

Faculty of Information and Media Studies MIT 3210G – Media Representations of Women

Course outline for Winter 2021



Although this academic year might be different, Western University is committed to a **thriving campus**. We encourage you to check out the [Digital Student Experience](#) website to manage your academics and well-being. Additionally, the following link provides available resources to support students on and off campus: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>.

Technical Requirements



Stable internet connection



Laptop or computer

Course Overview and Important Dates




Mode	Dates	Time	Frequency
Virtual asynchronous	N/A	2-3 hours	Weekly

[Google Chrome](#) or [Mozilla Firefox](#) are the preferred browsers to optimally use OWL; update your browsers frequently. Students interested in evaluating their internet speed, please click [here](#).

Classes Start	Reading Week	Classes End	Study day(s)	Exam Period
January 11	February 15 – 19	April 12	April 13 – 14	April 15 – 30

Contact Information



Course Instructor	Contact Information
Dr. Nichole Edwards 	Email: nedwar7@uwo.ca Twitter: @nicholekedwards Virtual Office Hours: Tues 2-4pm EST (sign up on OWL, I will then send a Zoom link)

Course Description and Design – 3210G Media Representations of Women

This course considers how media – including film and tv, mainstream news, music, social media, pop culture, and societal trends – represent the experiences of both real *and* fictional women. By investigating these representations through an intersectional lens, students will explore how gender is often experienced alongside elements of race, sexuality, and class. For instance, how are women of colour represented in film and TV? Why are we seeing an increase in representations of transgender women, but not necessarily including the experiences of transgender men? How can we critically engage with the ever-popular genre of teenage witches that continue to grace our screens? And, what are the costs and benefits of social media use when it comes to young people’s sexuality?

These are just some of the intriguing questions at the heart of this course. By investigating these kinds of themes, students will not only come to an understanding of the many ways in which women are (and are not!) represented in media, but how these representations can often have real-life implications and knock-on effects – in other words, how representations can impact how women are valued, perceived, and treated within the broader social world. Through this approach, students will have a more nuanced understanding surrounding the varied representations of women in media.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:



- Assess the intersections of race, class and sexuality as they impact the way women are represented in various forms of media, and as a result, the broader social world
- Evaluate various films and TV shows in such a way that speaks to many current and ongoing debates within mainstream, political, media, and feminist discourse(s)
- Appreciate the significance and implications surrounding the idea that representation matters (“you can’t be what you can’t see”) and its real-life impact on women and minority populations
- Examine the importance of changing technologies and how this has impacted understandings and representations of women in media

Required Readings



Most course readings are available in OWL via EZproxy Library Link. All you have to do is click the reading link provided on each week’s overview page on OWL, and you will be redirected to a downloadable copy via the Western libraries database. Remember to login using your UWO ID to access the full library database off-campus. Please note that if you click the reading link and it does not automatically open the reading in a new window, you may have to allow your browser to accept pop-ups from OWL or update your browser.

All other readings are web-based and thus I have provided a hyperlink on the following page.

