



## Working Paper Series

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### **Media Literacy at Fairhill Community High School: An 'alternative' approach to media education?**

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# **Media Literacy at Fairhill Community High School: An ‘alternative’ approach to media education?**

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## **Rationale for the research**

This case study of a media literacy class at Fairhill Community High School has two different groups of target readers: educators and administrative members in Fairhill Community High School and other general educators and researchers, especially those who wish to learn how media literacy education is practiced in urban alternative educational settings.

One of the goals of this research is to support the teacher, Dana Gubitosa, who is teaching media literacy for the first time at Fairhill, a second-chance high school in North Philadelphia. The documentation from the four researchers and feedback from the students will enable Gubitosa to analyze her class more objectively. She can find out how students are experiencing the class, what they like or dislike about it, the challenges they face, and what they are learning from it. These aspects will be explored by close examination of whether students find the issues discussed in class relevant to their lives and their community, and if their experience of the media has changed as a result of the course, and how their opinions about the topics discussed in the class have been shaped.

A record of the teacher’s and students’ experiences can also benefit administrative members in Fairhill Community High School, allowing them to gain knowledge of the kinds of support educators and students need to create more engaging and effective learning environments. Since media education has been newly introduced in the school, clear documentation of its positive influences as well as the challenges faced by the teacher can help administrative members and educators to systematically improve and sustain the course in the future. Through this case study, the school administration can also comprehend how their current school model is influencing the course, considering the effects of project-based learning, heterogeneous grouping, class

length, and their unique eight-week long module system.

Other educators and researchers who want to learn more about media literacy education in urban alternative settings can also benefit from this case study. This paper examines the accessibility and availability of media education resources for educators especially in the urban educational settings, the distinct goals of media education for underprivileged and at-risk teenagers, and the influence of the community and the student body on the aims and methods of instruction.

Educators and researchers who are interested in media literacy education in other educational settings can also benefit from this case study because this paper explores diverse pedagogical concerns in the media education field. For instance, this paper observes how Gubitosa modifies the curriculum to accommodate the varying skill levels of each class, how her teaching experience in other subjects has influenced her teaching of a media literacy course, and the effects of political discussions in the classroom.

When observing the class and interviewing the teacher, principal, and students, the researchers sought to answer the following questions: Is the teaching based on a model of inquiry? Does the class focus on form and content of media texts? Does the teacher create a comfort zone for students by depersonalizing real world problems? Does the teacher encourage student creativity? Does the class stimulate and impart critical thinking skills? Does the class foster skepticism or cynicism?

The exploration of these theoretical questions in a real educational setting will serve as a useful perspective for other media educators and researchers who are studying the influence of various pedagogical practices in media literacy education in order to apply them in the field.

## **Learning Environment in Fairhill Community High School**

### *Student Makeup*

Fairhill Community High School is a “second chance” alternative high school for students aged 16 to 21. Students attend Fairhill because they have not succeeded in their previous school settings for a variety of reasons such as pregnancy, truancy, failure, and lack of a safe school environment. Students at Fairhill face many challenges, including homelessness, unstable families, and the responsibility of raising children. The school staff is highly aware of the students’ need for safety and strives to provide them with

stability and consistency to ensure their well being. The teachers actively cultivate a climate of respect, and students are required to wear uniforms and adhere to the guidelines of Fairhill Community High School, including a courteous and respectful conduct with teachers and staff.

#### *Initiation of the Media Literacy Course*

The media literacy class at Fairhill High School was the idea of Temple University professor Renee Hobbs, who has been deeply involved in the field of media literacy for many years. Initially, she approached the principal, Marcus Delgado, with the vision of incorporating media literacy into the school curriculum. Delgado was inspired by her vision and was quick to recognize a potentially powerful course that would match the needs and the philosophy of his school.

Dana Gubitosa was the instructor chosen to implement the media literacy class at Fairhill. As preparation, she visited professor Hobbs at Temple University for two days to review her outline for the media literacy class. In addition, Hobbs loaned her media literacy books and curriculum materials, and helped Dana Gubitosa focus her lesson plans. Prior to teaching media literacy, Gubitosa had taught, among other subjects, English, reading, creative writing, and Egyptology. She had previously taught at an Afro-centric junior high school. Dana Gubitosa holds a Bachelor's degree in English.

