Course Description

This course will examine domestic social issues from global and intercultural perspectives. Traditional journalism on domestic problems tends to focus on domestic viewpoints and discussion about the origin of and solutions for such problems is of limited scope as social and cultural norms are often taken for granted. When it comes to issues such as economic recession, education, energy consumption, food and health, and climate change, the U.S. is often an outlier on a global scale, and placing such issues in the global/intercultural context would help journalists/readers think outside the box.

Course Objectives

Students are expected to focus on a number of social issues, identify alternative perspectives or reference systems, conduct comparative/intercultural research, and incorporate such research into class discussion and presentations.

Required Readings

Readings from different sources will be made available on the course’s Blackboard at http://courses.utexas.edu.

Recommended Text


Schlosser, E. Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal. (Houghton Mifflin, 2002).

Course Requirements

* Assignments & presentations (50%): A series of exercises and assignments for you to better understand the issues to be examined in this class. You are expected to identify relevant online and offline information sources, conduct personal interviews, synthesize what you find to develop your own view, and present your findings and lead discussions in class.

* Cross-cultural Web project (15%): An interactive multimedia project that fosters dialogues among different groups of readers on a given topic.
* Final project (25%): An in-depth story or a research paper on a contemporary issue involving multiple non-U.S. views or data sources.

* Participation (10%): You are expected to actively participate in class activities and discussions. In class, the instructor will monitor attendance or give in-class exercises from time to time. No make-ups for such exercises will be granted. There is no need to justify your absence, but more than 3 absences will result in an F (60/100) for participation, and more than 7 absences will result in a zero for participation.

We will set up a blog as a platform for everyone to post and share information with one another. The URL is ________________________.blogspot.com

**Grading Scheme**

A = 94 or above  
A- = 91-93  
A-/B+ = 90  
B+ = 87-89  
B = 84-86  
B- = 81-83  
B-/C+ = 80  
C+ = 77-79  
C = 74-76  
C- = 71-73  
D+ = 67-69  
D = 64-66  
D- = 61-63  
F = 60 or below

**Disruptive Behavior**

Mutual respect is essential in this class. Therefore, please do not use your laptop computer, tablets, and smartphones in class, unless the instructor/TA has requested that you do so. In accordance with university policy, disruptive behavior will be documented and may lead to sanctions. Examples of disruptive behaviors in the classroom include arriving late to class, chatting, etc.

**Academic Integrity**

Be academically honest in every aspect of class work. All students are subject to the student code of conduct, including the University Code of Academic Integrity. For this course, academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) the following: fabrication (i.e., making up data, sources or information), plagiarism (using someone else’s work in your work without giving proper credit), duplication (doing an assignment for this course and for any other course in this or any prior semester without the express consent of the instructor), and cheating (exchanging information with another individual during an exam). Violations of the academic integrity code will result in penalties in this course and all violations will be reported to the University. It is your responsibility to be aware of the rules of academic dishonesty -- ignorance is not a defense. When in doubt, consult the instructor before doing anything about which you are uncertain.

**The University of Texas Honor Code**

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.
University Electronic Mail Notification Policy

All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html.

In this class, e-mail will be used as a means of communication with students. You are responsible for checking your e-mail regularly for class work and announcements. We will use your e-mail address available on Blackboard.

Use of Blackboard

This course uses Blackboard, a Web-based course management system in which a password- protected site is created for each course. Student enrollments in each course are updated each evening. Blackboard can be used to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to take online quizzes and surveys.

You will be responsible for checking Blackboard regularly for class work and announcements. As with all computer systems, there are occasional scheduled downtimes as well as unanticipated disruptions. Notification of these disruptions will be posted on the Blackboard login page. Scheduled downtimes are not an excuse for late work. Blackboard is available at http://courses.utexas.edu. Support is provided by the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400 Monday through Friday 8 am to 6 pm, so plan accordingly.

Student Feedback

Come see me during office hours if you have any questions/suggestions.

Documented Disability Statement

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 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone).

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

Q Drop Policy

The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231: “Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an
institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number."

Missed Classes/Deadlines and Late Assignments

Please form a study group of three and write down the contact information of two members here:

1.

2.

