

CMN 3260
Communication of Class in U.S. Culture
Spring 2014
Coleman 1731, Tuesday and Thursday 11:00 a.m. - 12:15 pm (CRN #35597)

Instructor: Dr. T. M. Linda Scholz

Office: Coleman 2030

Email: tscholz@eiu.edu (**Note:** I frequently check my Panther e-mail account, therefore, this is the best way to reach me. I DO NOT frequently check the D2L e-mail. To insure delivery, please use your EIU e-mail to contact me.)

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.; Wednesday, 10-11:30 am; and by appointment.

Required Readings:

Ehrenreich, B. (2001). *Nickel and dimed*. New York, NY: Picador.

Dines, G. & Humez, J. M. (Eds.). (2011). *Gender, race, and class in media: A Critical reader*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

hooks, b. (2000). *Where we stand: Class matters*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Additional reading will be posted on D2L.

Course Description and Objectives

Course Description: This course examines ways in which socio-economic class is constituted through public discourses. Students will learn how to use critical theories to investigate discourses that sustain a multilayered class system. Topics include the discourses of poverty, homelessness, immigration, and media representations of class.

Course Objectives:

- Identify theoretical terminologies and accounts of socio-economic systems of power and stratification as understood within U.S. discourses;
- Describe the relationships between ideological expectations of class mobility and discursive constructions of race and difference;
- Analyze popular representations of socio-economic class;
- Explain how dominant discourses affect understandings of socio-economic class distinctions;
- Evaluate discourses of resistance within their socio-historical contexts;
- Utilize varying critical methodologies to conduct research.

Accommodations

It is imperative that you are getting the most out of your educational experience. If you have a special need that qualifies for accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (217-581-6583) to arrange support services. Please also inform the instructor by providing the necessary documentation specifying the accommodations needed for the class within the first week of class.

Classroom Environment, Behavior, and Policies

All faculty in the Department of Communication Studies uphold the standards of good scholarship and expect our students to do the same. We expect that students earning a degree in Communication Studies will develop superior reasoning/critical thinking, argumentation, writing, and presentational skills while also building a comprehensive knowledge of their content area. Students in communication studies classes will be expected to read all assigned materials, write extensively, complete their own work, and engage in respectful interactions in the classroom. We, as a faculty, agree to hold our students to these standards.

The majority of students are in college specifically to acquire a degree in the hope of finding an adequate job to attain a particular standard of living in the future. Therefore, you should consider college your “on the job training.” You should make this a priority in your life (particularly when you consider the amount of money that is being invested in your education). With this said:

My intent is to establish an environment where you are able to ask questions openly, and respectfully. In an effort to co-construct this environment be courteous and respectful to one another AND to the instructor. During class discussions please avoid dominating the discussion and be concise with your comments. Be aware of how you phrase comments and questions. Avoid the use of “bashing” or derogatory language toward one another and toward others outside of this class. Additionally, be open to other perspectives. Each of you has a perspective to offer as it pertains to your individual experiences. Part of being effective communicators entails good listening skills as well. Each day will provide you with an opportunity to put effective communication skills into practice.

CELL PHONES: Given that the university has created an emergency text message system for campus community safety, it is understandable why students have concerns about keeping cell phones handy. Unfortunately, as you all know perhaps better than I, few students who opt to have their cell phones out during class are monitoring text messages for possible campus-related emergency texts. Therefore, I ask that cell phones be turned off and put away. Text messaging or any other form of cell phone use (or inappropriate use of any other electronic device) during class is very disruptive, disrespectful and will NOT be tolerated, and may result in the dismissal of the student for that class period. You are in this class to learn the subject matter, and not to have personal conversations with friends and family via your cell phone, or laptop. Surely, your friends and family can wait to speak with you before or after class. Be respectful of your instructor and peers, and put your cell phones away.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is expected at every class meeting, and it may factor into your overall grade. I consider more than two absences (a week of class) to be excessive. I understand that emergencies do occur, and that illness is often times inevitable. Be aware that in-class work may not be made up except by prior arrangement for a university excused absence and/or if you provide proper documentation proving a legitimate emergency (official doctor’s note, court papers, and the like). Regardless of the reason for your absence, I will not provide you a personal lecture in my office or via e-mail. It is up to you to get notes from a classmate. And the answer to the perpetual question “Did I miss anything?” is always: YES!

LATE WORK: I WILL NOT accept late work, e-mailed assignments, any assignments turned into my mailbox, or assignments turned in on flash drive, etc. (unless you have made prior special arrangements directly with me). Assignments are **DUE IN CLASS AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS**. Any papers turned in to me in class after class has commenced can result in a grade reduction. If you know that you are going to be absent on a day on which an assignment is due, make arrangements to turn in the assignment before, directly to me. Always have a backup of your work.

