

MIT 3210G: Media Representations of Women

Course instructor: Dr. Andie Shabbar

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Office hours: Thursday 10:00-11:00 AM, or by appointment, FNB 4120

Delivery mode: In-person

Class meeting: Tuesdays 9:30-12:30 pm, HSB 9



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Course Description

This course will apply a variety of feminist theories to investigate the construction of gender by a range of historical and contemporary media - newspapers, television, film, social media, and advertising. Our investigation will take an intersectional approach to consider how gender is constructed alongside representations of race, sexuality, ability, and class.

We will examine various topics such as representations of Indigenous women and girls in the news, the sexualization of girls in television and advertising, the construction of gender roles on dating apps, representations of transwomen in film, postfeminist constructions of gender on the Internet and social media, representations of Black women in Hollywood cinema, the commodification of Witch culture, and the production of feminist media activism.

Course Start	Reading Week	Course End	Study day(s)	Exam Period
January 10	February 18-26	April 3	April 11-12	April 13-30

* Last day to drop a first-term half course or a first-term full course without penalty is March 7, 2023

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will not change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Course Material:

All course materials are available on OWL. **Pen/pencil and paper** are required for in-class activities.

Evaluation

Participation	10%	ongoing
In-class test	25%	February 14
Annotated bibliography (1000 words)	15%	March 7
Debate	25%	March 14, 25
Final essay (1500 words)	25%	April 4

- All assignments are due at the beginning of class unless otherwise specified
- Written assignments will be submitted to Turnitin
- Students will have two submissions to Turnitin
- Rubrics will be used to evaluate assessments and will be posted with the instructions
- After an assessment is returned, students should wait 24 hours to digest feedback before contacting the professor; to ensure a timely response, reach out within 7 days

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. Detailed FIMS specific descriptors are included in the Notes from the Dean's Office appended to this syllabus.

Grading

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 academic consideration will be subject to a late penalty 5%/day
- Late assessments with academic consideration require the student to work with the Academic Advising unit in their Faculty of registration; once that has been approved, students need to contact the instructor to arrange for an alternate submission date
- For work worth 10% or less, students should contact the instructor directly about how to make up missed work

Assignment Descriptions

*A detailed handout with further instructions for each assignment will be provided on OWL

1) Participation 10%

By this time in your undergraduate degree, you know that being actively present can significantly increase your grade, and that you cannot participate unless you attend class. This course has been designed so that there is ample opportunity to participate whether in small discussion groups, class discussion, or other in-class activities. Your participation will be evaluated based on the quality (not necessarily the quantity) of your in-class and group work contributions.

2) In-class test 25%

2 hours, mixed format: multiple choice, fill in the blank, true or false, key concepts

3) Annotated bibliography 15%

In preparation for the final essay, students will write 1000-word annotated bibliography which will include four annotated sources (approx. 200 words each) and an introduction that includes a tentative thesis statement (approx. 200 words).

4) Debate 25%

In groups of 4-5, students will engage in a 60-min in-class debate pertaining to the topic of gender, sexuality, ability, and or race and media representations. Students will be given a statement to debate and divided into teams (for and against). Each team is expected to write a collaborative opening and closing statement and present at least four points to support their position. Each team will hand in their statements and students will also submit their individual research notes that they prepared for the team. While students will be given time during class to prepare for the debate, it will be necessary for teams to meet outside of class to craft a well-thought-out argument.

5) Final essay 25%

For the final assignment, students will write a 1500-word argumentative essay related to course themes and topics. The essay must have at least four academic sources, one of which must be from the required readings and two must be from outside sources. Students may choose to apply course concepts to analyze a media object, examine a current event, news item, or popular debate in the media related to gender, or compare theoretical approaches, frameworks, or concepts that we have discussed in the course.

Requirements:

- Your thesis statement must be *italicized*
- Give your essay a title
- MLA format (including in-text citations)
- You may include images throughout your paper or append them at the end to illustrate your argument (if appropriate).

Learning Objectives:

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



- Articulate feminist theories and concepts related to representation and the media;
- Understand how media representations affect the ways in which women are valued, perceived, and treated in the broader social world;
- Understand the relationship between media, embodiment and ideology;
- Learn how to critically assess media representations of gender and sexuality and their political implications on social life and identity;
- Develop a critical awareness of interdisciplinary approaches to media studies;

Communication:

- A weekly checklist will be provided on OWL. You can find the checklist for each week by navigating to the “Lessons” tab
- You **MUST** include the course number “MIT3210” in the **subject line** of your email
- Emails will be monitored daily during the week; students will receive a response in 24-48 hours
- **Missed classes:** PowerPoint slides for lectures will be available on OWL. In addition to accessing lecture content, if you miss a class you should prepare to contact classmates to obtain lecture notes.

