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BEST PRACTICES IN TEACHING DIFFICULT TOPICS IN A POLARIZED SOCIETY

Thursday, Aug 6, 2020 • 11:45 a.m.
AEJMC 2020 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

BEST PRACTICES IN TEACHING DIFFICULT TOPICS IN A POLARIZED SOCIETY

This booklet contains the winning entries of the Best Practices in Teaching Difficult Topics in a Polarized Society 2020 competition, sponsored by the AEJMC Elected Standing Committee on Teaching.

Booklets produced for the previous competitions can be found online at:
aejmc.com/home/2010/09/best-practices-in-teaching-booklets

2020 Winning Entries:

First Place

Joe Grimm and Lucinda Davenport, Michigan State University School of Journalism, for
"Journalism Sourcing Tool Teaches Students to Include Diverse Perspectives"

Second Place

Sherry S. Yu, University of Toronto, for "Teaching Immigration News through Content Analysis"

Third Place

Mariam F. Alkazemi, Virginia Commonwealth University, for "Films, Readings and Reactions: Reflecting on Media Portrayals of the Middle East through Film and Readings"

Honorable Mention

Teri Finneman, University of Kansas, for "A Diversity Analysis of Student Media"

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Best Practices in Teaching Diversity in Journalism and Mass Communication

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BEST PRACTICES IN TEACHING DIFFICULT TOPICS IN A POLARIZED SOCIETY



First Place

Journalism Sourcing Tool Teaches Students to Include Diverse Perspectives

Joe Grimm and Lucinda Davenport
Michigan State University

Abstract: The 2020 campaign and divisions over race and gender send journalism students directly into the deepest creases of polarization. It is natural to want to sidestep them. However, our students plunge right into these fault lines because no one likes to be marginalized. Students are asking hundreds of sources about their politics, race and gender to make sure that diverse perspectives have what one student calls a “fair chance” to be represented. Our new tool generates data visualizations of how well their sourcing reflects communities. Students can literally see how well they represent demographics and politics and the visualizations show how they have improved.

Explanation of the teaching practice or activity: In this required public affairs journalism class, a key goal is to get students reporting. Central to that is for them to interview a range of sources whose perspectives reflect the community. This requires training, confidence and practice. We are achieving that by developing a tool that measures how the aggregate of our sourcing correlates with Census and election data. By elevating the curriculum to teach a skill so central to journalism and communications, we are creating sustainable, widespread change in students and, we believe, the industry.

Journalism that does not reflect communities is usually done unintentionally. Accurate, representative coverage requires intentionality. Newsrooms, until now, have simply not had a good way to see in real time whom they are interviewing. By linking several commonly available technologies into a new array, our students are comparing their sources’ and the community’s demographics.

They are aggregating thousands of demographic data points with this tool. It organizes, analyzes and makes visualizations to show the big picture. Most newsrooms have only a fuzzy picture about the makeup of their communities and do not measure whom they are interviewing in the aggregate. Our tool delivers crisp images of how inclusive coverage is by an individual journalist, reporting teams, the whole class or an entire newsroom for either one story or over time.

Students begin by learning about their community with Census and election reports. They then gather a little extra data on each person they interview. Using an app developed in class in spring 2020, students collect this data immediately following the interview. Or, they can hand over their phones and ask sources to enter responses themselves, assuring some measure of control and privacy and accuracy and reducing interviewer bias. Data is automatically uploaded into a

database and timestamped. Just about as quickly, that database can generate data visualizations that show whether sourcing correlates to community demographics. Students examine, “Are we reflecting this community?” “Why not?” “Does it matter?” “Should we do something about that?” and “How will we change?” We can then adjust coverage plans or interviewing choices instantly, remeasure and compare.

In spring 2020, three undergraduate sections and a graduate-level class used the tool. A fourth undergrad section was our control group and did not. All took pre- and post-tests. We believe our post-test will show an enhanced understanding of community-reflective sourcing among students who have used the technology, seen their performance and reflected on it.

Rationale: Students frequently hear about diversity. However, they do not get much explanation about what that means, why it is a journalistically ethical imperative and how to know whether they are achieving it. By having students ask sources about age, race, gender and political lean in every interview, aggregating their answers, displaying them and then comparing them to community characteristics, inclusion becomes engrained in their process. It means something. With practice and a reason, they learn to navigate the polarizations they might otherwise avoid.