Your quizzes and exams CANNOT be made up unless you have made prior arrangement for a university excused absence and/or if you provide proper documentation proving a legitimate emergency (official doctor's note, court papers, and the like). Missing class on days during which you are expected to participate in a group activity, a presentation and/or discussion of papers, etc. will result in a failing grade for that portion of the assignment or a reduction in grade on your paper.

NOTE ABOUT TARDINESS AND EARLY EXIT: Class begins at the designated time, and ends at the designated time. Consistent tardiness and/or consistent early exit are distracting to students and the instructor, and are also disrespectful. If you have a class or work schedule conflict that interferes with your ability to come to class on time and remain in the class until its official end, please consider taking this class during a different semester or make appropriate adjustments that will not interfere with your timely, regular, and complete participation.

Academic Honesty: It is imperative that you understand that when you are an EIU student you are bound to the Student Conduct Standards. Although the Student Conduct Standards comprise a lengthy document, and although each aspect of it is highly important, aspects of Standard I will be highlighted here so that there are no misunderstandings of what is considered appropriate behavior conducive to creating an appropriate learning environment. **If you are caught cheating and/or plagiarizing, you will be reported and will fail the assignment, and possibly the course.** If you are confused about what constitutes cheating and/or plagiarism, please ask. Also consider the aspects of Standards II, III, IV and V when interacting with peers and the instructor in and outside of the classroom, when responding to class materials, etc.

- Standard I.** Eastern students observe the highest principles of academic integrity and support a campus environment conducive to scholarship. Violations of this standard:
- a. Conduct in subversion of academic standards, such as cheating on examinations, plagiarism, collusion, misrepresentation or falsification of data.
 - b. Theft or the unauthorized possession of examinations; alteration, theft, or destruction of the academic work of others, or academic records, library materials, laboratory materials, or other University equipment or property related to instructional matters or research.
 - c. Submitting work previously presented in another course unless specifically permitted by the instructor.
 - d. **Conduct which disrupts the academic environment; disruption in classes, faculty offices, academic buildings, or computer facilities.**
 - e. Complicity with others in violations of this standard.

Students who violate the conduct code will be given one verbal warning. The second time you will receive a reprimand and you may not attend class again until you have met with me and worked out a plan to adjust the disruptive behavior.

Assistance Outside of Class

If you need additional time to talk through the class material, or to discuss the progress of your work, I am happy to do so. You can stop by my office during my regularly scheduled office hours. You are also welcome to stop by outside of my regularly scheduled office hour, and if I am there, I will be happy to talk. Finally, you can set up an appointment. I also check Panther e-mail regularly during the day throughout the week, and will respond to questions that you have. However, there may be times when a question warrants a lengthy response, and so I may ask that you come to my office. Lastly, be sure to check your Panther e-mail and the course's D2L site regularly for any announcements regarding class issues, etc.

A Note About Grades

If you have questions about your grade, I ask that you follow this procedure:

- a. First, we will abide by the **“24-hour rule.”** This means that after you’ve received the grade, reflect upon it for 24 hours before you come talk to me. To assist in your reflection, you should look through your notes and readings.
- b. Second, after 24 hours have passed, e-mail me to request an appointment to come in and talk with me in person.
- c. Finally, our meeting should determine if indeed there was an error made in grading, and/or provide you with clarification on concepts, and/or create strategies for more effective future study habits, etc.

Despite the amount of times that you come in and talk with me, this will not guarantee you a specific grade in the course. In other words, the points you earn on assignments are totaled and those points will coincide with the overall grade you earn in the class. Please be aware of where you stand throughout the semester. If you need assistance calculating your grade, I am happy to assist you. Do not wait until the last few days of the semester to figure out where your grade stands. Once the semester is over, it’s over, and no more points will be allotted. In short, I do not curve nor do I generally offer extra credit. Clear expectations for assignments will be provided for you in the assignment guidelines that will be posted onto the D2L site for the course.

After one week all grades are final!

Expectations of the Readings

You will be reading material, viewing videos, and participating in activities that will be intellectually and emotionally challenging. You **ABSOLUTELY** need to do the reading in order to come to class prepared to have a **dialogue** that **goes beyond doubt and accusation**. Do not assume that by merely reading the titles of some of the articles, you know what the article is about. You will need to read **CAREFULLY** in order to achieve a better understanding of the material. A quick skim before class will not be sufficient. Having a clearer understanding of the different concepts will help you to have more appropriate and fruitful conversations in and out of the classroom.

