

AAS210/CIN210 Race and Gender Role Stereotypes, Spring 2022

Instructor Contact: Name: Dr. Knopf ["nope"] (she/her/hers) --you can also call me C.K.

Drop-in office hours: Tu 9-12 (WebEx), F 11:30-1:30 (VH125G) Office: VanHoesen 125G

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Class Meetings: M 3:00-5:30pm VanHoesen B134A

Course Description:

Focus on racial and gender role awareness and attitudes in individuals. Prejudice and discrimination against ethnic minorities and women are examined, from both historical and contemporary perspectives. The causes and consequences of prejudice and discrimination are discussed. Also listed as AAS 210, PSY 210. Fulfills GE 11; LASR. (3 cr. hr.)

⚠ Content Warning: In order to talk honestly and productively about stereotypes and their impact on individuals and society, we will be looking at examples of stereotypes. Most, even all, are offensive. Looking at them, pointing at them, and identifying them is not condoning them. We must call attention to them so that we can recognize them and address them or reject them when we see them. Many stereotypes are "products of their time" – borne from certain socio-political circumstances and conditions; this helps us to understand how they happened, but they were never right or ok.

Learning Outcomes:

Communication & Media Studies -

I. Students will demonstrate a broad understanding of various forms of communication as vehicles of human expression:

- Know and understand modes of human communication: intercultural, mediated, and transmediated
- Know and understand foundational theories of communication – especially cultural studies and critical theories
- Know and understand the significance of cultural context within human communication

General Education -

II. Students will reflect critically about the causes and consequences of prejudice and discrimination from individual to institutional levels. The courses will examine the challenges of constructing a more diverse and inclusive society. Students will demonstrate an understanding of

- how power, bias, prejudice and discrimination can affect society's values, attitudes and institutions;
- approaches that address barriers and foster greater equity and inclusivity.

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With regards to the above programmatic goals, students will

- identify common cultural stereotypes used in media, particularly film (Ia & IIa)
- illustrate how metaphors are used in pop culture products to discuss socio-political issues (Ic)
- cooperatively summarize course content and produce course materials to engender equity & inclusivity (IIb)
- evaluate contemporary communication and cultural scholarship regarding issues of identity and representation in film (Ib)

Required Materials:

- dedicated notebook for Media Journal
- index cards or half sheets of paper for Reading Reactions
- Access to online readings linked in Blackboard

Suggested Resources:

- Dines, et al. *Gender, Race & Class in Media, 5th ed.* Sage
- Race, Gender, and Stereotypes in the Media: A Reader for Professional Communications. George & Thomason
- Luther, et al. *Diversity in US Mass Media.* Wiley.

Assignments/Grade Distribution:

Reading Responses (5 @3%):	15%	(SLO4)	Exam (3 @10%):	30%	(SLO3)
Media Journal:	30%	(SLO1)	Digging Deeper Presentation:	15%	(SLO2)
Participation:	10%				

Grade Conversion

B+: 87-89%	C+: 77-79%	D+: 67-69%	E: 0-59%
A: 94-100%	B: 83-86%	C: 73-76%	D: 64-66%
A-: 90-93%	B-: 80-82%	C-: 70-72%	D-: 60-63%

(Based on CollegeBoard's conversion chart at <https://pages.collegeboard.org/how-to-convert-gpa-4.0-scale>)

Grade Policies: If you *find an error* in grading, bring it to the instructor's attention immediately so it can be corrected. If you have a question about assignment feedback, exam answers, etcetera - ask. It will help you learn. If you *disagree* with a grade earned on written work, you can file a request for reconsideration no sooner than 24 hours after receiving the grade and no later than 1 week after receiving the grade. The original work with all evaluation forms should be re-submitted to the instructor along with a written explanation of why you believe your work warrants reconsideration and a higher grade. Any grade change at that time, including a lower one, will remain final.

"Extra" credit is possible only by paying attention to the course information provided. Extra credit is *not* available to replace for missed work. You can also email the professor a gif of how your semester is going for an extra 2 points, if you read this before Week 6.

Late work is not accepted.