Professionalism & Privacy:

- Western students are expected to follow the [Student Code of Conduct](#).
- 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 may 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:

- Make it a bi-weekly habit to log onto OWL to ensure you haven't missed anything.
- Follow weekly checklists created on OWL or create your own to help you stay on track.
- Take notes as you go through the lesson material
- Connect with others. Try forming an online study group and try meeting on a weekly basis for study and peer support.
- **Do not be afraid to ask questions!!!** If you are struggling with a topic reach out to a fellow classmate or contact your instructor.
- FIMS Undergraduate Services (fims@uwo.ca) and [Western Student Experience](#) are resources to help students succeed.

COURSE CONTENT AND SCHEDULE***Readings and films available on OWL**

Week	Dates	Topic
1	January 10	Between image and identity: Why representation matters
2	January 17	The Pleasure Gap: The gaze, sexuality, and femininity
3	January 24	Representations of Black women in Hollywood
4	January 31	'Unruly' women
5	February 7	Invisible women and Western media
6	February 14	*In-class test
7	February 21	Reading Week
8	February 28	Documenting the I/Eye: Feminist media activism *Annotated bibliography due
9	March 7	Witches, women, and feminism: Commodity vs. community
10	March 14	*Debate (Groups 1, 2 and Groups 3, 4)
11	March 21	*Debate (Groups 5, 6 and Groups 7, 8)
12	March 28	Queer mis/representations and dis/identifications
13	April 4	*Final essay due

NOTES FROM THE FIMS DEAN'S OFFICE

Winter 2023

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 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 required 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

Academic Accommodation

Students with disabilities work with [Accessible Education \(AE\)](#) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing.

Medical Consideration

Students who have medical grounds for academic consideration for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth **10% or more of their final grade** must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty (for FIMS students this is [Undergraduate Student Services](#)).

Students are required to provided

documentation in the form of a [Student Medical Certificate](#). It will be the Dean's Office that will determine if consideration is warranted.

For work worth less than 10% of the final grade, the instructor will consider requests for academic consideration on medical grounds made in a timely manner in writing or during office hours. Such requests need not be accompanied by documentation. The instructor may decide to require documentation be submitted to the appropriate Academic Counselling office.

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 must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.**

Compassionate Accommodation

Academic accommodation (extensions, makeup tests and exams, additional assignments etc.) may be given to students on compassionate grounds. The situations for which compassionate accommodation can be given must be serious, including significant events such as death in the immediate family, trauma (fire, robbery, harassment, muggings, car accidents, etc.) or emergency situations. Documentation is required.

If a member of your immediate family is seriously ill, obtain a medical certificate from the family member's physician and submit the documentation to your Academic Counsellor.

If you have been involved in a severe accident, fire, or some other exceptional crisis, obtain a copy of the police report or be prepared to provide the necessary documentation upon request.

Generally, for deaths within a student's immediate family (parents, guardians, caregivers, siblings, spouses), bereavement leave is granted, upon provision of documentation. For deaths within a student's extended family, academic accommodation is given for one to three days, upon provision of documentation. Students seeking additional bereavement leave should contact their Academic Counsellors with valid documentation.

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 Advisor. Additional information is given in the [Western Academic Calendar](#).

Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence, you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, [here](#). The gender-based violence and survivor support case managers are located in Thames Hall (3114-3127 office suite.) To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Support Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to [Health and Wellness](#) for a complete list of supports.

SUPPORT SERVICES - LINKS

[FIMS UGSS](#): *academic advising; career services*

[Psychological Services](#): *Information about accessing mental health supports*

[Medical Services](#): *Student health related services*

[Office of the Registrar](#): *Financial Information, Timetable, Exam Schedules, Academic Calendar Information*

[Academic Support and Engagement](#): *Central Academic Supports, including Writing Centre, Learning Development, Transition and Leadership Supports, and Careers and Experience*

[Accessible Education](#): *Assessment and recommendations for students with disabilities*

[Accessibility Information](#): *Information to help support barrier free access, including floor plans, accessible washroom locations, service disruptions etc.*

[Indigenous Student Services](#): *Includes information about financial support, indigenous self-identification, orientation, and tutor support*

[Western International](#): *Information and support for international students and students seeking to go on exchange*

FIMS Grading Policy

FIMS Undergraduate programs now have the following class average policy:

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%.

Second year required courses (MIT 2000, 2025, 2100, 2200, 2500) are expected to have a course average between 70 and 75%. The third year required (MIT 3100) is expected to have a course average between 72 and 77%.

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

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.