Given that this course requires a lot of reading and writing, consider the time that you are willing to allot to careful and thorough reading and studying. It is okay if you face challenges comprehending some of the material, class discussions are designed to help you work through complications. If you are a student who feels that they can get by without reading, please drop this class. Given the small number of students, it will be abundantly clear (and also perhaps embarrassing) if you do not put the required time and effort into this class. **Be forewarned: I will likely respectfully ask you to leave class if you have not done the reading.**

Course Assignments

In-class Group Activity (25 points): This assignment will provide you with an opportunity to apply and identify key concepts for the class. This activity will also provide you with a review prior to your exam. You will be assigned to work in small groups of approximately three students. Once in groups, you will divide concepts among you (after they have been defined for you in class). Each of you is in charge of providing your group with **examples** for your assigned concepts. Type your examples for your group, and be prepared to provide each group member a copy. You will then discuss each example with your group on the designated days. I will come around to each group to check your work. Do not let your group members down. They will not be happy if you do not follow through with your portion of the assignment.

My Position Paper (75 points): After discussing the various class-related concepts, you will be asked to reflect upon your own class position. In a **3 - 4 page** paper: discuss what class identity means to you, where you position yourself now, and where you see yourself in the future and why. You need to use **at least 5 concepts/terms** in this paper that we will have covered in reading and in lecture/discussion.

Response Papers (75 points each, total 150 points): You will write a critical response paper for the material covered in Units Two and Three. These papers should be **3 - 4 pages** in length (double spaced). You need to include at least **5 concepts** to help frame your response. You will also need to cite the readings using proper APA style. Lastly, each student will present her or his paper to the class. More details will be uploaded unto D2L.

Service Learning Project (350 points): This project consists of four components:

- ① **Service Learning Experience (100 points total):** You will be required to conduct **10 hours** of service learning this semester with an organization that provides services to people who are economically disadvantaged. You will be given options early in the semester so that you can begin service learning as soon as possible (NOTE: should begin early in February). As part of the assignment, you will write **two 2 – 3 page “journal responses”** reflecting on your experiences as you progress through the 10 hours. You are expected to incorporate concepts from class in your responses.
- ② **Topic Proposal for Research Paper (50 points):** Drawing on your service learning experience, you will select a topic focusing on socio-economic class concerns. The topic proposal will evolve into an **academic style paper (using APA format)**. The primary goal of this paper is to focus on a class concept in relation to a particular group in the United States AND use research (including communication texts and journals) to illuminate the depth and complexity of the concept/issue.
 - You will turn in a 2 - 3 page paper (double spaced) that will explain the topic of your focus for your final research paper. You will also be required to have a **5 source annotated bibliography** for this assignment (the source requirement will increase for your final paper).
- ③ **Research Paper (150 points):** The paper should include a formal title page, 7 - 8 pages of written content, and a works cited page, so about nine - ten pages TOTAL. You will weave in examples from your service learning experience to illustrate/support/ and/or challenge the research you conducted. From the get go, I advise you to keep this paper in mind. Note: As you progress through your service learning experience, find an issue and/or concept for which you have passion and want to explore in depth.

- © **Paper Presentation (50 points):** At the end of the semester, you will present your papers to the class. You are expected to develop a formal presentation. Details of how to structure your presentation will be provided along with the paper requirements on D2L.

A detailed description of the overall project requirements will be posted on D2L.

Concepts Exam (worth 100 points): One exam will be administered this semester. The exam will focus on the foundational concepts for the course.

Pop Reading Quizzes (50 points total): Reading the material in this course is essential so that you are able to navigate and negotiate the subject matter in an effective manner. To assist you in your reading efforts, you will be given 5 pop reading quizzes throughout the semester (worth 10 points each).

In-Class Participation (50 points total): Throughout the semester, you will be required to participate in different in-class activities and discussions (which are depend on the reading assigned throughout the semester). The total points that you receive will reflect your consistent level of participation as well as your reading preparedness for discussion. In order to assist in tracking your participation, you will be signed in daily.

Total points possible: 800

Grading Scale

800-720 = A
719-640 = B
639-560 = C
559-480 = D
479-below = F

Tentative Schedule
CMN 3260
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Spring 2014
Coleman 1731, Tuesday and Thursday 11:00 am -12:15 (CRN #35597)
(The instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule if needed)

Readings are to be completed for the day on which they are noted.

Key:

Gender, Race, and Class in Media (GRCM)

Nickel and Dimed (N&D)

Where We Stand: Class Matters (Where We Stand)

Week 1

January 14— **Introduction to the course. Expectations.**

January 16— **Unit One: Foundation Concepts and Theories**
D2L reading: Allen, “Social Class Matters”

Week 2

January 21— **Unit One, cont’d.**
D2L reading: Allen, “Social Class Matters” cont’d
Textbook reading (GRCM): Lull, “Hegemony”

January 23— **Unit One, cont’d.**
D2L reading: Mantsios, “Class in America—2006”; Gans,
“Deconstructing the Underclass”

Week 3

January 28— **Unit One, cont’d.**
D2L reading: Domhoff, “Class and Power in America.”