Attendance: Attendance is recorded and factored into your Participation grade, but attendance itself is not graded (ie, there are no excused/unexcused absences). If you miss class or skip work, you do so at your own risk. Attendance is necessary for participation – but you can find out how to earn participation credit in the case of emergency absences by following the directions provided for Participation below. Email the professor a picture of something you love for an additional point if you understand your attendance responsibilities by Week 6 of the semester.

If you miss class, email any work due by class time for full credit, refer to the syllabus (this document!) to see what is due during the class you miss, what topics and/or activities are planned for the class you miss, what work is coming up due in the next class(es), and what instructions are available for any assignments you should be working on. If any PowerPoints are used in class, they will be in the "Class PowerPoint" folder on Blackboard.

Diversity: SUNY Cortland is dedicated to the premise that every individual is important in a unique way and contributes to the overall quality of the institution. We define diversity broadly to include all aspects of human difference. The College is committed to inclusion, equity, and access and thus committed to creating and sustaining a climate that is equitable, respectful and free from prejudice for students, faculty and staff. We value diversity in the learning environment and know that it enhances our ability to inspire students to learn, lead and serve in a changing world. We are committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive campus through the recruitment and retention of faculty, staff and students. As a community, we hold important the democracy of ideas, tempered by a commitment to free speech and the standards of inquiry and debate. To this end, we are dedicated to developing and sustaining a learning environment where it is safe to explore our differences and celebrate the richness inherent in our pluralistic society. (College Handbook, Chap 130)

Inclusive Learning Environment: SUNY Cortland is committed to a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment. The course instructor honors this commitment and respects and values differences. All students enrolled in this course are expected to be considerate of others, promote a collaborative and supportive educational environment, and demonstrate respect for individuals with regard to ability or disability, age, ethnicity, gender, gender identity/expression, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or other aspects of identity. In an environment that fosters inclusion, students have the opportunity to bring their various identities into conversation as they find helpful, but are not expected to represent or speak for an entire group of people who share aspects of an identity. If you have any questions or concerns about this statement, contact the Institutional Equity and Inclusion Office at 607-753-2263.

What Diversity & Inclusivity Mean in this Class: A diversity of viewpoints, opinions, and experiences are welcome. We will respect the multiple Truths of lived experiences and honor the reality of those experiences for everyone, even if they are different or confusing from our own. We learn and grow when confronted with new ideas and different perspectives. But we are also here to learn to be more effective, more ethical communicators. Therefore, anything that fits the definition of hate speech or degrades fellow human beings will not welcome.

Academic Integrity: All students are expected to uphold academic integrity standards. Plagiarism is defined as taking the ideas of others and using them as one's own without due credit. Students who cheat in examinations, course assignments, or plagiarize in this course may be disciplined in accordance with university rules and regulations. (College Handbook, Chapter 340)

Access (Accommodation of Disabilities): As part of SUNY Cortland's commitment to a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment, we strive to provide students with equal access to all courses. If you believe you will require accommodations in this course, please place a request with the Disability Resources Office at disability.resources@cortland.edu or call 607-753-2967. Please note that accommodations are generally not provided retroactively so timely contact with the Disability Resources Office is important. All students should consider meeting with their course instructor who may be helpful in other ways." (College Handbook, Chapter 745)

Title IX: Title IX, when combined with New York Human Rights Law and the New York Education Law 129-B, prohibits discrimination, harassment and violence based on sex, gender, gender identity/expression, and/or sexual orientation in the education setting. The federal Clery Act and NY Education Law 129-B provide certain rights and responsibilities after an incident of sexual or interpersonal violence. When a violation occurs, victims and survivors are eligible for campus and community resources. Where the College has jurisdiction, it may investigate and take action in accordance with College policy. If you or someone you know wishes to report discrimination based in sex, gender, gender identity/expression, and/or sexual orientation, or wishes to report sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking or relationship violence, please contact the Title IX Coordinator at 607-753-4550, or visit cortland.edu/titleix to learn about all reporting options and resources.

Mental, Emotional, & Physical Wellbeing: Diminished mental health, including significant stress, mood changes, excessive worry, alcohol and/or substance abuse, or problems with eating and/or sleeping can interfere with optimal academic performance.

If symptoms are related to your course work, please speak with the instructor.

If problems with relationships, family worries, loss, a personal struggle or crisis, or food or housing insecurity are negatively impacting your health and/or interfering with your academic success, SUNY Cortland offers resources to help.

