

Resource Packet for

Media Literacy through Service Learning

An ACME Summit workshop
presented by

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What is Service Learning?

Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

Service-learning combines service objectives with learning objectives with the intent that the activity change both the recipient and the provider of the service. This is accomplished by combining service tasks with structured opportunities that link the task to self-reflection, self-discovery, and the acquisition and comprehension of values, skills, and knowledge content.

--from the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse

Service Learning Goals

- ❖ Promotes learning through active participation in service experiences
- ❖ Provides structured time for students to reflect by thinking, discussing and/or writing about their service experience
- ❖ Provides an opportunity for students to use skills and knowledge in real-life situations
- ❖ Extends learning beyond the classroom and into the community
- ❖ Fosters a sense of caring for others

--adapted from the National and Community Service Act of 1990

MEDIA LITERACY SEMINAR FOR FRESHMEN

SF-109-A, Fall 2006
Tue/Thurs 4:00-5:30pm – 349 Archer
Office Hours: Tue/Wed, 2:30-4:00 and by appt.
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the cultural and social functions of the media with an emphasis on learning how to critically evaluate media content. In this class we will examine media's role as a source of information and entertainment, and as a central persuasive force in contemporary society. Various forms of media are investigated including print, television and radio broadcast, film, and new media technologies. Critical evaluative skills applied to the complex and often contradictory meanings of media content will be developed through reading, writing and media production assignments.

PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

“A democracy cannot be both ignorant and free.” – Thomas Jefferson

The First Amendment protection of the press and freedom of speech is a cornerstone of our political system because the authors of the Bill of Rights recognized that a free flow of information is essential for a robust, functioning democracy. But it is not enough, especially in our media saturated world, for information simply to be available. Citizens must possess the skills to read, reflect and discriminate among media messages in order to navigate the deluge of content at hand.

The political, economic and social forces that influence the media in turn shape public discourse and thus, how we as individuals and as a community imagine ourselves and each other. As such, it is critical to develop the skills to evaluate adequately the credibility, motivations and purposes of media content. This is the central purpose of this course.

Production is a necessary component of this course as well. Learning how to “read” the media is perhaps best understood by learning how media content is produced. Seemingly technical decisions regarding lighting, camera angle and editing, for example, have a profound influence on the messages of media content. By learning some basic techniques in video production through a public service announcement assignment, you will gain a deeper understanding of the media in general, and exercise the critical thinking skills developed in class.

The four core objectives of this course are:

1. Access: Students will learn where and how to find diverse sources of information and entertainment in order to expose themselves to a breadth of ideas and perspectives about the world in which they live.

2. Analyze: Students will learn how to read and deconstruct media texts, including how production decisions influence content. Analysis involves understanding the concept of objectivity, recognizing bias, and finding inaccuracies or omissions in media messages.
3. Evaluate: Students will develop skills to evaluate the credibility, purpose and motivation of the producers of media messages.
4. Communicate: Students will improve their writing and oral presentation skills through class discussion and written assignments, as well as learn how use the tools of media (video production) to communicate effectively.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is required and accounts for 10% of your final grade. Excused absences **must** be documented. All late work will be deducted for each class day the work is overdue. I highly encourage you to take advantage of class time. In particular, the video production assignment will be labor intensive and require many hours of work. Use class time wisely!

SERVICE LEARNING

This course includes a service learning component, which is ten hours of required service at a Boston-area AIDS organization. I will provide you with a list of organizations that have worked with Suffolk University students on previous community service projects. The purpose of this assignment is to introduce you to community service and civic responsibility, the S.O.U.L.S office, fellow Suffolk students, and the global and local issues of AIDS. Also, the time you spend and people you meet at the organization will be the basis of your final class assignment, the public service announcement.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- *A Writer's Reference, 5th Edition* by Diane Hacker.
- Course packet. I will provide additional readings in a course packet.
- Note-taking materials - spiral-bound notebook or loose leaf writing paper, and a pen or pencil.
- One hour of news/day. Read the first section a reputable newspaper (*New York Times*, *Boston Globe*), listen to one hour of radio news (NPR), or watch one hour of TV news (CNN, NECN, national network news) every day. Discussion of current events and the media are an essential component of this course. Intelligent participation in class discussion requires that you know what is going on in the world.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Weekly journal (25%): The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to reflect on course concepts in regards to the media content you observe and experience in your everyday life. Each week I will provide a journal topic and you will write a two page (500 words) response due on Tuesdays.
2. Critical Analysis-News (20%): **Due October 12th**. You will choose a nonfiction/news media piece (documentary film/TV show, television news or newspaper story, magazine article, or

radio program) about AIDS and write a four page (1000 words) analysis of the media based on the nine core journalistic principles we cover in class.