#### *The goals and aims of the principal*

The principal's overarching philosophy for the school that informs much of the school's pedagogy is to "think out of the box" – both as a creed for curriculum design and instructional methods as well as a state of mind to instill in the students. He strongly advocates "creative ideas and ways of educating the students" and hence was drawn to the media literacy course as a way to not only effectively engage students in the learning process but, more importantly, to encourage critical thinking about issues beyond their isolated microcosms. He acknowledges the fact that this is a first attempt for the course and has not set it against any expectations, except that it would "impact" students by encouraging them to "open their minds". He recognizes the difficulty in assessing the effectiveness of the course but hopes that it will generate interest and can be expanded and improved for future modules – to become a staple in the program, and intends to include it in his annual School Improvement Plan.

## **Research Methods**

The team prepared this case study by collecting data through a curriculum review, class observation, student surveys, and interviews with students, the teacher and the school principal.

### *Class Observation*

All four team members visited a different class period of Dana Gubitosa's module. According to her, the four periods fit into two distinct categories: two of the groups work faster, demonstrate a higher skill level of critical thinking and conduct active discussions, while the other two groups are less motivated to join discussions, show difficulty in answering Gubitosa's questions and following the class activities. The researchers made a special effort to visit the four different class periods in order to observe whether there were any noticeable differences in the class dynamics and its effects. During every visit, the teacher introduced the team member to the class as a Temple graduate student and briefly explained the team's interest in the class and media literacy in general.

### *Student Surveys*

During two of the class periods (one "weak" and one "strong" class), Dana Gubitosa distributed surveys prepared by the team to students who had finished a write-up earlier than the rest of the class. It included nine statements, which students evaluated on a Likert scale, and two open-ended questions. The student survey is provided in Appendix B and a summary of the data obtained through the surveys follows in the results section of this report.

### *Student Interviews*

Every team member interviewed several students who volunteered or were encouraged by Dana Gubitosa to speak with the team. All nine interviews took place at the teachers' conference room. Since that space is not part of the students' usual environment, all four team members interviewed students at the same time in order to reduce student anxiety. The team members recorded two of the interviews and took notes during the other seven, writing down student responses. Students responded to several interview questions provided in Appendix A.

### *Teacher Interview*

The team met Dana Gubitosa during her visit to a session of Temple's Media Education class, where she talked about herself, her use of media in the classroom and

her students at Fairhill Community High School. Before and after each of the four class observations, she explained her lesson plan for the specific class period. Finally, the team conducted an interview, in which Gubitosa answered the questions included in Appendix A and provided insights about her teaching.

#### *Principal Interview*

Delgado, principal of Fairhill Community High School, answered various interview questions (included in Appendix A) and shared with the team his thoughts about the school history, the teachers, the students and the learning environment.

#### *Review of Lesson Plans*

The team reviewed Dana Gubitosa's lesson plans and curriculum documents (Appendix C). The teacher also provided relevant information about her class activities during several conversations with the team.

#### **Instruction Methods: Dana Gubitosa's Use of Media in the Classroom**

Gubitosa used different media formats and genres to demonstrate different view points about the same event to introduce students to a variety of texts and messages. These included documentaries like "Fahrenheit 9/11" (2004) and "On Native Soil" (2006), as well as print articles from Entertainment Weekly, USA Today, the Christian Science Monitor and Time Magazine.

When Dana Gubitosa screened "Fahrenheit 9/11", she asked students to watch closely and take notes. She identified the following learning objectives:

1. Students will continue to enrich their Media Literacy by focusing on the techniques of film and how they can sway opinion.
2. Students will prove their comprehension by completing checklist of point/counter-point for assessment.
3. Students will take part in class discussions to understand that there are multiple views on the subjects at hand and that everyone views messages differently.

Dana Gubitosa prepared a template with three columns (point, proof, opinion) for students to fill out while watching. While watching the documentary, students wrote down points made by the director Michael Moore, the proof he provided to back up each point, and finally their own opinion on whether the point was convincing and objective. In her own words, Gubitosa prompted the students to watch out for "the accuracies vs.

inaccuracies, truths vs. falsehoods, accusations and proof, and the use of media techniques in telling the story”.

The teacher also helped students with the close reading by pausing the film and allowing them to engage in discussions about remarkable points in the segments that called their attention.

In a different class period, Dana Gubitosa organized an informal student debate, in which every student had twenty seconds to make a point. Then, the other students had a chance to either express a point of their own or make a counterargument to another student’s point of view.