- Counseling Center: 607-753-4728
- Substance Abuse & Prevention Education: 607-753-2066
- Associate Vice President of Student Affairs 607-753-4721).

☀️ In the interest of overall wellbeing, as long as SUNY and/or the college requires mask-wearing, everyone in the class is required to wear masks properly over the nose (over the bridge, not hovering at the tip) and the mouth for every class. This is a matter of respect to those who are immunocompromised or have other increased risks related to COVID and/or are living with or caring for people who may be immunocompromised or at risk. Repeated reminders will negatively impact your participation grade.



Coursework

Media Journals:

As a cinema class, we will engage with media content, fictional and nonfictional, regularly. It is okay, even encouraged, to have fun watching the movies, and to enjoy them. But you will also be expected to be engaged, active, and critical in your viewing and listening. For that reason, you will keep Media Journals. Each entry should be developed during class time while viewing the movies and contain the following information as appropriate:

- 1) The media title or topic (if it's a movie or TV show, you might note the year, too)
- 2) For fictional media, observations and considerations like:
 - Who are the actors? (Not necessarily names, but demographics)
 - Which characters do and don't have powers? What are the different types of powers?
 - What's the gender, racial, ethnic mix?
 - How is sexuality portrayed?
 - *Are any stereotypes present? If so are they reinforced or subverted?*
- 3) For either fictional or nonfictional, *what issues about diversity, inclusion, and/or acceptance in socio-politics are being addressed? How?*

You are welcome to be creative in your approach to these journals. (See example).

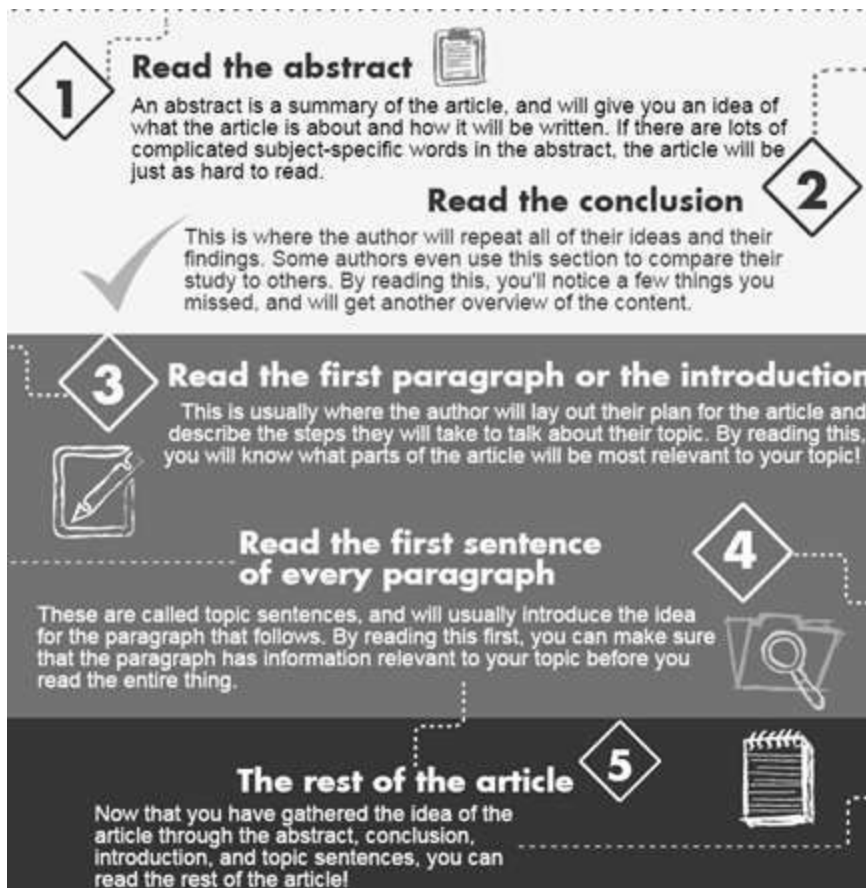


The journals will be collected 3 times during the semester following each in-class screening to check that they are up-to-date and complete. Each check will be worth up to 10% (10 points). Grades will be based on completion, thought, and evidence of effort/engagement (not on having “correct” responses). All entries should be kept together in a dedicated notebook, folder, or binder.