With sourcing, accuracy and diversity hard-wired into every assignment, we can no longer be unintentional about what we are doing. Because we frequently check and discuss what we are doing, students see why sourcing matters and that choices have impact. Periodic reviews of visualizations mean they literally see that their actions can change journalistic outcomes. Several students, on their own initiative, run their own analyses. That will become another course assignment.

Outcomes: We measure outcomes in several ways. We measure learning by asking students to write reflections at the end of the semester and compare this qualitative data to what earlier classes wrote. We have been through three cycles now. Throughout the semester, we improve the survey instrument, our training about diversity and the collec-



JRN 300 sources, spring 2020

Thank you for your interview. People's words are the heart of what we do. Our stories are published on the Spartan Newsroom website. We want to represent all perspectives in the community fairly. So, we have a few questions beyond the basic ones. They take about a minute. If you have already done this during the semester, we need just your name. You may fill in the answers yourself or have the reporter do it. Thank you.

My [source's] last name, first name *

SHORT ANSWER TEXT

My occupation (business owner, farmer, etc.)

SHORT ANSWER TEXT

My age

- ☐ 0-20
- ☐ 20s
- ☐ 30s
- ☐ 40s
- ☐ 50s
- ☐ 60s
- ☐ 70s
- ☐ 80+
- ☐ Other...

My race or ethnicity.

- ☐ White
- ☐ Black, African or African American
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Asian American, Asian
- ☐ Native American, indigenous
- ☐ Mixed race

My gender

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Trans, nonbinary, other

Political leaning

- ☐ Strongly conservative
- ☐ Leans conservative
- ☐ Independent
- ☐ Leans liberal
- ☐ Strongly liberal
- ☐ Undecided

tion tool. The reflections clearly show students are becoming more comfortable with this type of potentially awkward interview and explaining it better in difficult situations. (Please read some of their observations and see visualizations in the supplemental material.) Quantitatively, they are logging more sources, and the data sets on these sources are becoming more complete. We can identify and address areas where sources or students feel less comfortable.

In spring 2020, we administered pre- and post-tests to three undergraduate sections and a graduate section that used source sourcing tool to compare intentionality of interviewing diverse sources at the beginning and end of the semester. We identified a fifth section as a control group, whose instructor and students did not use this tool, to compare with the other sections.

While we are committed to developing this sourcing tool and regimen, our primary goal is not only to help the news industry. Our first responsibility as teachers is to also develop better, more inclusive journalists. The data tells us we are on that path.

Supplemental: Comments and images

Students have largely designed this tool, based on the philosophy that it is our ethical responsibility to reflect our communities. Marginalized ethnicities, races and genders should be represented in our journalism to the same degree they are represented in the community. The same is true of political views, especially in a time when journalists are denounced as left-leaning “enemies of the people.”

We began simply by constructing a simple, short post-interview that was really an extension of when we ask for contact information. We began aggregating responses in a shared database to see our collective efforts and sharpened the questions. Using feedback from sources, we improved our explanation of what we were doing. Also, students’ discussion of any discomfort helped to fine-tune our script and led us to develop an app that would help them.

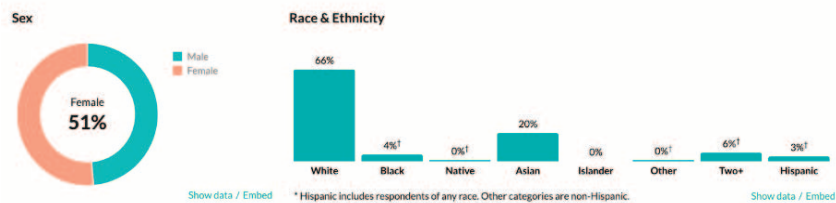
Now, students can explain why we ask about sensitive topics such as politics and gender. They record more sources and are taking to more diverse sources. They gather more data and our categories are more relevant.