Course Content and Schedule

DATE	TOPIC	READING
Jan 11 – 17	Representation Matters	No reading for first week back
Jan 18 – 24	“She’s Too…” Representations of Unruly Women	Dionne, E. “No One Can Escape Diet Culture – Even Lizzo.” <i>Bitch Media</i> . 18 Dec 2020. Podcast: “Anne Helen Petersen Wrote A Book Called Too Fat, Too Slutty, Too Loud.” <i>No Filter with Mia Freedman</i> .
Jan 25 – 31	Comedy and Feminism	Swink, R. 2017. “Lemony Liz and likeable Leslie: audience understandings of feminism, comedy, and gender in women-led television series.” <i>Feminist Media Studies</i> , 17(1), pp. 14-28. Watch any episode of one of the following sitcoms: <i>30 Rock</i> , <i>Parks and Recreation</i> , <i>The Mindy Project</i> .
Feb 1 – 7	Witches Are Having A(nother) Moment	Waldron, D. 2005. “Witchcraft for sale! Commodity vs. Community in the Neopagan Movement”, 9(1), pp. 32-48.
Feb 8 – 14	Women (and Men) of Colour and Media	Winfrey Harris, T. “Some of Us Are Brave: Killing the Mammy Myth.” <i>Bitch Media</i> . 11 May 2017. Jean, Y. “Cultivating Freedom: This Year, Cottagecore Exploded – But Excluded Black Women.” <i>Bitch Media</i> . 21 Dec 2020.
Feb 15 – 21		Reading Week
Feb 22 – 28	Youth Sexuality, Social Media, and Digital Age	Ringrose, J. and Harvey, L. 2015. Boobs, back-off, six packs and bits: Mediated body parts, gendered reward, and sexual shame in teens’ sexting images. <i>Continuum</i> , 29(2), pp. 205-217.
Mar 1 – 7		Midterm Week
Mar 8 – 14	Queer Hollywood and Straight Audiences	Corey, S. 2017. All Bi Myself: Analyzing Television’s Presentation of Female Bisexuality. <i>Journal of Bisexuality</i> 17(2), pp. 190-205.
Mar 15 – 21	Trans Identities: From Politics to Pop Culture	Lovelock, M. 2017. Call me Caitlyn: making and making over the ‘authentic’ transgender body in Anglo-American popular culture. <i>Journal of Gender Studies</i> , 26(6), pp. 675-687. Riedel, S. “Why Cis Women Can’t Ignore Trump’s Anti-Trans Shelter Policy.” <i>Bitch Media</i> . 12 Aug 2020.
Mar 22 – 28		Oral Presentations
Mar 29 – Apr 4		Oral Presentations
Apr 5 – 11		Oral Presentations



Evaluation

- All assignments are due at 11:55 pm EST unless otherwise specified
- Written assignments will be submitted to Turnitin to ensure academic integrity
- Detailed instructions will be posted for each assessment on OWL

Below is the evaluation breakdown for the course. Any deviations will be communicated:

Assessment	Weighting	Due Date
Engagement	25% (5 to do, 5% each)	Ongoing (see below)
Midterm	25%	Complete by March 7
Oral Presentation	20%	Sign Up Required (Weeks 11 – 13)
Essay	30%	Complete by April 19

After an assessment is returned, students should wait 24 hours to digest feedback before contacting their evaluator



Click [here](#) for a detailed and comprehensive set of policies and regulations concerning examinations and grading. The table below outlines the University-wide grade descriptors.

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

Information about late or missed evaluations:

- Late assessments without illness self-reports will be subject to a late penalty 5%/day
- Late assessments with illness self-reports should be submitted within 48 hours of submission of the last illness self-report
- An assessment cannot be submitted after it has been returned to the class; an alternate assessment will be assigned.

Engagement Activities – 25% (5 to do, worth 5% each)

- You must engage with the lesson content five times throughout the semester (there will be an opportunity to do so each week!)
- The activity will amount to about 20 minutes of your time and you should consider it to be like a participation mark
- That said, do not just assume that if you complete the task you will get a perfect score. You should be putting in the effort and doing what is required of you in the activity
- You must post your engagement activity by 11:55pm on the Sunday of the week in question

- While it is completely up to you, I would encourage you *not* to wait until the final five weeks in the semester to get these done.
- I will keep track of your engagement marks and the number of activities you have completed, you are also responsible for doing so. Please do not email me asking how many you have left to do.

Midterm – 25%

- On March 1, I will release the midterm questions
- The midterm will include short answer questions and one short essay. The midterm format is what I call 'application-based', meaning students will receive a list of quotes, concepts, etc. from the course and be asked to explain, critique, or expand on them. (Note: it's not as easy as it sounds!)
- Your midterm is due by March 7 at 11:55pm in the Assignments tab on OWL.
- Each midterm will run through Turnitin software on OWL to ensure academic integrity
- More details to come in the first couple weeks of the semester

