

MAS 374: Race and Digital Media Studies

Fall/Spring 20XX

Unique #: XXXXX

Instructor	Email	Office Hours	Class Time and Location
Javier Rivera	Javierrivera3830@utexas.edu	Xam-Xpm GWB 2.104C	MWF Xam-Xpm

Course Description:

“On the internet, nobody knows you’re a dog” - Peter Steiner

From its inception, the internet was pitched as a utopia that freed one from the constraints of race, gender, sexuality, and other lived experiences that often result in marginalization - as reflected in the quote above by Peter Steiner. This idea was quickly eschewed with the onset of Web 2.0 and the shift from text-based to image-driven and user-generated web platforms. This course examines the ways the internet, digital media, and other new media technologies have affected notions of race, ethnicity, gender, the public sphere, and civic engagement. Students will be asked to engage with written text and various media that will be used in critical analysis through writing activities, group presentations, and class participation.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students should:

- Have grown in their capabilities to think critically about race and ethnicity as they relate to the internet, digital, and new media technologies.
- Consider intersections of gender, sexuality, class, and nationality as they relate to race and digital media.
- Acquire knowledge of the histories of race and technology and be able to use that knowledge to guide critical assessment of emerging technologies.
- Acquire practical skills in using online platforms and digital tools to assess and critically engage the implications of race in new technologies.

Course Materials

Required Materials

- All readings for this course will be available on Canvas.

Assignments and Grading

Attendance/Participation 15%

You are permitted three absences from class, for any reason, no questions asked. There are no excused absences beyond this, unless you have communicated with me about an issue within a week in advance or if it is related to accessibility, also to be addressed in conversation with me. More than three absences will reduce your Attendance/Participation grade up to five points. Students possess different learning styles and thus I hope to allow various avenues for you to participate. These can include in-class speaking, in-class writing exercises, participation of small group discussion, or Canvas discussion posts in addition to the assigned weekly posts.

Weekly Discussion Posts 10%

Before every Monday class. Students will submit discussion posts through Canvas that respond to the readings from the previous week and answer any questions posed in the discussion prompt.

Paper 1: Race and New Technologies Paper 15%

With this paper assignment (4-6 pages), students will analyze a piece of new technology using a theory or concept explored in the second unit of the class. Examples of new technology can be a smartphone application, emergent technology such as virtual reality, big data and algorithmic processes, or web page interfaces and infrastructures. More information on this assignment will be provided as its due date approaches.

Visual Cultures of the Internet: Group Presentation 20%

You will organize, collaborate, and deliver a group presentation on a piece, genre, or other collection of internet visual cultures (think memes, GIFs, and short videos used as a method of computer-mediated communication). The visual artifacts should be placed in conversation with a concept covered in the course thus far. I organize the groups, but do my best to place you in a preferred group. Still, I may arbitrarily assign you to a group. You must check-in with me on the artifacts you are using for your presentation at least a week before the date of your presentation.

Paper 2: Online Community Analysis Paper 15%

With this paper assignment (4-6 pages), students will analyze an online community which holds race and/or ethnicity as a foundation for its existence. Students should take a concept or theory from the literature read in class thus far and apply it to their community in question. The community can be broadly construed to encompass spaces such as Twitter, Facebook, Reddit, YouTube, Twitch, etc. More information on this assignment will be provided as its due date approaches.

Final Project/Paper 25%

Students will have some flexibility with the final assignment. It will consist of a creative production that has been approved before-hand. This can include, but is not limited to an e-zine, a digital web text, series of blog posts, podcast recording, etc. which uses the concepts and theories for the course. This prompt is intentionally broad and not specific. We will have consultations on final project ideas leading up to its due date so that we can identify what course content has interested you the most during the semester.

Grade Scale

Grades for the course will be determined once assignments have been completed and turned in. The following scale will be used:

A = 93.5-100

A- = 90-93.4

B+ = 87-89.4

B = 84-86.4

B- = 80-83.4

C+ = 77-79.4

C = 74-76.4

C- = 70-73.4

D = 65-69.4

F = <65

Course Policies and Guidelines

Academic Integrity:

All work submitted by students is expected to be their own work created specifically for this course. Any breach of academic integrity will not be tolerated and can result in disciplinary action. For more information, [access UT's policies regarding academic misconduct](#).

Late Assignment Policy:

It is expected that students turn in assignments on time. If you are having difficulty completing assignments by their due date, please communicate with me as soon as possible. Late assignments will decrease by half a letter grade (5 points) for every day that it is late.

Accessibility:

Students who have disabilities, permanent or temporary, may find themselves having to navigate completing course requirements in ways that may come in conflict with things such as due dates, participation or attendance. I recognize that not all disabilities are documented with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Regardless, I will work with you to establish accommodations that can facilitate a more equitable class experience for those in need. I highly encourage students who may need such accommodations to visit me during office hours or during a scheduled face-to-face meeting so that we can work something out.

Disability Accommodations with SSD:

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 512-471-6259, or visit their website: <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd>.

Community Agreements:

At times, you may find the content and/or discussion of this course fascinating, exciting, upsetting, or uncomfortable. To be expounded on early in semester, we will operate under a set of agreed-upon community agreements so that we may strive to maintain a respectful class between myself and students. Some agreements that are to serve as a base include a social justice ethic, respect, the openness to grow, collaborative learning, and a community-based ethics of care (we can talk more about what this looks like).

Communication:

Email is the best form of communication with me on a one-on-one basis. Always refer to Canvas announcements page before sending a question over, as you may find you answer there. Please check this Canvas announcements page regularly as it is my main source of communication to the entire class. Email etiquette: Please refer to me as either Instructor or Professor in class and in your email correspondence with me. Email serves as a form of professional communications and now should be the time that you solidify these practices and conventions.