These are some student reflections from April 2020:

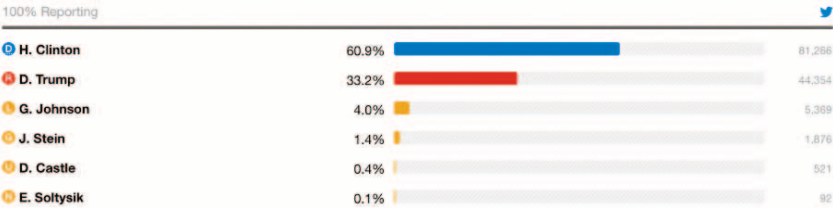
- *“When I paid more attention to the sources I was using for my stories, I noticed that I felt more confident in my reporting ... I noticed that I was paying a lot more attention to who I was interviewing and how their viewpoint would be different than the other interviews I had. When I achieved that, I felt very confident that I had gathered views that were different, diverse and representative of the community.”*

- “I learned that sources play a large role in your credibility as a journalist ... Prior to this, I thought that just having authority or knowledgeable figures in my stories was all I needed to be credible; however, through this sourcing assignment I learned that how well you represent a community is just as important as how knowledgeable your sources are.”
- “One of the biggest things I learned is the communities of people that are not the majority love when their voice is heard.”

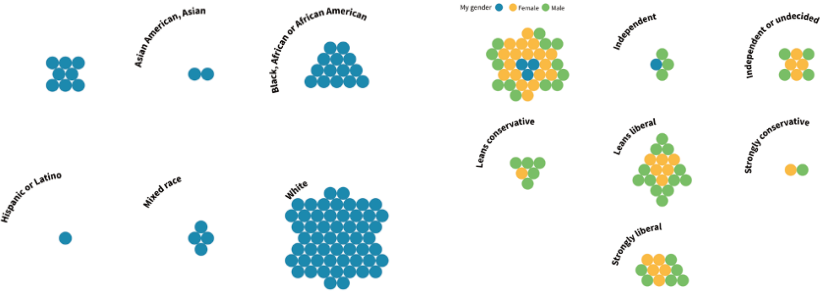
These images are examples of how students move from community Census data and election results to the visualizations they can create about their sources.



Ingham County



Sourcing visualizations come from data motion graphics created in Flourish Studio.



Second Place

Teaching Immigration News through Content Analysis

Sherry S. Yu
University of Toronto

Abstract: Immigration is one of the topics students can easily associate with, especially in immigrant-receiving countries such as Canada and the U.S., but it is simultaneously one of the most difficult topics to teach, especially in journalism. Content analysis is useful to teach how immigration is covered in news media and help journalists in training broaden their perspectives and approach immigration more critically. Through collecting news samples, coding and analyzing the patterns of coverage, and discussing similarities and differences between news outlets, students not only develop critical thinking skills in their approach to immigration, but also research skills they can apply to future journalism and media research.

Rationale: Immigration is a difficult topic to teach. The public discourse, let alone policy debates on immigration, is often polarized (Daniller, 2019; Environics Institute for Survey Research, 2018; Ma, 2019). Media coverage of immigration further varies across media outlets, as influenced by factors such as journalistic traditions, editorial directions, and target audiences (Benson & Wood, 2015; Fleras, 2011). Careful planning is thus required to help journalism students see the interplay between these factors, understand the implications of media coverage, and be able to approach the topic more critically. To do this, in my second-year journalism “studies” course, I use content analysis to allow students to explore hands-on how immigration is covered, before they move on to “practice” courses and write their own stories. This process goes beyond the news outlets students are familiar with by extending to media outlets across the border (national-international media comparison) and diverse media types (mainstream-ethnic media comparison). The focus is on news framing, that is, the “selection” and “salience” of news (Entman, 1993, p. 52). News framing does not reveal its intentions itself but these intentions are revealed through a systematic analysis of news stories. News framing is particularly important for immigration news as immigrants are often described as the Other or the problem of society, more so than equal members of society (Henry & Tator, 2002, 2005).

Explanation of the Teaching Practice or Activity: To understand news framing in relation to immigration, two research papers are assigned to conduct a content analysis. Students use Benson and Wood’s (2005) approach to content analysis of immigration news. This study is useful because: 1) it demonstrates a cross-border comparison; 2) it explains the news sampling process; 3) it uses quotes rather than articles as a unit of analysis to explore whose voices are used to frame the story in a certain way, and also allows students to secure enough samples from a manageable number of articles to complete the analysis within a

given timeframe; and 4) it offers pre-determined codes for news frames and news sources for students to adopt. The two research papers are designed to conduct a comparative analysis of a different set of news outlets and time periods, and to utilize the benefits of various work dynamics.