Oral Presentation – 20%

- Within the first few weeks of the semester, I will randomly assign you a topic for your presentation. Each person will be assigned a general theme for their presentation (for instance, "Celebrity Feminism") and it will be up to you to determine how you will approach this general theme from there
- Each presentation should be 8-10 minutes in length
- These presentations will occur in the final three weeks of the semester, and you will need to Sign Up on OWL for a timeslot
- You will present "live" to me via Zoom (just me, not the whole class!) and as such, I will be scheduling the timeslots for when we would have normally met if this class were occurring in-person (Tuesdays 3:30-6:30pm EST). I will try and be flexible if this does not work with your schedule but please bear in mind that I also teach 4 other courses and am essentially giving you a 10 week advance notice with the hope that you can carve out time appropriately
- More details on the specific instructions, objectives, and creative ideas for the presentations will be posted to OWL
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Essay – 30%

- You are responsible for writing a 2,000 word essay (*not* including the bibliography) on a topic of your choosing. The topic you choose must simply fall under the umbrella of one of the themes we've explored in this course, but other than that, it is up to you.
- I need to approve your topic and am happy to do so via email or during office hours.
- The essay will be due during the formal exam period, on April 19.
- I will post more details, including writing tips and referencing advice, closer to the due date

Communication:

- Students should check the OWL site every 24 – 48 hours
- A weekly update will be provided on the OWL announcements
- Students should receive an email response in 48 – 72 hours (excluding weekends / holidays)
- Students should use the OWL forum entitled "Café" for general class chat, questions, concerns, and all course-related content. Also, movie and TV suggestions 😊
- The "Café" will be monitored on a regular basis by Dr. Edwards





Resources

- All resources will be posted in OWL
- Required readings will be posted via EZProxy Link in OWL.
- Students are invited to login to [Kanopy](#) – sign in with your Western ID to access documentaries that will be required to watch in this course.

Professionalism & Privacy:

Western students are expected to follow the [Student Code of Conduct](#). Additionally, the following expectations and professional conduct apply to this course:



- Students are expected to follow online etiquette expectations provided on OWL
- All course materials created by the instructor(s) are copyrighted and cannot be sold/shared
- Recordings are not permitted (audio or video) without explicit permission
- Permitted recordings are not to be distributed
- Students will be expected to take an academic integrity pledge before some assessments
- All recorded sessions will remain within the course site or unlisted if streamed

How to Be Successful in this Class:

Students enrolled in this class should understand the level of autonomy and self-discipline required to be successful.



1. Invest in a planner or application to keep track of your courses. Populate all your deadlines at the start of the term and schedule time at the start of each week to get organized and manage your time.
2. Make it a daily habit to log onto OWL to ensure you have seen everything posted to help you succeed in this class.
3. Follow weekly checklists created on OWL or create your own to help you stay on track.
4. Take notes as you go through the lesson material. Treat this course as you would a face-to-face course. Keeping handwritten notes or even notes on a regular Word document will help you learn more effectively than just reading or watching the videos.
5. Connect with others. Try forming an online study group and try meeting on a weekly basis for study and peer support.
6. Do not be afraid to ask questions. If you are struggling with a topic, check the online discussion boards or contact your instructor(s) and or teaching assistant(s).
7. Reward yourself for successes. It seems easier to motivate ourselves knowing that there is something waiting for us at the end of the task.

We are (still) living through a pandemic.

It's okay to not be okay.

Health & Wellness
University Community Centre
Tel: (519) 661-2111
Email: health@uwo.ca

www.uwo.ca/health

Twitter: @WellnessWestern
Facebook: Wellness Education Centre

Canadian Mental Health Association

For London-Middlesex: www.cmha.middlesex.ca

Canada-wide: www.cmha.ca

*Search your location for local services and contact information

I know how easy it is to get stuck in the cycle of “I have so much to do, I don’t have time to _____!”

You, as a human being, are more important than the degree you are working towards at Western.

Taking care of yourself first should always be your priority.

