s Blackboard site. Readings, context sheets, notes, assignments, reviews sheets, and instructor messages will be posted there, so it is important that you check often. As I will attempt to accommodate the interests of students and tailor the lessons to issues that arise in class, it is vital that you refer back to the blackboard site as often as possible as readings may appear the weekend before class at the latest.

The meaning of a writing (w) Requirement
This course fulfills the ‘W’ requirement in the UA Core Curriculum, which means that writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in the course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper division student in the discipline will not be given a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs other course requirements. Written assignments will require coherent, logical, and carefully edited prose. We will begin with descriptive writing and progress to higher-level critical thinking and writing skills such as analysis, interpretation, and synthesis.

For all written assignments, the instructor is willing and able to assist in writing help, either through separate meetings or through scheduling with the Writing Center. All writing assignment will receive full commentary as a part of the instructor’s evaluation. At least one written assignment will be graded and returned by Midterm.

Exams and Assignments

Course Assignments:

1. Attendance/ Participation 100 points 10%
2. Journal Entries (10) 200 points 20%
3. ID Check Papers (3) 300 points 30%
4. Instructor Meeting 25 points 3%
5. Quizzes/Class Activities (3) 75 points 7%
6. Final Reflection Paper 150 points 15%
7. Partner Project 150 points 15%

Grading Scale:

965 – 1000 = A+
935 – 964 = A
895 – 934 = A-
865 – 894 = B+
835 – 864 = B
795 – 834 = B-
765 – 794 = C+
735 – 764 = C
695 – 734 = C-
665 – 694 = D+
635 – 664 = D
595 – 634 = D-
000 – 594 = F

**Journal Entries (10 x 20 pts.)**

Most Thursdays (see course schedule) students will turn in a 2 -3 pp. typed journal entry reflecting on either the theoretical readings for that week or based upon a prompt from current events in diversity and public discourse for said week. These entries can attend to critiques of what we read, what you might read outside of class, extensions of our in-class discussion, or applications of the readings to some experience had by the student either in class or “out there” in the public. These journals should not just be summaries of the readings, they should actively engage the questions, stakes, and arguments made in the articles. Students should use these journals as an opportunity to improve writing skills. *A more detailed assignment sheet will be provided on Blackboard.*

**ID Check Papers (3 x 100 pts.)**

Students will complete three papers based on the ID check questions (grey box, not the reflection questions at the end of the chapter) in the textbook. In each of these papers you will examine aspects of your own identity. Everything you write in these papers (or share with me outside of class) will be kept confidential unless you chose to reveal it to others. While your paper should include answers to all of the questions, it should be written as a paper, not questions and answers. Topics will include the following:

- Paper #1: Gender (pg. 62) due January 28
- Paper #2: Race (pg. 9 –91) Due February 4
- Paper#3: Sexuality (pg. 124) Due February 27

**Instructor Meeting**

Each student should schedule an appointment to meet with me during the first half of the semester. I will have signup sheets to facilitate this or you can email me to arrange a time. If you miss your meeting **without calling to reschedule before the meeting time** you will only be able to get 15 points.

**Quizzes Class Activities**

Three times throughout the semester you will be asked to participate in class activities that will assess your comprehension of the reading material for that week. These quizzes will either come in the form of multiple-choice questions, brief short essay, or a small group activity. If you have read and understood the reading this should not be difficult.
Final Reflection Paper 150pts

In lieu of a final exam or a midterm, students will write a 5-7 page paper about what they have learned about communication and diversity this semester, applying the readings from throughout the semester to personal experience, and address their plans for using this knowledge and experience in the future. See detailed assignment sheet on blackboard.

Final Partner Project 150pts

Students will complete an ultimate “capstone” to the course dealing with issues of diversity and communication. Students will have the option of either completing a solo 12-15 page research paper or engage in a project dealing with issues of gender, race, class, sexuality, and ability with a pre assigned student. The project needs to approved NO LATER than Spring Break. A more detailed assignment sheet will be available in Blackboard.

Attendance / Participation 100pts

This class depends upon group discussion as a means of facilitating our course objectives. Therefore, it is expected that students will come to class prepared and engage in substantive discussion to add to the course’s understanding of diversity and discourse. Students who repeatedly come to class unprepared for the day’s discussion will get 1 warning about their need to participate. After this warning if participation does not improve, points will be reduced by 10-point increments for each day until behavior improves. Students will also receive a status update on participation at the midterm.