1. Group Paper: A group of three to five students choose one national mainstream news media outlet and one international news media outlet, and also two time periods (e.g., 2010 and 2020), and explore similarities and differences across the border and also over time. A group paper allows students to sample, code, and analyze news articles collectively. A total of 40 news articles are sampled, equivalent to 20 articles per media outlet, and 10 articles per student to code. This is also equivalent to approximately 200 quotes (first five quotes from each article).

2. Individual Paper: Once the group work has been completed with the analytical skills obtained from Group Paper, students work individually on a smaller scale sampling and analysis exercise for a mainstream-ethnic media comparison. Students choose one ethnic news media outlet to compare with the national mainstream news media outlet they already worked on for Group Paper. A total of 10 news articles are sampled to compare to the 10 articles of the mainstream news outlet published in the same time period.

3. Workshops: To guide the sampling of news articles, a workshop on the overview of news databases and how to sample and archive news articles is provided. Once sampling has been completed, the following workshops focus on manual coding of each quote by using Benson and Wood's 12 "news frames" (categorized by "problem," "cause," and "solution" frames) as well as the "news sources" who provide those quotes (e.g., government, individual, pro/anti-immigration association). Additionally, students also code the overall "news topic" the story is related to (e.g., administration/processing, crime/terror, cultural practices/life). Once coding has been completed, another workshop on basic Excel is offered to learn how to organize and analyze the coded data using pivot tables and visualize overall patterns of news coverage.

4. Presentation and Roundtable: Upon the completion of Group Paper, students share their findings with the rest of the class by giving a formal group presentation. This is an excellent opportunity for students to learn from each other, not only through the findings from various sets of national-international comparisons, but also their own experience as researchers conducting a content analysis. Upon the completion of Individual Paper, students share their findings from the mainstream-ethnic media comparison in a more casual roundtable setting, moderated by the instructor based on key research questions.

Outcomes: For many students, this is their first time conducting a content analysis. Therefore, the goal is more about learning from mistakes rather than doing it perfectly. Students are evaluated based on how thoroughly they have documented

their findings (what and how they found) and how critically they reflect on their own research experience (what was overlooked and could be corrected next time).

1. Critical Thinking Skills: One of the main outcomes is critical thinking skills gained from a holistic understanding of coverage of immigration across the border and by media type. Now that students have compared empirically with their own systematically coded data, they understand the similarities and differences in coverage more clearly. Students are also instructed to look behind the numbers by exploring socio-cultural and policy changes that took place during the sampling period to make better sense of the numbers.

2. Research Skills: Another outcome is a set of research skills. Students understand the difference between quantitative and qualitative research, and also the strengths and limitations for each. Students are also able to discuss inter-coder reliability as they have experienced different interpretations of Benson and Wood's frames within the group during the coding process. The learning curve is moderate for news sampling and coding, but can be steep for analysis using pivot tables for some students. Nonetheless, once students understand the benefit of pivot tables in organizing and visualizing the pattern of coverage, they find it rewarding and useful for future journalism and media research.

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Third Place

Films, Readings and Reactions: Reflecting on Media Portrayals of the Middle East through Film and Readings

Mariam F. Alkazemi
Virginia Commonwealth University

Abstract: Students were provided a list of 8 films to which they have access through Kanopy, which is an academic version of Netflix. Also, each was paired with a reading or activity. After viewing the film and completing the reading/activity, students were asked to write a 3-5 page paper that provides their interpretation of the film and reading/activity as well as their personal reactions afterwards. Excerpts from student samples are included on pages 14 and 15 of this booklet. Further, a rubric is provided in the appendix on page 16 of this booklet.

The Film Series Assignment: The salient issues in news items relating to the Middle East usually include war, conflict, violence against women and corruption. Very seldom do students in American universities have a moment to reflect on the vast diversity that the Middle East encompasses from languages to ethnicities and religions. Film is a unique medium because it provides students with an intimate opportunity to explore the culture through hearing different languages, seeing different cultural norms play out and understanding what it looks like for people to operate under very different cultural conditions.

Keeping the diversity in mind and the different interests of students at an urban institution, 8 films were chosen that all students have access to through the institutional access to Kanopy. The blurbs of each film were included in the film assignment and two readings for the majority of the films. Below are descriptions of the films and readings:

Created by an Italian photographer that displays mostly Qatari men living in a modern home, driving modern cars while gathering in male-only rooms and raising falcons is *The Challenge: Wealthy Qatari Sheikhs with a Passion for Falconry*. It was paired with the Koch (2015) article asking students to examine the authenticity of a life in relation to the attainment of wealth that a nation accumulates.