Dr. Edwards



Good2Talk

Confidential support services for post-secondary students in Ontario and Nova Scotia

www.good2talk.ca

Tel (Ontario): 1-866-925-5454
Text: GOOD2TALK on 686868

Western Academic Policies and Statements

Absence from Course Commitments

Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences

In the interest of the health and safety of students and health care providers, you are no longer required to seek a medical note for absences this term. If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness you should use the [Illness Reporting Tool](#). This tool takes the place of the need to submit a medical note and the Self-Reported Absence System formally used by undergraduate students.

You are required to self-report every day that you are ill and unable to complete course commitments. Details about when you should submit missed work, the format of the missed work can be found in

the Section 7. Evaluation above. Students should communicate promptly with their instructor and use this tool with integrity.

Accommodation for Religious Holidays

The policy on Accommodation for Religious Holidays can be viewed [here](#).

Special Examinations

A Special Examination is any examination other than the regular examination, and it may be offered only with the permission of the Dean of the Faculty in which the student is registered, in consultation with the instructor and Department Chair. Permission to write a Special Examination may be given on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documents. To provide an opportunity for students to recover from the circumstances resulting in a Special Examination, the University has implemented Special Examinations dates. These dates as well as other important information about examinations and academic standing can be found [here](#).

Academic Offenses

“Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed [here](#) to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence.

Accessibility Statement

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Accessible Education (AE) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation or review [The policy on Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Correspondence Statement

The centrally administered **e-mail account** provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at his/her official university address is attended to in a timely manner. You can read about the privacy and security of the UWO email accounts [here](#).

Turnitin and other similarity review software

All assignments will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. Students will be able to view their results before the final submission. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western University and [Turnitin.com](#).

Policies and Statements

Copyright and Audio/Video Recording Statement

Course material produced by faculty is copyrighted and to reproduce this material for any purposes other than your own educational use contravenes Canadian Copyright Laws. You must always ask permission to record another individual and you should never share or distribute recordings.

NOTES FROM THE FIMS DEAN'S OFFICE

Winter 2021

Rights and Responsibilities

The conditions governing a student's ability to pursue their undergraduate education at Western are ratified by Senate and can be found on the Academic Policies section of the University Secretariat:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism

Students must write their essays and assignments, including take-home exams, in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. All papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software Turnitin under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system.

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment

for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- during exam periods,
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are NOT met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate or equivalent documentation, if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact the FIMS Undergraduate Student Services Office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see [Policy on Academic Consideration For Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#) and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

In the event of a Covid-19 resurgence, it is possible that different procedures may need to be put in place on short notice.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Academic Calendar](#).

Grading at FIMS

- Normally, first year courses required for entry into an MIT or MPI module (MIT 1020E and MIT 1025F/G) are expected to have a course average between 68-72%.
- Normally, second year required courses (MIT 2000, 2100, 2200, 2500) are expected to have a course average between 70 and 75%.
- Normally, third year required courses (MIT 3000, 3100) are expected to have a course average between 72 and 77%.

Elective courses and 4th year seminars have no recommended course averages.

Support Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/>

SUPPORT SERVICES - LINKS

Office of the Registrar:

www.registrar.uwo.ca

Mental Health

Support:

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html>

Accessible Education:

http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html

Accessibility

Information:

www.accessibility.uwo.ca/

Writing Support

Centre:

<http://writing.uwo.ca/>

Learning Skills

Services:

<https://www.uwo.ca/sdc/learning/>

Academic Learning and Support for Online Learning:

<https://www.uwo.ca/se/digital/types/academic-and-learning-support.html>

Indigenous Services:

<https://indigenous.uwo.ca/>

Western International:

<https://international.uwo.ca/>

Career Centre:

<http://careerexperience.uwo.ca/>

Appendix A: Suggested Grade Ranges in MIT, MPI and MTP

Guidelines to the MIT Grade Range

These guidelines are benchmarks, and are not to be followed as rigid regulations. They will be adjusted as appropriate to take into account the level of the course and any specific instructions given by a professor. As well, competency in English language usage (including spelling and grammar) may be taken into account in the assignment of grades by individual instructors. Note that the 70-79 grade range is broken into two divisions, as this is the grade range into which a large number of students fall.

