Ever since the election of our 45th President, many experts in a variety of fields have called for greater attention to be paid to teaching and learning about critical media literacy. This radically revised new version of this course is a response to that call.

This course continues to examine the manner in which media culture induces us to perceive various dominant and marginalized groups of people. In particular, this course looks at the ways in which such relations as gender, race, class and sexuality, as well as other subaltern (lower status) peoples are presented and often misrepresented in the media.

However, rather than requiring formal papers in which students examine the politics of representation in particular media texts, this course will instead require a group, 5-10 minute video project, which addresses some dimension of gender, race, class sexuality, or intersectionality representations in some kind of media artifact (e.g. a film; tv/podcast episode or series; graphic novel, computer game; music video or social media site).

For the first time, the class will incorporate a media production component and students will spend one of two weekly classes in production workshops, in which you will learn about different dimensions of media production. Students will then employ these skills to produce small group media projects, which will constitute a significant percentage of their final grade.

Because this is the first time that the Course Instructor is taking advantage of the new CLICC [Campus Library Instructional Computing Commons] resources, which include media production equipment, and technical instruction, there are likely to be some technical or logistical glitches, which we will have to resolve at that time. So, if you are interested in any aspect of social justice media production and the cultural studies theoretical approach which informs it, I invite you to explore it within the context of a course mediated by what bell hooks describes as “engaged pedagogy.”

According to hooks: “Engaged pedagogy assumes that people learn best in an interactive environment and that “every student has a valuable contribution to make to the learning process.” This can be an empowering experience for students as engaged pedagogy “highlights the importance of independent thinking and each student finding his or her own unique voice.”

However, this experience is hardly exclusive to students as: “Any classroom that employs a holistic model of learning will also be a place where teachers grow, and are empowered by the process.” And, she goes on to argue that “when students are fully engaged, professors no longer assume the sole leadership role in the classrooms.” It is within this context of engaged pedagogy that I believe that this class will be both a challenging and extremely valuable endeavor which will provoke you to employ (and perhaps discover) your own creative and critical abilities, which are different from the more typical kinds of texts usually required for class assignments in the Social Sciences.

Please note that a large percentage of your grade will be based on “involved” attendance; active participation and 5 short posts based on course readings and/or media texts assigned for viewing or shown in the class.

Because of the additional production component of class, enrollment will be limited. If you think that you can commit to this kind of challenge, please e-mail Instructor Rhonda Hammer at rhammer@ucla.edu for PTE number and indicate that you have read the description and include your Student ID number, Major and Class Standing.

*The course gives priority to upper levels Gender, Communications and Labor Studies majors or minors*

Please note: Limited Space Available and there is no guarantee you will receive a PTE