Another film shows the plight of Syrian refugees in Europe through the eyes of children. Narrated by kids of different ages, *Born in Syria: Child Refugees of Syria's Civil War* shows refugees getting out of cages, living in refugee camps and assimilating into their new homes. Students were asked to play a game created by the BBC (<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32057601>) and read about the potential outcomes of the "choose your own escape" style of information delivery. In the game, students have to decide the best course of action to arrive in Europe as a refugee, and often fail. This activity is paired with a *New*

York Times article, “The Historic Scale of Syria’s Refugee Crisis”

(<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/interactive/2013/10/16/world/middleeast/syrian-refugee-crisis-photos.html>).

A third film, *Taqwacore: The Birth of Punk Islam* shows an American convert as he struggles to incorporate punk music into various communities around the world. In the film, the protagonist visits Pakistan and studies alongside scholars. He then engages in activities that ostracize him from mainstream Muslim communities. He also finds a niche of Muslims who do enjoy his genre of music. To understand the resistance to music, students were asked to read a summary about Islamic jurisprudence opinions on music. The article, “Production, Hearing and Listening: Intentional Participation in Musical Culture in the Islamic World,” is a one-page condensation of select opinions of the theological opinion leaders of different schools of thought within Islam. It is written by a University of Minnesota anthropologist, Dr. William Beeman, and published in *Anthropology News*. Then, students were asked to read an academic study listed below.

Another is a documentary about how Arabs have been portrayed in the media, and *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People* brings up mentions of Arabs in popular culture. This is particularly important since Disney had recently remade its movie *Aladdin*. This was paired with a reading by communication scholars’ examination of Arabs’ support of censorship for the sake of cultural preservation shown below.

Further, *Feminism Inshallah: A History of Arab Feminism* documents the plights and hopes of Arabs in several countries across the Arab world. This article was paired with a reading on honor-based violence because it is unique to collectivist cultures and is in retaliation to the breaking of gender roles.

Two movies allowed students to hear the Persian language. One of them was a film that showed students how differently their experience of courtship occurs than those of women in Iran. *The Broker: An Iranian Dating Agency* showed women lining up on stage to introduce themselves to potential spouses while men cracked up in the audience. The film makes references to temporary marriages, which are a religiously legitimate way to experience marriages that are limited in time and sometimes tied to a particular condition. Badran and Turbull’s (2019) article takes a balanced approach to Sunni and Shiite differences in pursuing temporary marriage through examining blog posts.

Further, *A Girl Walks Home at Night* is a vampire drama in the Farsi language that featured a son of a man with a substance abuse disorder falling in love with a vampire. It was filmed by an Iranian-American and the Naficy (2002) article is on movies made by Iranian immigrants.

Finally, the movie *Arranged* was the only one that was based in the United States and featured fairly religious Muslim and Jewish women experiencing arranged

marriages. That was paired with, “A Tentative Dialogue: Baltimore is a leader in Jewish-Muslim relations - but talking about the Middle East is a no-no.” It is a 1993 article published in the *Baltimore Jewish Times*. Then, students were asked to read, “Jewish-Muslim relations in the Age of Trump” from *New Jersey Jewish News*. Both of these files were located through the university library system and uploaded to the internet.

Rationale: The assignments included the rationale that students could draw upon connections that might not appear on the surface. For example, the movie on Qatari wealth was paired with an article about how falconry is not an indigenous sport. The reading helps students see governments impressing on people a culture and then examines how it looks like.

Further, the movie about the Iranian dating agency was paired with a reading explaining temporary marriages. Since the concept of arranged marriages would be unfathomable to most American college students, *Arranged* was introduced because it was in a familiar environment. Also, it showed similarities between two religious communities that often appear in the news as being antithetical to one another. The time periods from which they were selected are different and show a progression.

Overall, students were provided the rationale of the combinations so that the purpose of the assignments would be clear. The purpose is to evoke deep thought and self-reflection.

Outcomes: Since students could pick any movie and watch them in any order, the movies emerged in the class in the form of questions about the culture, which I could then address. Also, students provided insightful observations. Some excerpts of their work are shown in the following.