The next step in the curriculum entailed comparison and contrast of four film reviews of “Fahrenheit 9/11” by the four different print media outlets mentioned earlier. She provided handouts with the four articles and assigned homework which entailed an informal content analysis, namely counting the “facts” (direct references to “Fahrenheit 9/11”) and the “opinions” (judgments of the journalists about the documentary and the director). In class, she introduced five quiz questions (provided below) on the board and asked students to answer in writing and then collected the responses.

#### *Quiz Questions*

1. Rank the reviews in order from most informative to least.
2. Is it surprising to you where each is?
3. Next to each review, list if it is positive/negative/neutral.
4. Underneath the ranking, put two pieces of proof why the review is positive/negative/neutral.
5. How many facts did each review use? Did that change how you were persuaded by the review?

With the screening of “On Native Soil” (2006), Dana Gubitosa intended to demonstrate the difference between a “biased documentary... with one that states facts and the physical proof to back up those facts”. Her main goal was to engage students in a comparison and contrast of two media texts of the same genre, but which provide unique points of view through different production techniques. For this documentary, Gubitosa defined the following learning objectives:

1. Students will weigh bias vs. fact as seen in the two documentaries they've viewed and be able to articulate the difference between the information presented.

2. Students will look at the different techniques used to telling the stories and make a compare/contrast piece up about the two films.
3. Students will take part in daily discussions, proving their comprehension of the material being addressed.

After screening “On Native Soil”, Gubitosa planned the following two projects:

- A. Students will complete an outline for the film, marking down any notes they feel are necessary as well. (Appendix 1)
- B. Students will use those notes, eventually, to focus in on one area that was overlooked by the government and produce a research project based on the footage, internet research and group discussion.

Dana Gubitosa allowed students not to take notes during the screening of “On Native Soil” (2006), but encouraged them to watch closely. However, her planned class activity of preparing an outline of “On Native Soil” (provided in the appendix) contains primarily “fill-in the blanks” type of questions and focuses mainly on dates, numbers and names.

In a conversation with a team member, Dana Gubitosa mentioned her intention to hand out excerpts from the 9/11 Commission Report as an additional information source. Gubitosa clearly defines her role as a teacher in the lesson plans she provided to the team. She sees herself only as a “facilitator”:

“I would like the students to find the information for themselves and discussions will only include me as the pacer, time-keeper, and task-master. All student discussion should be generated by them.”

### **Students’ Learning Experiences**

In this section, students’ thoughts on their learning and class experiences will be reviewed. Data from class observations, formal interviews and survey are synthesized to document their feedback about the class.

#### *Pleasure in learning media literacy*

Having an interest is critical for a student to be engaged with what they are learning in the class. Students in the media literacy class in Fairhill Community High



School definitely showed interest in what they were learning.

When asked if they like the course or not, 74 percent of students answered positively. Students gave many reasons to explain why they like the class, such as class discussion, group work, and uses of media contents. Students often mentioned their favorable evaluation of the teacher in support of their positive experiences in the class. For instance, several students mentioned how great their teacher is, and how she makes what they learn interesting. They feel they are learning new things because their teacher is wonderful. Several students also mentioned that they feel comfortable and relaxed in the class, which allows them to open their minds. They feel they are not judged, but accepted as who they are. They feel they are now forming their own opinions, which is welcomed and appreciated in the class. The difference between the media literacy class and other class subjects also greatly influenced students' positive feelings towards the course. Students like the different topics and subjects covered in the class.

While the majority of students demonstrated an enjoyment in the class, five students out of twenty eight who participated in either the survey or the interviews claimed that they did not like the course. As a reason for their negative feelings about the course four students indicated their lack of interest on the topic. One student expressed uneasiness about the television being turned on in the class.

#### *Group Work*

There was a conflict in the data we collected with reference to group work. While our class observations did not reflect any teamwork or collaboration as an instructional technique, several students indicated group work was a reason they liked the class. However, only eight students agreed that they work in groups with other students and three students stated that they did not. Eleven students expressed a neutral position regarding group work in the class. This conflict in the data will be explored further in the limitation section of the report.

#### *Class Discussion*

These students are from underprivileged neighborhoods, and they have been labeled as "at-risk" youths whose opinions and ideas have been often ignored. However, in the media literacy class, students feel their voices about important social issues are heard by their teacher and peers. One student was uncomfortable about classmates expressing inappropriate and irrelevant opinions on a topic. However, four students

expressed dislike about group discussion. These students prefer not to share their comments with others because they are shy and not “discussion type” people.

Out of nineteen students who participated in the survey, ten students stated that they are enjoying discussions because they are allowed to share their opinions and learn how others think. Students acknowledged the importance of group discussion and the confidence they have because of educated discussions in the class.