3. Critical Analysis-Entertainment (20%): **Due November 21st.** You will choose a fiction/entertainment media piece (film, television show, musical recording, commercial or advertisement) which depicts HIV/AIDS and write a four page (1000 words) analysis of the media based on criticisms proposed in course readings.
4. Public Service Announcement (25%): **Due December 7th.** Working in groups and with a local AIDS prevention and education organization, you will create a short (30 second) video message about AIDS based on your community service experience. The PSA project will come together through a series of video production assignments including storyboards, scripts, on-site camera shoots, and editing. The final project will air on Suffolk's WSUB-TV station and a copy will be presented to the organization you worked with throughout the semester.

CHEATING & PLAGIARISM

The following is from the Suffolk University Student Policy and Procedures Handbook. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or how to properly attribute source material, please see me BEFORE you turn in an assignment.

Cheating on examinations, plagiarism, and/or improper acknowledgment of sources in essays or research papers, and the use of a single essay or paper in more than one course, without the permission of the instructor, constitute unacceptable academic conduct. It is dishonest to buy, download, borrow or lend papers. It is unacceptable to make up or falsify data that are supposed to be collected from survey, experimentation or other means. Work that is represented as your own should be yours; if not, the source should be properly identified. This applies to lab reports, computer projects and group projects as well as to individual assignments.

A student who has been found to have violated this rule after a hearing by the Dean of Students or by the Joint Committee on Student Conduct, which hearing has been held at the option of the student, is subject to an automatic grade of "F" in the course and to suspension, enforced withdrawal, or expulsion from the University or appropriate lesser penalties if warranted by the circumstances.

GRADING STRUCTURE:

A	93-100	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62
B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	59 or below

SF109: Journal Topic One

Due: Tuesday, September 12th

Assignment: My Media Diary

For one day keep a media diary. Write down every media you come in contact with. Keep track of the time you use the media, what it is including medium (TV, radio, DVD, CD, Internet) channel, title, artist, etc and where you heard/saw/read it. See example below. Use the back of this paper or attach additional sheets if necessary.

EXAMPLE

Time	What	Where
6:30-6:45	Radio, WFNX	My bedroom clock radio
8:00-9:00	ABC, channel 5 Good Morning America	Living Room TV
9:00-9:03	Billboard for Friday Night Smackdown	Outside my office window
10:15-10:45	The Killers, Hot Fuss CD	On my office computer

TIME	WHAT	WHERE

SF109: Journal Topic Two

Due: Tuesday, September 19th

Assignment: The First Amendment during Wartime

This writing assignment asks you to consider our class discussion about the First Amendment in regards to the current War on Terror. To prepare, read the articles assigned for this journal topic, review your class notes, and refer to the overhead for this lecture (<http://www.mediacritica.net/courses/109/overheads/demo.html>). Choose one of the following two issues to address in your 500-word essay.

Issue One: In April of 2004, *The Seattle Times* published a picture of flag-draped coffins of soldiers killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan. The picture sparked a nation-wide debate about whether or not the news media should show images of fallen soldiers. A government policy established during the first Gulf War in 1991 bans the media from filming or photographing caskets bearing soldiers' remains. Do you think this policy violates the First Amendment? Why or why not? What might be important about showing pictures of caskets, or why do you think such images serve no useful purpose?

Issue Two: Considering our class discussion about ABC's docudrama *The Path to 9/11*, what responsibilities do you feel the media have to represent historical events accurately? Does the responsibility change if the program is a news show or a docudrama? Do you think ABC's disclaimer was enough to satisfy the concerns raised by former Clinton administration officials? Should ABC have further edited the program or perhaps canceled it altogether? Is the pressure Democrats put on ABC to make edits or cancel the program akin to censorship?