90-100 (Outstanding, A+)

The report shows sparkling originality and exhibits a high degree of critical analysis of the topic. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the writing and background research is exemplary.

80-89 (Excellent, A)

The report shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical analysis of the topic; it gets to the heart of the matter with comments and/or questions. It is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing makes the report immediately understandable. Mastery of complex material and ideas is demonstrated. The report is of appropriate length, while preserving the priorities and emphasis of the material, so that the result is meaningful, not simplistic.

75-79 (Very Good, B+)

The report shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The topic is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. The analysis is organized around focal points and the argument is easily followed. The report demonstrates an above average ability to write in an intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material.

70-74 (Good, B)

The report shows an attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The topic is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. The analysis is organized around focal points. The report is generally well written and well argued.

60-69 (Competent, C)

The report demonstrates adequate comprehension of the topic. The report is on topic and is a reasonable summary of material covered in the course, but goes no further. Facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the report.

50-59 (Marginal, D)

The report shows less than adequate comprehension of the topic and of the material covered by the course. The report is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the report.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)

The report demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. The material is disorganized and unintelligible. The report clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment.

Appendix B: Guidelines of Academic Appeals for FIMS Students

Grounds for Appeal:

The Faculty of Information and Media Studies does not view the appeals process as an opportunity for students to solicit a second opinion on a grade assigned to a particular piece of work. Appeals must pertain to the final grade in a course, and will only be entertained if sufficient grounds for appeal can be met, including: medical or compassionate circumstances, a defect in the evaluation process, bias, inaccuracy or unfairness.

Stages in the Appeals Process:

The first stage of the process is a discussion of the disputed grade with the appropriate Teaching Assistant (if applicable), and subsequently, the course Instructor. For grades assigned to individual assignments, essays, lab reports, projects and tests completed throughout the term, the student first must appeal to the Teaching Assistant or Instructor of the course, within three weeks of the date on which the Instructor or Teaching Assistant returned the assignments to the class. The Appeals Committee will not hear any further appeals about the final grade in any course unless this first step has been taken.

If completion of the first stage has not resolved the matter, the student may appeal the final grade in the course to the FIMS Appeals Committee. Appeals of final grades must be **within the time frame indicated in the Undergraduate Calendar.** It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the appeal is submitted within the deadline. The student shall submit a formal letter to the FIMS Appeals Committee outlining the grounds for the appeal, the remedy sought and relevant materials including the information about when and with whom (Teaching Assistant and/or Instructor) the student met, as described in Stage 1. If the appeal involves a request for work to be regraded, the original marked work and a clean copy (if possible) must be included. If the appeal is commenced once the deadline has passed, it will not be considered either by the Appeals Committee or by the Associate Dean.

The FIMS Appeals Committee has the discretion to determine whether the grounds for appeal have been met.

If the Committee deems that the reasons for the appeal are not legitimate, the Associate Dean will be informed. The appeal will be terminated and the student will be informed.

If the Committee decides that the grounds for appeal have been met, the following steps will be taken:

1. the course Instructor will be shown the appeal letter and offered an opportunity to make a written response;
2. if work is to be regraded, a reader will be appointed who is competent in the area in question and was not involved in the assignment of the original mark. The reader will consider the work in question and will arrive at an independent evaluation. If there is a large discrepancy between the original mark and the regraded mark, a second reader may be appointed by the Committee. **If the appointed reader(s) arrive at a grade within five marks of the original, the original grade will stand.**

The FIMS Appeals Committee will review the evidence and will make a recommendation on the case to the Associate Dean Undergraduate.

The Associate Dean Undergraduate will consider the recommendation from the Appeals Committee, and will make a decision. The student and the instructor will be notified promptly and in writing by the Associate Dean of the decision and of the change in grade, if any. Within the Faculty of Information and Media Studies, the Associate Dean's decision on the matter is final.

Further appeals are possible under certain circumstances to the Senate Review Board Academic (for Undergraduate students) or to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (for Graduate students) but the student should carefully consult the guidelines regarding such Appeals.