Readings & Reading Responses:

Readings are meant to a) expose you to the nature of communication research and academic writing, b) introduce course concepts to you, c) prepare you for in-class discussions, activities, and assignments. Readings let you hear multiple voices, make lectures more accessible to you, and allows you to tailor discussions to meet your own interests and goals. To help you achieve these benefits, you are asked to submit the following for each assigned reading, on an index card or half-sheet of paper:

Your Name	Date
Article Title	
1. One-two sentences identifying a key takeaway or central lesson in the reading.	
2. A one-two sentence reaction to, comment about, or question regarding, the reading.	



Each Reading Reaction is worth 3 percentage point. Completing at least 5 of the 8 assigned will earn full credit – as long as the reaction is specific or thoughtful enough to show you did the reading (ie, Responses like, “I thought it was all really interesting. My question is, what do others think?” Or, “I thought this reading was boring. I have no questions,” will not earn credit.). Completing more than 5 Reactions will earn extra credit.

The purpose of the Reading Reactions is not only to help you engage meaningfully with the readings, but also to give me more insight about your interests and knowledge. Both outcomes can help to make our class time more engaging.

Exams:

There will be 3 exams in the class in weeks 5, 11, and 16. Exams will be created through crowdsourcing – that is, *you will contribute exam questions and the class will work together to determine exam content through Blackboard discussion space.* (The instructor will finalize the exam format and specifics.) As you progress through the course – when you do the readings, when you get back from a class discussion, or any other time an idea strikes – contribute to the designated discussion threads on Blackboard with your ideas for test questions. They should be multiple choice, matching, true/false, fill in the blank, or short answer. As your classmates post their test question suggestions, respond to the ones you like, make suggestions for modifications, or express concerns about ones you think might be inappropriate or too difficult.

You are also encouraged to work together through discussion forums or space like GoogleDocs to create class notes that you can use. Within these processes we will consider, discuss, and explore issues of access and inclusivity and the relationships between information, knowledge, and power.

Tests are designed to help you learn the core concepts that will better prepare you to achieve the course Learning Outcomes. Psychological research on the science of successful learning has demonstrated that the act of preparing for a test and actually taking the test and retrieving information is a great boost to memory. Exams are not just a measurement instrument, they are also an important learning instrument. Exams are a clinically proven way to help you keep up with classwork – they encourage attendance, preparation and review in ways that less traditional or structured means don't.

All exams will be delivered through Blackboard to better accommodate COVID-related absences. But they will be administered during regular class time, the same as paper-and-pencil, in-person, exams. Each exam is worth 10% of your course grade.

Digging Deeper Presentations

In groups of 3-4, you will select and sign up for one of the nine topics listed below. With your group, you will research the issues and develop a 30-minute presentation about your findings to share with the class. For each topic, there are a few suggested avenues of inquiry. You may opt to use one or more of them, or to develop your own.

Rubric

	Element	Pts		Comments
Intro	Screening	10	Introduces self to audience, states the topic & purpose of the presentation, previews what the presentation will contain	
Content	Info & Research	40	Presentation demonstrates that the group put time, thought, effort into developing the content. It achieves the ideal of "digging deeper" by going beyond just what has already been covered in class material to offer new insights and information.	
Delivery	Verbal	5	Easily heard & understood, exhibits enthusiasm & familiarity.	
	Nonverbal	5	Appears prepared with professional demeanor.	
	Multimedia	30	The presentation makes good, creative, and/or effective use of media clips, images, and/or excerpts to show and help clarify	
Concl.	Recap	10	Reviews key content and summarizes the presentation	

Topic One: One Representation Replaces Another

- Conduct a content analysis of 3-5 episodes of your favorite show. How many social group stereotypes do you see in the programs?
- Consider the representations discussed in class and other resources and the mass media images of social groups you've recently encountered. What other examples can you find that you believe simply have evolved from old representations?