Remember:

- Write a 500 word response. You are highly encouraged to state **your educated opinion**, informed by course readings and class discussion.
- Use a 12-point font, black ink, type-written or computer printed on 8 ½ x 11 inch paper, with 1-inch margins on all sides, and double-spaced.
- Spelling and grammar **ALWAYS** count, and will affect your grade. Please proof-read your journal entry carefully.

SF109: Journal Topic Five

Due: Tuesday, October 17th

Assignment: De-mythifying HIV/AIDS

Instructions: Below are listed ten myths about HIV/AIDS. Using the online sources credibility checklist we reviewed in class, **choose five myths** to investigate and provide an online source for each which debunks the false claim. In addition, answer the following questions about your research for each of the five myths you investigate.

Questions: How did you determine that the source of information debunking the myth was credible? Who is the author of the online source? How old is the information posted? Are there any sponsors visible on the website that may bias the information presented?

Note: You should collect a diversity of sources during your research, so use each online source only once!

1. Sexual intercourse with a virgin will cure AIDS.
2. HIV is transmitted by mosquitoes.
3. HIV can easily be transmitted to a person being tattooed.
4. An HIV-infected mother cannot have children.
5. AIDS can be cured.
6. HIV cannot be transmitted through oral sex.
7. HIV can only infect gay men and drug users.
8. AIDS can be spread through casual contact, like hugging and shaking hands, with an HIV infected individual.
9. The AIDS epidemic began when a human male had sexual intercourse with African monkeys, transmitting the virus to modern humans.
10. Africa is the only country experiencing an increase in AIDS cases.

SF109: Critical News Analysis

Due: Thursday, October 12th

Choose **one** of the news pieces listed here (www.mediacritica.net/courses/109/newsanalysis.html) and write a four page (1000 words) analysis of the story based on the news analysis guidelines we covered in class (also listed below). You may need to use the Internet to read other stories about AIDS in order to compare the article you are analyzing to other accounts. Be sure to address all of the guidelines, and in your conclusion discuss what you learned in taking a closer look at this story and the issues covered in the story. Do you think the story is a fair, accurate and balanced account?

Body of Analysis

1. Basics
Summarize the Who, What, Where, When, Why and How of the news story. Does the story address a controversy or debate? If so, what are the different sides of that debate? Be sure to include when and where the story was published, and who wrote the story.
2. Sources
Identify all the sources used in the article. Who is quoted, their official title and what expertise or perspective do they contribute to the story? If applicable, which sources represent one side of the issue and which sources represent the other side?
3. Audio/Visuals Elements
What audio and/or visual elements are included with the story? Are the audio/visual elements relevant to the story? How do the photographs, videos or sounds influence the meaning of the story? Are the audio/visual elements appropriately used?
4. Charged Adjective and Verbs
Are there any politically and emotionally charged adjectives and verbs; words that add “color” to the facts. Word choices can help identify a reporter’s biases and slant of the story. How do these adjectives and verbs influence the meaning of the story? Are the words used fairly?
5. Statistics and Polls
Polling data and statistics can often be misleading. What data and statistics are reported in the story, where do they come from, and how old are the numbers? What perspective does this data support? Is the data fair and accurate, and can you find any data that contradicts what was reported?

Remember:

- Write a 1000 word response in essay form: introduction, body and conclusion.
- Use a 12-point font, black ink, type-written or computer printed on 8 ½ x 11 inch paper, with 1-inch margins on all sides and double-spaced.
- Spelling and grammar ALWAYS count, and will affect your grade. Please proof-read your essay carefully.

SF109: Service Learning Requirement

Suffolk University – World AIDS Day

This course includes a service learning component, which is ten hours of required service at a Boston-area AIDS organization. The purpose of this assignment is to introduce you to community service and civic responsibility, the S.O.U.L.S office, fellow Suffolk students, and the global and local issues of AIDS. Also, the time you spend and people you meet at the organization will be the basis of your final class assignment, the public service announcement.