#### *Acquiring useful knowledge*

Students consider what they are learning in the class to be useful information because it gives them a better understanding of not only what is going on in and around their lives, but also beyond their neighborhoods. They see the class as connected to real people and real-life problems. Students appreciate being exposed to new ideas and perspectives, which allows them to learn that other people have different points of view. Many students pointed out the importance of understanding the view points from various people and sources in order to survive in a competitive world, and even called the media literacy course a “stepping stone.”

#### *Changes in the pattern of media consumption & critical media analysis*

Students frequently brought up how the class influences the way they watch TV news. First, many students proudly stated that they began to watch TV news after the media literacy course was introduced. Students reported that when they watch, they try to concentrate on how the editing and the tone of reporters influence the reporting, which often leads to the promotion of certain ideas. Students firmly stated that they are making efforts not to be influenced by reporters’ opinions, but to seek facts from the news. Their efforts to distinguish between facts and opinions are influenced by what they are learning in the media literacy class, where they learn how to separate facts and opinions when reading news articles. Students reported to be applying what they were gaining from the class to their media consumption.

The students do not only distinguish facts and opinions, but also try to understand different “points of view” by diverse groups of people. They do not make judgments because the media tell them to think a certain way. Their efforts to understand points of views from diverse groups of people also changed their attitudes towards certain groups of people. For instance, students mentioned how their perception towards Islamic people has been changed because of what they learn in the media literacy class. Their

appreciation of diverse positions and opinions leads them to build their own opinions. They are proud of having their own points of view on political issues and current events. One student said, “I used to want everyone else’s opinion. Now I use my own voice.”

Changing the pattern of media consumption and critical media analysis were also the most common answers to the question asking what students thought the goal of this class is. More than 90 percent of students mentioned media awareness, wise media consumption habits, knowledge about media production, and the ability to distinguish between real life and media contents as some goals. Students pointed out that their media consumption habits needed to be changed since informative programs such as news or documentaries weren’t part of their regular media ‘diet’, and some mentioned that they had started to watch news programs since being in the class. Some added that the knowledge related to the media industry and texts would be helpful for their future careers and they appreciated the chance to learn these skills in the media literacy class.

#### *Political discussions and participation outside of the school*

Students proudly mentioned that they now have political discussions with their parents and friends. They feel comfortable talking about the issues discussed in the class and shown on TV news. They claimed they were not passive viewers, but active audience members who can critically analyze the news and form their own opinions based on the facts presented in the news. This enables them to talk about political issues with their family members and friends. It also makes them feel proud to appear intelligent and competent.

Students also expressed their awareness of the importance of participation in their society, such as voting and speaking out to the public. They praised Gubitosa for bringing their attention to what is going on in the world and for giving them hope and vision to be a part of the world.

Further explanations about methodological limitation of gathering, synthesizing and analyzing students’ reaction will be explained at the end in the limitation section.

### **Challenges of the Teacher and the Principal**

Dana Gubitosa and Marcus Delgado faced many challenges when implementing the media literacy program at Fairhill. First of all, Fairhill is a two-year school and the students are coming in with different credits. According to Gubitosa, she has not taught

the same curriculum in the two years she has been a teacher at Fairhill. In addition, new students arrive in Gubitosa's class as late as four weeks into the semester. Because of their previous school experience, the students are at different learning and developmental levels, and arrive at Fairhill with a variety of educational needs.

The attitude among students provided another challenge for Dana Gubitosa as she implemented the media literacy curriculum. Both Gubitosa and Delgado acknowledged that students at Fairhill are only comfortable with what they know. At first, students were not receptive to the concepts of media literacy because it was outside of their comfort zone.

Another challenge for Dana Gubitosa was the lack of access to media literacy materials. The Media Education Lab at Temple was not able to give Gubitosa all of the media literacy resources she needed, and the resources at Fairhill are limited. In addition, Fairhill has one computer lab, which is often booked by other teachers for months in advance. Dana Gubitosa had to find a way to access materials for the classroom, and work around her limited access. Lastly, because media literacy was a foreign concept to her, she had to do more work to prepare her curriculum, plan lessons, and find access to materials.

Delgado also had to face objections to the introduction of the media literacy in the curriculum. Several parents have called the school asking him why war is being discussed in the classroom. Some parents are pro-war, while others are anti-war, and some students come from military families. Delgado admits that he often has to educate parents about what is taking place in the classroom. Although war is a touchy subject, he believes students need to form their own opinions.