Topic Two: Sexuality and Power

- Some issues of sexuality are more complicated than others. For instance, in some cases, African American men are hypersexualized, such as when they are the main characters in Blaxploitation-type films, and in other cases they are desexualized, such as when they are portrayed in "buddy" roles. Asian women are often hypersexualized, while Asian men (especially when cast in the "nerd" role) may be desexualized. Explore these contradictions and what they might mean.
- Some films over the past 20-40 years or so have featured men, and often men of color, dressed as women. Try to find and review or learn about some of those films. Consider how those men are being represented. Also consider what the filmmakers might be saying about the position of women in this country.
- 2017 saw the rise of the #MeToo movement. Review news stories of sex and sexual harassment scandals in the entertainment industry. How is the media handling the discussion on abuses of sexuality and power in its own industry?

Topic Three: Rules and Regulations Impact Representations

- Based on what you have read so far, what rules or laws have been put in place to correct some of the stereotyping or hurtful representations in the media? Should more be done? Can more be done?
- Should the various media industries set standards for themselves about how groups discussed in this text are represented in film, television, or in other media platforms?
- Assuming treatment of underrepresented groups in the industry itself (ex. writers, artists, producers, directors) influences representations, what rules/regulations are being put in place to protect victims of sexual harassment or other discrimination in the media industry?

Topic Four: Symbolic Annihilation of a Social Group

- Compare the box office profits for films that have people of color in casts and the profits for film that have replaced people of color with white actors. Is there something to be said about the argument that Hollywood needs white actors to draw audiences or do you think the argument has no foundation?
- Consider films that have cast cis-gendered actors as Trans characters, and/or able-bodied actors as characters with physical disabilities. Is this related to star power and box office receipts, or is something else at work here? How does it influence or shape representation of these groups? What messages does it send?
- Try to think of social groups that have seen advancement away from symbolic annihilation. What might be the underlying reasons for the advancement?
- Do you believe invisibility is worse, better, or just as problematic as a negative stereotype? Find examples to support your answer.

Topic Five: Minorities as the "Other"

- Gather several recent issues of popular fashion magazines, such as *Vogue* or *Glamour*, and several recent issues of men's fashion magazines, such as *GQ* or *Esquire*. Review each advertisement in these magazines. Compare and contrast how women and people of color are presented. Are they made into objects? Do they appear as the "Other"?
- Look at the characters in 2-3 popular video game franchises. Compare and contrast how men, women, and people of color are presented. Who is objectified? Who is made into the "Other"? Who are the "good guys" and the "bad guys"?
- Look at the characters in several comic books, or in popular superhero movies. Compare and contrast how men, women, and people of color are presented. Who is objectified? Who is made into the "Other"? Who are the "good guys" and the "bad guys"?
- Look at music videos from 3-4 different musical genres, such as pop, hip hop, country, and/or rock. Compare and contrast how men, women, and people of color are presented. Who is objectified? Who is made into the "Other"?
- How has history contributed to the systematic "Othering" of the poor, women, or ethnic minorities?

Topic Six: Reliance of the News on White "Expert" Sources

- Conduct a content analysis of the op-eds that appear in a local newspaper. Whose stories are being told? These stories provide context for complex current events, so the stories that are published are important to the readers. Whose stories are not being told?
- Conduct an analysis of the experts who appear on television news programs during tax season, discussions of current tax changes, or any other financial issue (or look at the experts who appear on financial news programming). How many of these experts are women or people of color? Do those experts get asked to speak about the same issues as white male experts?
- Conduct an analysis of the experts who appear on television news programs during sports reports, or who appear on sports-programming. How many of these experts are women or people of color? Do those experts get asked to speak about the same issues as white male experts?
- Conduct an analysis of pundits appearing during prime time on CNN vs. Fox. Who are the talking heads offering their take on politics?

Topic Seven: "False" Framing and Misrepresentation

- Compare and contrast how any white-on-black police shooting or Black Lives Matter protest was covered by 3 different news outlets. Choose the news sources so that they represent different political slants, business models, or regions. Are there differences in the coverage? What, and why?
- How might media ownership shift the way a story about alternative fuels, LGBTQAIPD rights, health care, or some other issue is covered on the news?

Topic Eight: Online = New Opportunities

- Examine several podcasts that focus on minority issues or discuss minority representations. Determine who created and maintains the podcasts. Compare and contrast the content of each site based on which are created by and for minority group members and which are not.
- Vine was considered an important platform for Black culture. How are African Americans portrayed on one of the other streaming video sites, such as Streamable? How do those portrayals compare to images you see in traditional entertainment media?
- Examine an array of popular memes; do they reflect any social group stereotypes, do they exclude any social groups?