January 30— **Unit One, cont’d**
D2L reading: Aune, “Cultures of Discourse: Marxism and Rhetorical Theory”

Week 4

NOTE: Your “Service Learning” should start this month.

February 4— **Unit One, cont’d**
Textbook reading (GRCM): Dines & Humez, “A Cultural Studies Approach to Media”; Kellner, “Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism, and Media Culture”

February 6— **Unit One, cont’d.**
Film: People Like Us

Week 5

February 11— **Unit One, cont’d.**
Film: People Like Us
Begin group activity

February 13— **Group Activity, cont’d**

Week 6
February 18— **EXAM**

February 20— *Due: My Position*

Week 7
February 25— **Unit Two: Intersectionality/Class and Gender**
Textbook reading (N&D): Introduction & Chapter 1 (Serving in Florida)

February 27— **Unit Two, cont'd.**
Textbook reading (N&D): Chapter 2 (Scrubbing in Maine)

Week 8
March 4— **Unit Two, cont'd.**
Textbook reading (N&D): Chapter 3 (Selling in Minnesota)

March 6— **Unit Two, cont'd.**
Textbook reading (N&D): Evaluation & Afterword
Due: First Service Learning Response

March 10-14 SPRING BREAK. NO CLASS.

Week 9
March 18— **Unit Two, cont'd.**
Due: *Nickel and Dimed* response

March 20— **Unit Two, cont'd.**
D2L Reading: (Un)Hinging Whiteness by Rowe and Malhotra

Week 10
March 25— **Unit Three: Intersectionality/Class, Race, and Ethnicity**
Textbook reading (Where We Stand): Introduction – Chapter 3

March 27— **Unit Three, cont'd.**
Textbook reading (Where We Stand): Chapter 4 – Chapter 7
Due: Topic Proposal

Week 11
April 1— **Unit Three, cont'd.**
Textbook reading (Where We Stand): Chapter 8 - end

April 3— **Unit Three, cont'd**
Film: The House We Live In

Week 12
April 8— **Unit Three, cont'd.**
Due: Response to Where We Stand

April 10— **Unit Four: Representations of Class**
Textbook reading (GRCM): Lipsitz, Chapter 3, “The Meaning of Memory”; Butsch, Chapter 13, “Ralph, Fred, Archie, Homer, and the King of Queens”

Week 13

April 15—

Unit Four, cont'd.

Textbook reading (GRCM): Part IV, “Advertising and Consumer Culture”; Jhally, Chapter 22, “Image-Based Culture: Advertising and Popular Culture”;

April 17—

Unit Four, cont'd

Textbook reading (GRCM): Mueller, Chapter 24, “Reaching African American Consumers”; Ouellette, Chapter 25, “Inventing the Cosmo Girl”; Engstrom, Chapter 27, “Unraveling the Knot”

Due: Second Service Learning Response

Week 14

April 22—

Unit Four, cont'd.

Film: Class Dismissed

April 24—

Unit Four, cont'd.

Due: Research Paper

Week 15

April 29—

PRESENTATIONS

May 1—

PRESENTATIONS

Course wrap-up. Last day of class.

Final Exam Period: Tuesday, May 6th 2:45 pm – 4:45 pm. Conclude final presentations.

Bibliography of Additional Readings

- Allen, B. J. (2011). Social class matters. In Brenda J. Allen, *Difference Matters: Communicating Social Identity* (pp. 93-113). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.
- Aune, J. A. (1999). Cultures of discourse: Marxism and rhetorical theory. In John L. Lucaites, Celeste M. Condit, and Sally Caudill (Eds.), *Contemporary Rhetorical Theory: A Reader* (pp. 539-551). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Domhoff, G. W. (2010). Class and power in America. In G. William Domhoff, *Who Rules America: Challenges to Corporate and Class Dominance* (pp. 1-23). Boston Burr Ridge, IL: McGraw Hill.
- Gans, H. (2007). Deconstructing the underclass. In Paula S. Rothenberg (Ed.), *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States* (pp. 102-108). New York, NY: Worth Publishers.
- Mantsios, G. (2007). Class in America—2006. In Paula S. Rothenberg (Ed.), *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States* (pp. 182-197). New York, NY: Worth Publishers.
- Rowe, A. C. & Molhotra, S. (2006). (Un)hinging Whiteness. In Mark P. Orbe, Brenda J. Allen & Lisa A. Flores (Eds.), *International and Intercultural Communication Annual. The Same and Different: Acknowledging the Diversity Within and Between Cultural Groups* (Vol. XXIX, pp. 166-192). Washington D. C.: NCA.