If an emergency prevents a student from taking a scheduled exam or meeting the deadline of a presentation, the student must notify the instructor prior to the exam or presentation. Otherwise, the student will not be eligible for a make-up. Make-up exams/presentations will be granted only for a limited time and only for valid, documented reasons, such as serious illness, family emergency, jury duty or military reserve obligation. Absence excuses are subject to verification. Presenting a false excuse will be considered a violation of the academic integrity rules.

If the deadline of an assignment is missed, all late work must be turned in within one week after it is due and will be downgraded for one letter grade whether it is 1 or 7 days late. No late work beyond the one-week period will be accepted. Missed assignments will receive a zero.
Course Calendar & Readings 1.0 (Subject to change)
You are expected to complete the assigned readings before class.

1. Week of Jan. 14: Overview of the course; class survey.

2. Week of Jan. 21: Holiday (Monday)
Rethink our worldview
Read:
“The West and the Rest,” (1992), in Can Asians Think?
“The Rest of the West,” (2000), in Can Asians Think?

3. Week of Jan. 28: Image of the U.S. worldwide; modern shifts of international geopolitical power
Read:
“Anti-Americanism Down in Europe, but a Values Gap Persists,”
http://www.pewglobal.org/2012/12/04/anti-americanism-down-in-europe-but-a-values-gap-persists/
"Smart Power, Chinese Style,” (2008), in Can Asians Think?

4. Week of Feb. 4: Media coverage of domestic social issues; news framing; global news exchange
Read:
“Framing Effects of News Coverage,” (1991), in Is Anyone Responsible? How Television Frames Political Issues,
http://books.google.com/books?id=Ca6vATltqi4C&pg=PA11&source=gb books toc r&cad=4#v=onepage&q&f=false

5. Week of Feb. 11: Case study 1: Overview, resource sharing, and analysis
Read: Contingent on the chosen issue

6. Week of Feb. 18: Presentations of case study 1

7. Week of Feb. 25: Case study 2: Overview, resource sharing, and analysis
Read: Contingent on the chosen issue

8. Week of March 4: Presentations of case study 2

9. Week of March 11: Spring Break

10. Week of March 18: Case study 3: Overview, resource sharing, and analysis
Read: Contingent on the chosen issue

11. Week of March 25: Presentations of case study 3

12. Week of April 1: Case study 4: Overview, resource sharing, and analysis
Read: Contingent on the chosen issue

13. Week of April 8: Presentations of case study 4
Development and consultation of cross-cultural Web project

14. Week of April 15: **Cross-Cultural Web Project due (April 17)**

15. Week of April 22: Media literacy in the global context; the power of digital media; the rise of global journalism
Read:

16. Week of April 29: Rethink journalism and society; challenges and opportunities
Read:

**Final Project due (May 1)**
346G Student Information Form

1. Name: ______________________

2. Sophomore/Junior/Senior/Master/Doctoral

   (Major other than Journalism: ___________ )

3. On a 10-point scale, how interested are you in the following social issues?

   (1 = Not interested at all; 10 = Very interested)

   Please also circle specific aspects of these issues in the parentheses that you’re mostly interested in.

   a. _____ The economy (jobs, recession, savings)
   b. _____ Consumerism/capitalism (Walmart, Starbucks, big corporations)
   c. _____ Terrorism/9-11
   d. _____ Energy issues (oil price, resource depletion)
   e. _____ Global warming (climate change)
   f. _____ Food and health (fast food, health care)
   g. _____ Education (student performance, inequality)
   h. _____ Sports (commercial interest)
   i. _____ Gun control
   j. _____ U.S. image worldwide

4. Do you have any experience traveling/living abroad? When and where?

5. What are your favorite countries and why?

6. On a 10-point scale, how would you evaluate your skills with the following technologies?

   (1 = Not familiar at all; 10 = Very familiar)

   a. General computer use _____
   b. Powerpoint _____
   c. Blogger.com _____
   d. Wordpress _____
   e. Google Reader _____
   f. Photoshop _____
   g. Audacity/Audition _____
   h. Soundslides _____
i. iMovie ______
j. Final Cut Pro ______

7. What do you expect of this course?

8. Do you have any concerns about taking this course? If so, what are they?