World AIDS Day

World AIDS Day, observed December 1 each year, is dedicated to raising awareness of the global AIDS epidemic caused by the spread of HIV infection. As of January 2006, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization (WHO) estimate that AIDS has killed more than 25 million people since it was first recognized on December 1, 1981, making it one of the most destructive pandemics in recorded history. Despite recent, improved access to antiretroviral treatment and care in many regions of the world, the AIDS epidemic claimed an estimated 3.1 million lives in 2005 of which, more than half a million (570,000) were children.

The concept of a World AIDS Day originated at the 1988 World Summit of Ministers of Health on Programmes for AIDS Prevention. Since then, it has been taken up by governments, international organizations and charities around the world. From 1988 to 2004, the World AIDS Day was organized by UNAIDS, who, after consultation with other organizations, chose a theme. In 2005 UNAIDS handed over responsibility for World AIDS Day to The World AIDS Campaign (WAC), an independent organization. For 2005, they chose *Stop AIDS: Keep the Promise* as the theme for World AIDS days through to 2010. The student element of the campaign, the Student Stop AIDS Campaign (SSAC), is a key part of increasing awareness among young people across the world.

Service Project Description

As a group and working with the Office of Student Activities and Service Learning, you will decide, plan, and arrange what Suffolk University will be doing for World AIDS Day. This includes finding co-sponsors in different departments at Suffolk, deciding what kind of program Suffolk will have, and planning event logistics. This requires at least a 10 hour on-campus commitment to planning and organizing the event. Be prepared to work with others in your group and across the campus to create a successful and well-attended World AIDS Day event.

Public Service Announcement

The group will script, story-board, shoot and edit an advertisement for the Suffolk World AIDS Day event. This PSA aired on the University closed-circuit television station *before* December 1st in order to encourage Suffolk students to attend the World AIDS Day event.

SF109: Service Learning Requirement

AIDS Action Committee – Boomerangs

This course includes a service learning component, which is ten hours of required service at a Boston-area AIDS organization. The purpose of this assignment is to introduce you to community service and civic responsibility, the S.O.U.L.S office, fellow Suffolk students, and the global and local issues of AIDS. Also, the time you spend and people you meet at the organization will be the basis of your final class assignment, the public service announcement.

AIDS Action Committee

Founded in 1983, AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts is a not-for-profit, community-based health organization whose mission is to stop the HIV/AIDS epidemic by preventing new infections and optimizing the health of those already infected. Through a cooperative and mutually supportive effort between over 70 staff and hundreds of volunteers, AIDS Action seeks to assist and constructively work with people of all cultures by providing services, education, advocacy and prevention.

AIDS Action accomplishes that mission by providing support services for people living with AIDS and HIV; educating the public and health professionals about how to prevent HIV transmission; and advocating for fair and effective AIDS policy at the city, state and federal levels. AIDS Action provides free, confidential services to 2,500 men, women and children living with HIV/AIDS.

Service Project Description

You will be working at the second-hand store Boomerangs helping sort items for resale and performing various retail jobs. Boomerangs is an award-winning resale store based in Jamaica Plain. All of the store proceeds support the programs and services of the AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts. Since 1996, Boomerangs has been selling a vast array of finds and treasures, and specialize in new and vintage clothing for men, women, and children as well as gifts, house wares, electronics and furniture.

Public Service Announcement

Working closely with AIDS Action Committee staff and Boomerangs volunteers, this group will script, story-board, shoot and edit a commercial for the Boomerangs store in Jamiaca Plain. The commercial will air on the University closed-circuit television station as well as local cable access channels in order to increase costumers to the store. Boomerangs is located at 716 Centre Street in Jamaica Plain. Store hours are Monday-Saturday 10:00am to 7:00pm and Sunday 12:00pm-6:00pm.

SF109: Service Learning Requirement

Boston Living Center – Condoms on Campus

This course includes a service learning component, which is ten hours of required service at a Boston-area AIDS organization. The purpose of this assignment is to introduce you to community service and civic responsibility, the S.O.U.L.S office, fellow Suffolk students, and the global and local issues of AIDS. Also, the time you spend and people you meet at the organization will be the basis of your final class assignment, the public service announcement.