The second difficulty Delgado faces is assessment. According to him, "Media literacy is a good teaching tool, but how do you measure it?" He admits that it would be difficult to measure success by a final exam. He thinks the media literacy program will affect different students in different ways, depending on the individual.

### **Support for Media Literacy**

There are two key factors that play a critical role in supporting the introduction of media literacy at Fairhill. The first is the philosophy and the attitude of the principal. Delgado is firm and focused on the purpose of the school and it reflects in the

infrastructure, the policies, the curricula, and the pedagogy. What most would consider “soft” skills, he considers “hard” skills and he is ever willing to try new ways (courses) to impart these. If presented with a cogent and focused plan for a new syllabus or module, he is encouraging and more importantly, displays the confidence that provides the required support to the teacher and the course.

Additionally, the nature of the set-up of the school provides the leverage it needs to adopt and incorporate more unconventional or otherwise challenged courses in ‘traditional’ schools. The fact that Fairhill is an ‘alternative’ school allows it to deviate from established practices and hence, courses like media literacy can be defended or justified if need be at the school district level.

### **Reflection**

From this first glimpse at the new media literacy module at Fairhill, it appears that Dana Gubitosa teaches with the media, and not about the media since her curriculum does not explicitly cover ‘key’ media literacy areas such as language, audience, representation and media production as defined by Buckingham (2003). For instance, Dana Gubitosa intended to use different media texts to illustrate various media literacy concepts, such as fact and opinion, point of view, bias, and production techniques, but she did not taking full advantage of media education techniques. The outline of “On Native Soil” invites students to focus entirely on the content of the documentary instead of helping them perform a text analysis. This can be attributed to the lack of any formal training given to Gubitosa or the resources that would allow for a more comprehensive, expansive and flexible approach to the module.

In addition, Dana Gubitosa’s current instructional methods do not seem to incorporate a significant component of student collaboration. Class observations showed that students work individually, participate in class discussions by taking turns to speak, but do not have the opportunity to cooperate, communicate and act as a group by setting common goals and dividing responsibilities. If Gubitosa implements a more student-focused, group-learning approach through projects and assignments, her class could greatly benefit both the students and herself, by engaging the students in many different ways and reducing her own workload.

For the week of our observation, Dana Gubitosa chose 9/11 as the overarching

theme for the class not only because students showed a preference for it, but also due to her own personal interest and investment in the event. Our impression is that she is willing to introduce and tackle political and social issues through the course, which shows openness and courage, but her frequent and strong vocalization of her own personal socio-political stances may also be setting a pre-ordained ‘correct’ tone to the class debates and discussions which could be discouraging students from voicing dissenting opinions. Although Dana Gubitosa has her students’ best interests at heart, her frequent attempts to lead students to the ‘right’ answer and her belief that she is empowering them to “get angry” could limit the potentially broader effects of the media education elements of her class. By eagerly stepping in Gubitosa may be missing an opportunity to allow her students to learn and practice critical reasoning and to reach their own conclusions.

On a parallel note, Dana Gubitosa must also be made aware (if not already) and cautious of the tensions between ‘cynicism’ and ‘skepticism’ as potential outcomes of a media literacy class. Approaches to inquiry and developing critical thinking in students are crucial in this regard and through her current technique, Gubitosa risks fostering an attitude of conclusive condemnation of the media, which is an undesirable position on the continuum.

Dana Gubitosa has however created a new space for learning and teaching, where she has managed to dismantle the traditional constraints between student and teacher, to the extent possible at Fairhill High School. She seems to have established a friendly and trusting relationship with the students, similar to the case of Lee Rother working with at-risk youth in Canada (Kist, 2005). Gubitosa provides another testament of the importance of changing the teacher-student power relationship in a positive and constructive way.

Another very positive result of the class is the perceived personal growth demonstrated by her students. They show pride in their new media use practices and their awareness of current events. Some even recognized a change in their interactions with peers and family as a result of this class. In that respect, Dana Gubitosa’s approach to teaching proves an excellent fit for Fairhill Community High School in its mission of motivating learning that transcends into involvement and engagement on a societal and political level. However, it is important to bear in mind the extent to which the students

are truly being ‘critical’ viewers of the media they claim to be increasingly consuming. It was only a few students who when prompted, seemed to display a more nuanced understanding of the construction of media messages, while most others were more engaged with the media on the level of developing personal opinions in socio-political matters. This again, reflects the on-going struggles of media literacy experts in assessing the efficacy and outcome of media literacy programs.