Religious Holy Days:

In accordance with UT policy, you must notify me of an expected absence at least 14 days before the date of observance of a religious holy day. If this results in a missed assignment, I will work with you on an appropriate opportunity to complete any missed work or assignment.

Technology Use:

This use of devices such as laptops, tablets, mobile phones is discouraged in class. If you seek to use these devices for note taking purposes in class please see me, otherwise please keep these devices stowed away during class.

Office Hours:

Office hours are a time set aside where you can meet with me with questions in regards to course materials, assignments, becoming a Latinx Studies/MALS major, continuing class discussion, etc. If the established office hours do not work with your schedule, please let me know and we can schedule accordingly.

Title IX:

Per UT Austin policy, all instructional staff (including faculty and graduate As/TAs) are Title IX mandatory reporters, meaning we are obligated to report to the Title IX office any instances of gender discrimination or sexual misconduct, including harassment and assault.

Course Schedule (The reading schedule may be subject to change).

Week	Topic	Day	Reading
Week 1		W	Introduction
	Cyber-race and the Early Internet	F	Lisa Nakamura, "Introduction." <i>Digitizing Race</i> .
Week 2	Cyber-race and the Early Internet	M	Jesse Daniels, "White Supremacist Discourse." <i>Cyber Racism</i>
	Cyber-race and the Early Internet	W	Lisa Nakamura, Ch.1, <i>Digitizing Race</i> . (pg. 37-69)
	Critical Race Theory and Racial Formation	F	Michael Omi and Howard Winant, "Introduction." <i>Racial Formation in the United States</i> .
Week 3	Critical Race Theory and Racial Formation	M	Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, "Introduction and Ch. 1." <i>Critical Race Theory: An Introduction</i> .
	Critical Race Theory and Racial Formation	W	Patricia Hill Collins, "Ch. 2." <i>Black Feminist Thought</i> .
	Race, Technology, Infrastructure, Algorithms and Design	F	Wendy Chun, "Race and/as Technology, or How to Do Things with Race." <i>Race After the Internet</i> .
Week 4	Race, Technology, Infrastructure, Algorithms and Design	M	Meredith Broussard, "Hello, AI." <i>Artificial Unintelligence</i> .
	Race, Technology, Infrastructure, Algorithms and Design	W	Meredith Broussard, "People Problems." <i>Artificial Unintelligence</i> .
	Race, Technology, Infrastructure, Algorithms and Design	F	Ruha Benjamin, "Engineered Inequality." <i>Race After Technology</i> .
Week 5	Race, Technology, Infrastructure, Algorithms and Design	M	Ruha Benjamin, "Retooling Solidarity, Reimagining Justice." <i>Race After Technology</i> .
	Race, Technology, Infrastructure, Algorithms and Design	W	Safiya Noble, "A Society, Searching." <i>Algorithms of Oppression</i> . (pgs 1-29)
	Race, Technology, Infrastructure, Algorithms and Design	F	Safiya Noble, "A Society, Searching." <i>Algorithms of Oppression</i> . (pgs 30-49)
Week 6	Race, Technology, Infrastructure, Algorithms and Design	M	danah boyd, "Social Networking Sites as Networked Publics." <i>A Networked Self</i> .
	New Media and Propaganda	W	Screening: <i>The Facebook Dilemma</i> in class
	New Media and Propaganda	F	Screening: <i>The Facebook Dilemma</i> in class
Week 7	Online Communities and Networks	M	André Brock, "From the Blackhand Side."

	Online Communities and Networks	W	Sarah Florini, "Tweets, Tweeps, and Signifyin'."
		F	Paper 1 Due; No class
Week 8	Online Communities and Networks	M	Lori Lopez, "Blogging While Angry."
	Online Communities and Networks	W	Catherine Knight Steele, "Black Bloggers and Their Varied Publics."
	Online Communities and Networks	F	Rachel González, "Coming of Age in the Digital Barrio." <i>Quinceañera Style</i> .
Week 9	Online Communities and Networks	M	Madhavi Mallapragada, "Immigrant Activism."
	Online Communities and Networks	W	Madhavi Mallapragada, "Desi Networks." <i>Virtual Homelands</i> .
	Online Communities and Networks	F	Jessica Nydia Pabón-Colón, "Cultivating Affective Digital Networks." <i>Graffiti Grrlz</i> .
Week 10	Race and Visual Cultures of the Internet	M	Lisa Nakamura, "Ch.2." <i>Digitizing Race</i> .
	Race and Visual Cultures of the Internet	W	Lisa Nakamura, "Ch.4." <i>Digitizing Race</i> .
	Race and Visual Cultures of the Internet	F	Paper 2 Due; No class
Week 11	Race and Visual Cultures of the Internet	M	Lisa Nakamura, "Ch.5." <i>Digitizing Race</i> .
	Race and Visual Cultures of the Internet	W	María Elena Cepeda, "Putting a 'Good Face on the Nation'."
	Race and Visual Cultures of the Internet	F	Tiera Tanksley, "Education, Representation, and Resistance: Black Girls and Popular Instagram Memes."
Week 12		M	Group Work
		W	Group Work
	Race and Visual Cultures of the Internet	F	YouTube Videos Screening
Week 13		M	Group Presentations
		W	Group Presentations
		F	Group Presentations
Week 14		M	No class
		W	No class - Holiday
		F	No class - Holiday
Week 15		M	Final Project Consultations
		W	Final Project Consultations
		F	Final Project Consultations
Week 16	Course Conclusion and Evaluations	M	Conclusion and Course Evaluations, Final Project Due during finals week TBD