

Teaching Statement

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My teaching, like my research, emphasizes the historical and sociocultural perspectives of viewing media that are, at once, texts, technologies, and institutions. All media *are*, not *is*, shaped by intersecting social interests and human labor, and infused with values and power, I always tell my students. I teach them to recognize the multifaceted nature of media. Students hone their skills in critical thinking, advanced composition, oral communication, and group work that will serve as strong foundations in their future careers.

In *Introduction to Media Studies*, students examine the key concepts from assigned readings and personalize those concepts in their real and/or imagined experiences with media. In response to Vicki Mayer's *Below the Line* and a clip from the *Game of Thrones*' making film, *The Last Watch*, students discuss questions such as Why is the production side of media frequently overlooked? What is the flip side of the accounts that focus on a few creative geniuses for the entire production process? After class, students continue their reflections in their writing assignments, where they envision themselves as production staff and explore the structural conditions that invisibilize their work. A student in computer science who imagined his role as a special effect technician researched the Avengers franchise's budget size, pipeline, and promotion strategy and assessed the challenges he would face in that work environment from the individual, organizational, and institutional standpoints. By following the sequence that combines the macro and the micro aspect of each subject area, students learn to incorporate their personal experience in understanding conceptual frameworks such as political economy, audience commodification, and structure/agency, which otherwise might have felt abstract and impersonal.

The ability to plan and execute a long-term project and to present their ideas clearly within a group setting will be valuable as students foster their professional growth after graduation. Therefore, all my courses require students to collaborate as a team and to present their work either in small groups or to the entire class. As an example, in *Introduction to Popular TV and Movies*, each student participates in a group video project with 4 or 5 other students. They learn to streamline a long-term project from initial stages of brainstorming, writing scripts and storyboarding to scouting locations, shooting, and editing, while also presenting their progress to the other groups each week. Later, they co-write a final paper that reflects on the process and self-evaluate their contribution to the project. When I monitor their weekly progress, students occasionally report a minor conflict regarding the distribution of labor within groups. In these situations, I tell them to log each member's input more specifically and ensure that the experiences of managing conflicts will favorably lead to their career after graduation.

Commitment to diversity significantly influences my teaching both within and outside the classroom. For instance, I have used Sut Jhally's documentary, *Reel Bad Arabs*, to teach how media cultivate and reinforce racist stereotypes. With these, "How are different people differently situated?" I ask the students. The immediacy of the question allows students to bring their personal experience to their work, as they critique stereotypes attributed to black women, the Muslims, and Chinese students. Through one-on-one meetings, I offer individual support and guidance and help them further strengthen their critique by suggesting additional readings and feedbacks.

Students leave my class with a strong foundation in core concepts and the ability to think critically and to communicate their thoughts clearly. The skills they mastered in class will serve as firm groundings upon which they can orient themselves in the rapidly changing contemporary mediascape.