Arguably one of the most positive outcomes of this study was the support it received from the principal and the advantage of the setup of the school that allowed for a relatively unchallenged entry of media literacy into the school program. Fairhill Community High School is probably a case that represents a possible route or portal for media literacy that has otherwise faced tremendous roadblocks in other ‘traditional’ setups. It could also provide insight for the body of academic study that is concerned with media literacy a/effecting literacy and social engagement among at-risk youth. Hence, our concern is that if the school management was to change or higher authorities began to question or reject the course, Dana Gubitosa and Fairhill Community High School may face a formidable challenge in defending her media education agenda.

### **Limitations**

During the data analysis of the student surveys, it became obvious that the definition of “group work” had not been clearly defined by the researchers. The evidence lies in the contradictory responses to the question regarding group work. Some students interpreted “group” to be the entire class, while others understood it as distinct groups consisting of various students within their class. Our concept of group work intended to test to the latter.

Another problem the team encountered was the collection and grouping of the surveys. Since Dana Gubitosa administered and collected the surveys, she handed them in without separating the surveys from the different classes, since she received no instructions about the importance of labeling and sorting the surveys. This prevented us from separating or grouping student responses based on their class and its progress.

A further constraint on this research study was the limited time team members spent collecting the data due to the project deadline. Each researcher conducted only one class observation. In addition, the strict school schedule limited the team’s access to the

school facility and students' availability. All these factors influenced the researchers' choice regarding research design and data analysis methods.

Finally, two team members shared their impressions with the rest of the team after their visit to Dana Gubitosa's class, which may have influenced the other team members' expectations during class observations afterwards. However the researchers were aware of the drawback of this approach and intentionally sought counter-evidence if present, to counter any previously recorded observations in order to prevent any bias from 'contaminating' the study.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

This study concluded that, in agreement with other researchers' findings, critical reading skills are difficult to study and assess. While it was beyond the design and scope of this study to evaluate Fairhill Community High School students' change in critical reading, future research should attempt to create and test effective measurement tools for assessing changes in critical reading skills resulting from media education.

We identified teacher training as another important question for future study. The quality, structure and time of media education workshops or courses for teachers may affect greatly their ability to prepare and implement media literacy curricula, but exactly what kind of training different types of teachers can benefit from is open to debate and research.

Finally, the ability to adapt and customize existing media education curricula to different school environments also deserves further exploration. Limited infrastructure and time resources should be key factors to consider in this kind of research.



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## Appendix A: Interview Questions

### UInterview Questions to Dana Gubitosa

1. What is your training in media literacy?
2. What are the different skills each class period has?
3. You mentioned that the new generations of teachers are knowledgeable about the media literacy approach. Can you elaborate?
4. What is your definition of media literacy?
5. What initiated your decision to teach media literacy?
6. How did you choose the topic you are focusing on in your media literacy class?
7. Media literacy has had roadblocks in other schools. Why is Fairhill embracing it?
8. What subject do you usually teach? Do you find that your current curriculum and methods have been informed by other classes? How?
9. What is the level of student involvement in media literacy class compared to other classes of yours?
10. What are your goals/objectives for the media literacy class? Do your goal/objectives differ by class?
11. How has your teaching style adapted to fit Fairhill students?
12. What resources would help you with the class and the curriculum?
13. Do you have a support system?
14. What instructional methods do you use? Why are you using them?
15. What motivates you?

### UInterview Questions to Principal Marcus Delgado

1. What brought you to media literacy?
2. What were your thoughts about media literacy?
3. What are the unique challenges the students at Fairhill face? How does media literacy address these challenges?
4. What is your philosophy for the school? How does media literacy fit into that philosophy?
5. What are your expectations for this class?
6. Why did you choose Dana to teach media literacy? Do think other teachers would teach it?

7. Do you know what other schools are doing, and what the state of media literacy is statewide?
8. What convinced you to do media literacy?
9. Do you think media literacy will impact the everyday lives of people in the community?

UInterview Questions to Students

1. How is Miss Gubitosa's class different from other classes you take? (i.e. the teaching, curriculum, and assignments)
2. Does this class impact your life?
3. What do you think you are learning in this class?
4. Is this class making you think differently, if so, how?
5. Do you think this class addresses everyday problems and issues?
6. Has this class impacted the way you use/watch the media?

## Appendix B: Student Survey

Rate how strongly you agree or disagree using the scale below. Circle one number that best matches your opinion. Provide your comments to any question if you want to further explain your answer.