Excerpts from Reaction Papers of Different Students

Response to *Feminism Inshallah*:

“I believe that feminism is on the rise in the Middle East. Many disagree with the violence and as modernism evolves, changes will have to be made for the betterment of society (Mahmoud, 2014). Women have rallied and fought before for the limited freedoms they have today. My concern is that the younger generation has become more supportive of traditional views and honor killings (Gengler et al., 2018). One of these reasons is because younger male figures are chosen to commit the acts due to lower sentences from the judicial system. The misogynic views on women today allow women to be seen as property and unless stricter enforcement occurs, they will still be subjected to this violence.

Response to *Arranged*:

I believe the film showed a side to arranged matrimony that was relatable to many, although failed to show the real reality that occurs in today's society. I am

personally in an interreligious, and interracial relationship, I am Christian and Vietnamese and my boyfriend of three years is Muslim and Eritrean, and we have found a working environment where we both respect each other's beliefs and have a mutually beneficial, loving relationship. It was not all easy and romanticized though, we had to learn each other well, and although I know that arranged marriage of the same religion is common for some, interreligious couples are just as prevalent, especially in 2019. I feel like this film missed a good opportunity to be more inclusive.

Response to *Born in Syria*:

Compared to the documentary, the children and their family probably didn't have as many options as the game offered me. I made choices coming from a privileged background and mindset with a laptop comfortably sitting on my lap. I literally had a minute to think rationally and strategically that the children did not have. For most families, it was not easy to seek asylum or get refugee status like the situation seemed for me at the end of the game. Some were stranded and were left helpless in the film.

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Appendix

The illustration (on page 16) shows the Grading Rubric for Film Analysis Paper.

Appendix (continued)

Grading Rubric for Film Analysis Paper			
Excellent (50-45)	Great (45-35)	Good (35-30)	Poor (29-1)
In 3-5 pages, the film analysis should reflect a thorough examination of the film. A well-written, brief overview of the film should summarize the plot in approximately one page, with specific language that demonstrates an attentiveness to the storytelling. The articles read or activities performed are to be summarized in approximately one page, specifically demonstrating that the most important points of the activities or readings have been understood. A page is left to form relationships between the film and reading/activity, as well as provide information about the student's reactions insights or questions. The depth of the connection between the material should demonstrate a close reading and viewing of the assigned material. The paper should have three subsections that are clearly labeled and citations in the style of the American Psychological Association (APA) should be included when references are mentioned, including the assigned readings/activities. Your paper should be mostly free of typographical and mechanical errors in writing.	In less than five but more than three pages, the film analysis should reflect that the film was examined thoroughly. A well-written, brief overview of the film should summarize the plot in approximately one page. The articles read or activities performed are to be summarized in approximately one page. A page is left to form relationships between the film and reading/activity, as well as provide information about the student's reactions insights or questions. References should be shown in the style of the American Psychological Association (APA). There will be a couple of typographical and mechanical errors. All the parts of the paper are present, but they may not be labeled as such.	Without adhering to the word limit, the film analysis should reflect that the film was examined thoroughly. A well-written brief overview of the film should summarize the plot in vague terms. The articles read or activities performed are to be summarized, but may not reflect a deep understanding of the readings. A page is left to form relationships between the film and reading/activity, as well as provide information about the student's reactions insights or questions. References are listed without any adherence to style. There will be several of typographical and mechanical errors. All the parts of the paper are present, but they may not be labeled as such.	Without adhering to the word limit, the film analysis is vague and ambiguous. The film is not summarized, and it is not clear if the reading has been understood. In terms of writing mechanics, the assignment clearly required proofreading. The references are missing or incomplete.

Honorable Mention

A Diversity Analysis of Student Media

Teri Finneman
University of Kansas

The Diversity in Media class analyzed the state of diversity in the university's student newspaper. Student teams analyzed a semester's worth of newspaper coverage, specifically news, sports, photography, features, and Facebook, to generate quantitative data. Next, students interviewed 50 diverse individuals across campus to establish qualitative data about the perceptions of the state of diversity in the paper. Finally, students hosted focus groups with 54 diverse individuals to collect ideas for improving coverage and relationships between the newspaper and diverse communities. The final report included a strategic plan and marketing plan to create a more inclusive and representative campus newspaper.

Explanation of Activity: Students signed up for teams Front Page News, Inside News, Sports, Photography, Features, and Facebook. Each student analyzed three weeks of content – for most, this meant the hard copies of the paper. Since most teams had five students, this amounted to 15 weeks of coverage analyzed. The Facebook team went to the newspaper's Facebook page, with each student analyzing three weeks of posts over a 15-week period.