The Boston Living Center

Informally begun in 1988 as small get-togethers in the homes of those with HIV/AIDS, this was the beginning of what is now the Boston Living Center. Officially founded in 1989 under the auspices of the Massachusetts Coalition for People with Disabilities, the BLC opened in a small space in the YWCA building on Clarendon Street in Boston. At the time, the Center offered one congregate dinner per week, social events, outings, basic services such as haircuts, occasional classes and workshops and - most importantly - a supportive community for members. In 1995, the Center moved around the corner to its much larger current location on Stanhope Street. This major step allowed the Center to expand programming, operating 6 days a week with meals and a diverse array of programs and services.

Mission Statement: The Boston Living Center (BLC) is a non-profit community and resource center whose mission is to foster the wellness of all HIV positive people and respond to the changing needs of the HIV/AIDS community. Through peer leadership and support, we strive to enhance and enrich the lives of our members by providing education, treatment information, and support services with the goal of empowering members to live productive lives and participate within their families and communities.

Service Project Description

This group will learn about safer sex practices and the ways in which safer sex is, or is not, advocated on Suffolk's campus. Working with the Boston Living Center this group will assemble

safer sex packets for the BLC, as well as create and implement new ways of advocating safer sex on Suffolk's campus, including expanding the availability of free condoms on campus.

Public Service Announcement

This group will script, story-board, shoot and edit a public service announcement about where and how the Suffolk community can access free condoms and safer sex material. Working with safe-sex educators, this group's objective is to educate students about sexually transmitted diseases, such as AIDS/HIV, and methods of prevention.

SF109: Service Learning Requirement

Boston Living Center – Midday Meals

This course includes a service learning component, which is ten hours of required service at a Boston-area AIDS organization. The purpose of this assignment is to introduce you to community service and civic responsibility, the S.O.U.L.S office, fellow Suffolk students, and the global and local issues of AIDS. Also, the time you spend and people you meet at the organization will be the basis of your final class assignment, the public service announcement.

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Service Project Description

You will participate in the BLC midday meal service (12:00pm-1:30pm), preparing and serving lunch to BLC members. The Center provides the only HIV/AIDS-specific weekday congregate Meals Program in the Greater Boston area and is the only Greater Boston AIDS service organization to provide a weekend meal of any kind. Last year, the BLC served over 30,000 nutritious, culturally diverse meals, Monday through Saturday each week. In conjunction with the Meals Program, the Center also distributes protein and nutritional supplements. A registered dietician provides weekly nutritional consultations at the Center as well.

Public Service Announcement

This group will script, story-board, shoot and edit a public service announcement that encourages people to volunteer at the BLC. You will work closely with BLC staff to develop the content of the PSA. At the end of the semester, you will present the final project to the organization for use in their volunteer recruitment efforts.

Reflection Ideas

Journaling

Track hours and tasks. What did you do for community service today? Did you meet anyone new? Did anything surprise you about the people you worked with, the tasks you performed, etc.?

End-of-Semester Reflection Essays

What have you learned about the homeless population in Boston? How has your community service experience changed your perceptions about homelessness? Will you continue with community service in the future? What projects might you be interested in pursuing?

Video Production

Auto-documentary; News magazine piece; One-on-one interview; Advocacy video (PSA); Comedy skit; Music video; etc.

Tips

1. **Start Early:** Define the service projects and secure commitments from community partners **BEFORE** the semester begins.
2. **Organization:** Collect all the administrative forms you may need **BEFORE** the semester begins. This includes release of claim forms for off-campus activities, school liability insurance, confidentiality agreements, etc.
3. **Get Help:** If possible, ask for a teaching assistant or upperclassman to help you coordinate the projects and deal with logistics. Often students can earn college credit for participating, or earn hours towards service awards.

References

Big Dummy's Guide to Service Learning

www.fiu.edu/~time4chg/Library/bigdummy.html

Campus Compact

www.compact.org

The Corporation for National and Community Service

www.nationalservice.gov

The Importance of Reflection in Service-Learning

www.smc.edu/servicelearning/reflection_handout.doc

Learning in Deed

www.learningindeed.org

MediaCritica

www.mediacritica.net

The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse

www.servicelearning.org

Service Learning Research and Development Center at UC-Berkeley, Assessment Tools

gse.berkeley.edu/research/slc/evaluation.html