Grading Policy

Grading Criteria for Written Assignments:

Your individual paper assignments will be evaluated based on the requirements and expectations of the assignment. In general, papers will be judged as follows:

An “A” paper:

1. Fully completes all parts of the assignment in a thoughtful manner and meets written assignment guidelines (including page and topic requirements, etc.)

2. Includes a concise and clear thesis or topic sentence.

3. Has an effective introduction and conclusion.

4. Provides support (examples, evidence) for arguments with adequate yet focused details.

5. Acknowledges and documents sources (using correct APA documentation).

6. Is well organized.

7. Is free of grammatical and spelling errors.

8. Uses appropriate vocabulary and format.
9. Shows originality and creativity in completing the assignment.

10. Maintains a level of excellence throughout.

A “B” paper does all of the above (1-10) in a superior way, but without the level of originality or creativity of an A paper and/or has some minor errors or flaws.

A “C” paper does all of the above (1-10) in a satisfactory manner but includes more (or more serious) errors or flaws.

A “D” paper is missing some of the above (1-10) and/or includes many serious and minor errors or flaws.

An “F” paper is missing many of the above (1-10) and/or includes many serious and minor errors or flaws.

Policy on Grade Disputes:

If you think that a grade should be reviewed, you may request that the assignment be re-graded. You may not make this request within 24 hours of receiving the grade, but it must occur within one week. To do this, you must submit, to the professor, the original assignment and a memo that details your reasons for requesting the re-grade. Keep in mind that this will be a true re-grade.

Extra Credit Opportunities:

Extra credit opportunities will be offered at the instructor’s discretion, will be offered to all students, and will be announced in class and online with appropriate notice for their completion.

Policy on Missed Exams & Coursework

All work must be turned in on time. Exams and presentations cannot be “made up.” The only exception to this rule is in the case of documented medical emergencies, death related absences, or other special circumstances beyond the control of the student (NOTE: Taking a vacation during the semester does not constitute an excused absence. Being called in for jury duty, however, does). Under these special circumstances it is your responsibility to make arrangements for make-up work (or early test taking) AND provide appropriate documentation.

I will confirm documentation before a presentation or exam can be re-scheduled and before late work will be reviewed. Fraudulent or forged documentation is an act of academic misconduct and will be handled accordingly. If an unexpected illness or unanticipated occurrence causes you to miss excessive classes it is in your best interest to withdraw from the class. Regardless of reason, substantial absences are unacceptable and will limit your grade potential and ability to successfully complete the course.
**Attendance Policy**

Attendance is important to this course. The instructor will take roll on a daily basis. Students are allowed to miss three (3) unexcused sessions. An excused absence is defined as an excused absence is defined as (1) a verifiable medical or personal emergency, (2) official university business such as athletics, forensics and other university sanctioned activities, or (3) a death in the family. Being sick, or simply visiting the UA health center, does not constitute a medical emergency so use your unexcused absences wisely.

10% of your final grade depends on your regular attendance and participation in class. You are allowed three (3) unexcused absences from class without penalty; after this your points reduce dramatically as follows:

0 – 3 absences 100 points
4 – 5 absences 20 points
5+ 0 points

Ultimately, you are expected to attend class. Failing to do so may result in poor test scores and low assignment grades … in addition to wasting your time and money. You choose … you’re the consumer.

**Diversity Policy**

**General Course Related Policies**

A Note On Diversity:

“Discomfort is always a necessary part of the process of enlightenment.” – Pearl Cleage

This class is about discussing who we are. This will include in-depth discussions of a whole host of identity categories: race, sexual orientation, gender, class, ability, and many others. A key part of the success of this course depends on individuals being willing to share parts of themselves with the class. Thus, at some point or another we may get into issues that make you uncomfortable. When this occurs, please make the best attempt to articulate the source of your discomfort and try and open your mind to alternative ideas and viewpoints. Actions that threaten this environment will be handled at my discretion and could result in reduced participation points and absences for the day.