As a class, we created a codebook of what to track in coverage, so the entire class used the same template. We did sample coding with newspapers outside of the final sample so they could practice beforehand. Students coded individually, turned in their Excel sheet, and wrote up a findings report. They then met with their group to discuss everyone's individual findings to create one group report with agreed upon trends. They consulted the university's demographics to put their results into context (i.e. if a campus is 15% black students, students should use this as a comparison for their percentage findings).

When creating the group report, students were assigned roles, so everyone had a task: team secretary, team lead, team PR rep, team ad rep, and team proofer. (See Appendix for role descriptions).

In Round 2, each team received a concept: Race, Religion, Generation, Culture, Gender/Sexuality, Disability/Mental Health. Each student interviewed two individuals on campus along the diversity fault line assigned to their team. Like Round 1, students wrote individual reports and then came together with their team to write a group report about the broader themes found. As a class, we created a list of interview questions, so everyone was using the same set.

In Round 3, each team conducted two focus groups that each had at least five

other student subjects. Each mini group wrote up its results. Students then came together with their full group to write a report with trends. As a class, we came up with the list of focus group questions that everyone used.

Finally, three students were tasked with pulling the various class reports into one large class report. Each team created PowerPoint slides for their results. The team PR reps served as presenters. We rehearsed our presentation twice before giving it in the student union, with the associate dean, provost present, and journalism faculty present, as well as student newspaper staff.

Rationale: The course is designed as a conceptual class to teach future mass communicators best practices for portraying diverse communities. This research project allowed for real world analysis to enhance in-class philosophical discussions regarding coverage of race, gender/sexuality, class, generation, culture, disability and religion.

By doing this hands-on project and requiring students to hear concerns of diverse individuals and see the implications of media coverage that isn't inclusive, students are more likely to remember the course goals and diversify their own mass communication in the future.

The class included journalism and strategic communication majors, as well as a few nonmajor students.

Outcomes: I received my highest teaching evaluations ever with this project. Throughout the semester, students were frequently told how important this was and that the student newspaper was already making changes as it heard about our findings. As a result of frequently being told how much their individual contributions mattered and having specific tasks, they took great pride in the project.

Because the project spanned the semester, built upon itself, and was complemented with class lectures, students were more thoroughly engrained with diversity playing out in real life, not just in theory, and heard directly from diverse individuals telling them about the impact of problematic media coverage on their lives that no classroom lecture could replicate.

The news editor of the campus newspaper was in the class and provided incremental feedback to the staff as the project went along, in addition to the 200-page final report that was eventually submitted at the end of the class.

The newspaper immediately began increasing its coverage of graduate students, international students, and students with disabilities/mental health issues as a result of our findings.

APPENDIX

This appendix illustrates the group roles for the group reports.

TEAM SECRETARY: Makes sure all team members receive copies of individual reports to study before group meeting. Takes notes during meeting discussion to keep track of ideas and who suggested what, as well as what ideas are selected. In charge of providing raw notes to team leader to write up first draft and to the professor as proof of everyone participating. In charge of making sure team stays on deadlines throughout process.

TEAM LEAD: In charge of leading team meeting and making sure all team members provide ideas and input. In charge of creating team report draft based on discussion and agreed upon best ideas in secretary's notes. In charge of uploading final reports to Blackboard and getting copies to each team member.

TEAM PR REP: In charge of communication with the other PR reps for the other class teams to get copies of their team reports, to read them and to write a 1-2-page summary for your team of what other teams are finding. Also in charge of presenting in class your team's findings, thereby requiring you to be very knowledgeable about your team's status.

TEAM AD REP: You are in charge of reading your group's report and your PR rep's summary of the other teams' findings and then writing a 1-2-page marketing plan for how the paper could better reach diverse communities via **SOCIAL MEDIA**. (Please note the platform changes for each round.) Throughout the semester, you should be meeting with the other teams' ad reps to create one final marketing plan.

TEAM PROOFER: Collect and proofread all team reports before submission, suggest revisions to team members and implement agreed on changes to create clean final reports. In charge of being aware of university demographics and ensuring accurate comparison to data. Make sure everyone has read and signed off on reports before sending team lead the final reports to be uploaded to Blackboard. In charge of making sure report formatting matches other teams on font size, type, headings, etc.