Agree			Disagree	
Strongly			Strongly	
1	2	3	4	5

A. I like this class.

1    2    3    4    5

What do you like the most/ least about this class? Why?

B. I work in groups with other students.

1    2    3    4    5

C. I learn from and about other students by collaboration with them.

1    2    3    4    5

D. I discuss in class issues and problems covered by the mass media that are relevant to my life and my community.

1    2    3    4    5

E. I enjoy participating in discussions and sharing my opinion in this class.

1    2    3    4    5

Why do you like/or dislike participating in discussions?

F. This class is changing the way I think about the mass media.

1    2    3    4    5

G. This changes the way I see mass media coverage of problems that are important to me.

1    2    3    4    5

H. I am doing research for this class.

1    2    3    4    5

I. I'm learning to use new research resources in this class.

1    2    3    4    5

Write your answers neatly and explain your ideas and opinions.

## Appendix C: Dana Gubitosa's Lesson Plans

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Section: \_\_\_\_\_

### U"On Native Soil," Outline & Notes

#### Past Terrorist Actions

- Usama Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda terrorists had been attacking the U.S. for almost \_\_\_ years.

Examples:

#1: Suspected of hitting the World Trade Center in \_\_\_\_\_.

#2: Hit two American Embassies in Africa in \_\_\_\_\_, killing more than \_\_\_\_\_ and injuring more than \_\_\_\_\_.

- In \_\_\_\_\_, the Clinton Administration launched missiles at Al-Qaeda camps, but \_\_\_\_\_ survived.
- In \_\_\_\_\_, Usama Bin Laden was visiting a camp in \_\_\_\_\_ . It was an excellent chance to hit him with no possibility of damage to civilians.
- According to the \_\_\_\_\_, officials were afraid civilians and princes from the United Arab Emirates would be killed.

#3: In \_\_\_\_\_, Al-Qaeda terrorists used a small boat to bomb the \_\_\_\_\_, which was refueling in Yemen. \_\_\_\_\_ American sailors died.

***QUESTION: Why wasn't there a government response to #3?***

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#### Immigration Violations

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- Immigration forms were filled out \_\_\_\_\_ and

Had INS followed the law, at least \_\_\_\_\_ of the hijackers would have been denied \_\_\_\_\_ and would not have been in the U.S. on September 11P<sup>th</sup>.

**Bush Administration**

- Bush ordered a long term plan to go after terrorism.
- He didn't want to go after Al-Qaeda one attack at a time.
- According to Condoleeza Rice, "He was tired of \_\_\_\_\_
- She also testified that Bush said, "I didn't feel that sense of \_\_\_\_\_ and my blood was not nearly as \_\_\_\_\_ ."
- PDB (President's Daily Brief). Bush received one every day during the summer of 2001.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ , 2001 PDB title was

(Refer to Hard Copy)



**911 Emergency System**

- People were told to:
  - 1.
  2. 3.
- The entire system collapsed.
- 911 operators were in the dark about the magnitude of the event. They were unable to pass along information to the callers.
- NY police, Port Authority officers and the fire departments did not have a radio channel on which to communicate.

- What is Rudy Gulianni's solution?
- \_\_\_\_\_ was the first to fall.
- At \_\_\_\_\_ a.m., an NYPD helicopter reported that Tower 1 wouldn't last much longer.



**Trials Continue (2004)U**

- The witnesses keep saying they'd \_\_\_\_\_ to the commission or that they'd have to \_\_\_\_\_ their information.
- The families drew the conclusion that these government officials were not willing to \_\_\_\_\_ any information that would hold them \_\_\_\_\_ .
- More than anything else, the families wanted \_\_\_\_\_ from their government.
- The only one to do so was \_\_\_\_\_ (in charge of Counter-Terrorism during the Clinton and Bush administrations)
- Briefly describe his testimony:

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**Washington D.C. (July 22,2004)U**

- The commission released its final 9/11 report.
- The Commission makes a number of recommendations, including:
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  - 5.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Section: \_\_\_\_\_

**"On Native Soil" Outline & Information**

**Afghanistan 1997:U**

\* \_\_\_\_\_ (TV channel) interviews Usama Bin Laden. When asked what his future plans are for the United States, he answers:

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**Points Researched by Families of 9/11:**

**POINT #1:**

**POINT #2: CIA knew about Al Qaeda plot.**

*\*Project Bojinka \* -*

**POINT #3:**

**POINT #4: FBI ignored critical memo.**

*\*The Phoenix Memo \* -*

**POINT #5: FBI said no to a search warrant.**

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**9/11 Families Request Investigation**U (What happened after their requests?)