**Personal Electronics in Class:**

This course will be an interactive way to practice the skills of being able to articulate yourself in public settings. No cell phones or laptops are allowed in the course, except in special circumstances arranged beforehand. Having these items out/on will result in you being asked to leave the room and counted absent for the day. If your phone rings/or text alerts sounds I will take actions to prohibit this action in the future. Should continual use of these devices become an issue to the discussions in class your participation points will be docked by 10 points per instance.

**Policy on Academic Misconduct:**
All students in attendance at the University of Alabama are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. Academic misconduct includes all acts of dishonesty in any academically related matter and any knowing or intentional help or attempt to help, or conspiracy to help, another student commit an act of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessary limited to, the following acts when performed in any type of academic or academically related matter, exercise, or activity:

1. cheating – using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, study aids or computer-related information

2. plagiarism – representing the words, data, works, ideas, computer programs or output, or anything not generated in an authorized fashion, as one’s own

3. fabrication – presenting as genuine any invented or falsified citation or material

4. misrepresentations – falsifying, altering or misstating the contents or documents or other materials related to academic matters, including schedules, prerequisites and schedules

Except in divisions, which have an alternate academic misconduct policy which has been approved by the Academic Vice President, academic misconduct cases shall be resolved by the divisional academic misconduct monitor or the academic dean of the division in which the alleged action took place. However, the monitor or dean will consult the monitor or dean of the division where the student is enrolled and, with the concurrence of both deans, the responsibility for resolving academic misconduct cases can be transferred to the dean of the division in which the student is enrolled. Appeals from the monitor’s decisions may be made to the academic dean; appeals from the academic dean’s decisions may be made to the Office of Academic Affairs.

Penalties for academic misconduct can range from reprimand to a penalty as severe as suspension for a definite time or even indefinite suspension. Academic deans have the authority to impose the full range of penalties. Divisional academic misconduct monitors may impose penalties only after receiving a voluntary written confession. Misconduct monitors are authorized to impose penalties up to but not including suspension and may impose penalties of suspension or indefinite suspension if authority to do so has been delegated by the academic dean. All persons who admit to or are found guilty of an academic offense for which a penalty less than an indefinite suspension is imposed will receive a penalty of indefinite suspension if they admit to or are found guilty of another offense of academic misconduct (Faculty Handbook, August 1988, 88-89).

Disability Statement:

If you are registered with the Office of Disability Services, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss any course accommodations that may be necessary. If you have a disability, but have not contacted the Office of Disability Services, please call 348-4285 or visit 133-B Martha Parham Hall East to register for services. Students who may need course adaptations because of a disability are welcome to make an appointment to see me during office hours. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Disability Services, 133-B Martha Parham Hall East, before receiving academic adjustments.

Severe Weather Protocol:
In the case of a tornado warning (tornado has been sighted or detected by radar, sirens activated), all university activities are automatically suspended, including all classes and laboratories. If you are in a building, please move immediately to the lowest level and toward the center of the building away from windows (interior classrooms, offices, or corridors) and remain there until the tornado warning has expired. Classes in session when the tornado warning is issued can resume immediately after the warning has expired at the discretion of the instructor. Classes that have not yet begun will resume 30 minutes after the tornado warning has expired provided at least half of the class period remains.

UA is a residential campus with many students living on or near campus. In general classes will remain in session until the National Weather Service issues safety warnings for the city of Tuscaloosa. Clearly, some students and faculty commute from adjacent counties. These counties may experience weather related problems not encountered in Tuscaloosa. Individuals should follow the advice of the National Weather Service for that area taking the necessary precautions to ensure personal safety. Whenever the National Weather Service and the Emergency Management Agency issue a warning, people in the path of the storm (tornado or severe thunderstorm) should take immediate life saving actions.

When West Alabama is under a severe weather advisory, conditions can change rapidly. It is imperative to get to where you can receive information from the National Weather Service and to follow the instructions provided. Personal safety should dictate the actions that faculty, staff and students take. The Office of Public Relations will disseminate the latest information regarding conditions on campus in the following ways:

- Weather advisory posted on the UA homepage
- Weather advisory sent out through Connect-ED--faculty, staff and students (sign up at myBama)
- Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA at 90.7 FM
- Weather advisory broadcast over Alabama Public Radio (WUAL) at 91.5 FM
- Weather advisories are broadcast via WUOA/WVUA-TV, which can be viewed across Central Alabama. Also, visit wvuatv.com for up-to-the-minute weather information. A mobile Web site is also available for your convenience.