Topic Nine: Changes, Contradictions, and an Ever-Moving Continuum

- Explore the notion that inequities in media representations are rooted in power relation imbalances between social groups and examine your thoughts on whether it is even possible to have fair and equal social group representation in mass media.
- Based on what you've learned so far, what future challenges do you think lie ahead in terms of diversity in the media? Examine some of these challenges, or other changes, contradictions, and connections.

Participation

Your participation grade for the semester will consider:

Overall attendance.

Missing the occasional class is not a problem – and given COVID, is expected. Missing a lot of class (like more than 6 classes) is a problem.

"Good" attitude.

You respect your classmates (which includes properly wearing your mask). You usually come to class on time.

You don't make a habit of leaving class early.

Involvement.

Some combination of: You stay awake. You take notes. You answer questions. You ask questions. You do the given tasks. You don't spend the whole time staring at the screen of phone/tablet/laptop. You offer an occasional comment.

End-of-semester self- assessment:

Participation looks different for different people and different personalities. You will complete your own self-analysis at the end-of-the semester that will weigh as half your final participation grade.

📍 class topic 📖 reading due including Reading Reaction TEST

📺 tentatively planned media for class (⚠ content warning, ▶ on YouTube)

Wk	<u>MONDAYS</u>
1	1/24: 📍 Cultural Studies In class media planned: 📺 Stuart Hall – Race, Gender & Class in the Media ▶ 📺 The Insider (excerpt)
2	1/31: 📍 Gender and Sexuality in the media 📖 Before class, read The Weird Familiarity of 100-Year Old Feminism Memes , <i>The Atlantic</i> & Anderson, “Pornification & US Political Culture,” <i>Rhetoric & Public Affairs</i> : complete a reading reaction for each In class media planned: 📺 Killing Us Softly (this will go in your Media Journal)
3	2/7: 📍 Blacks in the Media 📖 Before class, read Blackface has Resurged in the Internet Age , <i>Berkeley Library News</i> & Sparks, “Minstrel Politics,” <i>Argumentation & Advocacy</i> : complete a reading reaction for each In class media planned: 📺 Race the Floating Signifier ⚠ ▶ 📺 Is Mickey Mouse a Minstrel ⚠ (this will go in your Media Journal)
4	2/14: 📍 Screening & discussion: 📺 <i>Bulworth</i> ⚠ (this will go in your Media Journal)
5	2/21: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Test 1 on Blackboard
6	2/28: 📍 Hispanics & Latinx in the media 📖 Before class, read Cramer, “Whiteness and the Postracial Imaginary in Disney’s Zootopia,” <i>Howard Journal of Comm</i> : complete a reading reaction In class media planned: 📺 Spanglish (this will go in your Media Journal)
7	3/7: 📍 Arabs, Asians, and “Orientalism” in the media. Sign-ups for Digging Deeper Presentations 📖 Before class, read Alsultany, “Arabs & Muslims in the Media after 9/11,” <i>American Quarterly</i> : complete a reading reaction In class media planned: 📺 Politics of Stereotypes in News ⚠ ▶
8	3/14: SPRING BREAK
9	3/21: 📍 Age & Disability in the Media 📖 Before class, read Ratto, “Not Superhero Accessible,” <i>Disability Studies Quarterly</i> : complete a reading reaction In class media planned: 📺 Perceiving the Supercrip in Popular Media ▶
10	3/28: 📍 Screening & discussion: 📺 <i>Driving Miss Daisy</i> (this will go in your Media Journal)
11	4/4: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Test 2 on Blackboard
12	4/11: 📍 Class and religion in the Media 📖 Before class, read Baron, “X-Men as J-Men,” <i>Shofar</i> : complete a reading reaction
13	4/18: Digging Deeper presentations 1-5
14	4/25: Digging Deeper presentations 6-9
15	5/2: 📍 Screening & discussion: 📺 <i>X-Men: First Class</i> (this will go in your Media Journal) Self-assessment of participation
16	TUESDAY, 5/10, 1:30-3:30pm: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Test 3

The final exam will be administered through Blackboard DURING the SPECIFIED EXAM TIME.