On \_\_\_\_\_, Bush signs legislation for a 9/11 Commission.

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### **9/11 Hearings (March 31, 2003, NY)**

- \_\_\_\_\_ - Chairman
- The two purposes of the Commission are to:
  - 1.
  - 2.
- Commission conducted \_\_\_\_\_ hearings over a time period of \_\_\_\_\_ months.
- \_\_\_\_\_ - (Former National Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism at the National Security Council) What was his testimony?
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ - (National Security Advisor) What was her testimony?

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### **Hijackers & The FAA (Federal Aviation Administration)**

- Four Hijacking teams
  - 1.
  - 2.3.
- The FAA knew terrorists were training for hijacking. In \_\_\_\_\_, they passed along high-alert warnings to airports.
- FAA issued at least \_\_\_\_\_ documents of warnings to airports. Some even think it was as high as \_\_\_\_\_ .
- Between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ , the FAA internal structure issued 52 warnings about \_\_\_\_\_ .

- \_\_\_\_\_ - The government's list of 61,000 names of possible terrorists.

The FAA list only has \_\_\_\_\_ names on it.

### Testimony of FAA Members

- Give three pieces of proof that the airlines messed up on 9/11.
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
- FAA told airports that security had been weak for years.
- (who) \_\_\_\_\_ Red Teams regularly tested system
- They found what?
  
- The FAA tried to have security reports classified.
  
- They say the reason that happened was because of \_\_\_\_\_.

### American Flight 11

- From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_
- Write down some of the message being heard over the communications device:
- Betty Ong - Flight Attendant who calls dispatch. What did dispatch do?
- At \_\_\_\_\_ a.m. Boston controllers realize Flight 11 has been hijacked.
- \_\_\_\_\_ minutes pass before they call Northeast Air Defense Sector (NEADS).
- Write some of the dispatch quote to NEADS:

- At \_\_\_\_\_ a.m., Tower 1 of the WTC is hit by Flight 11.
- Above the impact area, over \_\_\_\_\_ people were trapped.
- Port Authority, in Tower 2, makes an announcement. What was the announcement?
- Security stopped people from leaving Tower 2, telling them to do what instead?
- At \_\_\_\_\_ a.m., Bush is told about Tower 1 being hit. He calls \_\_\_\_\_ and asks to be kept informed.

### **American Flight 175**

- From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_
- Pilot hears hijackers from Flight 11 on his radio at \_\_\_\_\_ a.m.
- At \_\_\_\_\_ a.m. Flight 175 is hijacked.
- A New York air traffic controller tried to report the hijacking to superiors, but what happened?



### **American Airlines Flight 77**

- From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_
- At \_\_\_\_\_ a.m., Flight 77 is hijacked.

- An air traffic controller assumed the plane

**Timeline of Events**

- At \_\_\_\_\_ a.m. an unidentified plane shows up on radar, rapidly descending.
- At \_\_\_\_\_ a.m., Andrew Card informs Bush that: (direct quote):
  
- Flight 77 flew undetected for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes. The FAA was still looking for \_\_\_\_\_, which had crashed into WTC 1 over 45 minutes ago.
- Fighter Jets were sent out, but they were \_\_\_\_\_

**Flight 93**

- At \_\_\_\_\_ a.m., the pilot of Flight 93 received warning of possible hijacking.
- Boston Control was asked to issue a \_\_\_\_\_ for hijacking.
- What was the "pilot's" message?:



**More Timeline of Events**

- At \_\_\_\_\_ a.m., Flight 77 crashed into \_\_\_\_\_.
- Civilians in WTC 1 were not informed that \_\_\_\_\_ were no longer done. They were trapped.
- At \_\_\_\_\_ a.m., the president boarded \_\_\_\_\_ and headed home. What was he quoted as saying to Dick Cheney?

- At \_\_\_\_\_ a.m., Flight 93 was 29 minutes outside of \_\_\_\_\_.
- At \_\_\_\_\_ a.m., Flight 93 crashed into a field in \_\_\_\_\_.
- No one requested for Flight 93.
- 1 hour and 15 minutes after the U.S. knew we were under attack, the White House issued a order. It was never passed along to pilots.

**Question to consider:**

*\*\*\* Could any of the flights have been intercepted before they crashed into their intended targets?\*\*\* (Write your response below)*