Student Consent and Instructor elasticity:

The instructor stipulates that a student’s receipt of this syllabus shall act as a contract between the instructor and the student. Receipt of this syllabus presupposes that a student has read and understands the policies contained herein. The instructor reserves the right to amend course assignments, assignment weights, readings and non-administrative items contained in this syllabus. The instructor will notify students through E-learning and/or orally of any changes to this syllabus/contract.

Outline of Topics

1/9 Introduction to the Course No Readings
Writing at the 400 Level

1/14
Class Activity – Understanding Privilege

Tuesday
Syllabus Quiz
(A) Ch. 1 (1-22)
Basic concepts, Difference & Diversity

1/16
Basic Concepts, Different & Diversity

Thursday
Journal #1 Due
(A) Ch. 1 (1-22)

1/21
Power & Privilege

Tuesday
(A) Ch. 2 (23-40)

1/23
Power & Privilege

Thursday
Journal #2 Due

1/28
Gender Matters

Tuesday
ID Paper #1 Due
(A) Ch. 3 (41-64)

1/30
Gender Cont.

Thursday
Miss Representation
(B) Charlesbois, J.
Ladylike Men and Guyland

2/4
Race Matters

Tuesday
Black Kids’ Stories: Ta(l)king (About) Race
(A) Ch. 4 (65-92)
ID Paper #2 Due
(B)
2/6 Race Matters Cont. (B) Wise
Thursday Between Barak and a Hard Place Ch.1 (B) Ellis
“Real Americans”
Journal #3 Due

2/11 Race Matters Cont. (B) Jones (93-119)
Tuesday The Languages and Messages of Black Women

2/13 Whiteness Class Activity (B) Online Reading
Thursday Nakayam & Krizek
Journal #4 Due

2/18 Whiteness (B) Online Reading
Tuesday “Why are you shoving this”
Student Responses to Race in the Classroom

2/20 Social Class Matters (A) Ch. 5 (93-114)
Thursday Instructor Meetings Completed
Journal #5 Due

2/25 Social Class Matters (B) Online Reading
Tuesday Two or Three Things I know For Sure

2/27 Ch. 6 Sexuality Matters (A) Ch. 6 116 -136
Thursday Heterosexuality (B) Online Reading
ID Paper #3 Due

3/4  Ch. 6 Sexuality Matters  (B) Butler
     Tuesday  Being Gay  (B) D’Emilio
     Capitalism and Gay Identity

3/5  Diversity Symposium – Extra Credit  Gorgas 205
     Wednesday

3/6  Tony Adams Guest Lecture  (B) Tony Adams
     Thursday  Quiz – Tony Adams Discussion

3/11  Ch. 7 Ability Matters  (A) Ch. 7 137 - 160
      Tuesday  ID Check Paper Option Due

3/13  Ability Cont.  (A) Fassett & Morella
      Thursday  Murderball & Discussion  (B) Mills
      Journal # 7 Due

3/18  Bullied Film  (B) Online Reading
      Tuesday  Final Project Topic Due

3/20  Talkback Bullied Film  (B) Online Reading
      Thursday  Journal # 8 Due
Diversity Policy

Severe Weather Guidelines

The guiding principle at The University of Alabama is to promote the personal safety of our students, faculty and staff during severe weather events. It is impossible to develop policies which anticipate every weather-related emergency. These guidelines are intended to provide additional assistance for responding to severe weather on campus.

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• Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA-TV/WUOA-TV, and on the website at http://wvuatv.com/content/weather. WVUA-TV Home Team Weather provides a free service you can subscribe to which allows you to receive weather warnings for Tuscaloosa via e-mail or cell phone. Check http://wvuatv.com/content/free-email-weather-alerts for more details and to sign up for weather alerts.

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See the Code of Student Conduct for more information.

**Emergency Contact Information**
UA's primary communication tool for sending out information is through its web site at www.ua.edu. In the event of an emergency, students should consult this site for further directions. Additional course information will be posted using Blackboard Learn.