Course Description: Seminar in critical study of television programming content, production practices, and audiences. Includes consideration of industrial, political, aesthetic, and cultural analyses of television.

Student Learning Objectives:

After taking the course, students will be able to
1. Apply a variety of methods to study and analyze television culture
2. Create original research in television studies

Evaluation:

Article Abstract & Discussion Leading (10%). Each student will individually write an abstract, distribute it to the class, and lead discussion on an assigned reading.

Take-Home Exam (25%). A take-home essay exam will be given covering topics in television studies from the first half of the term.

Research Paper (35%) & Presentation (10%) Students will develop a 10 – 12 page research paper on an element of television culture in consultation with the professor. You will need to incorporate primary research as well as secondary sources into your work. Everyone is required to submit a proposal and meet for a consultation with me. In addition to turning in the paper, students will introduce their work in a 10-minute presentation to the class.

In-Class Participation (20%) Attendance is mandatory and active participation in class is vital to your experience in the course. Ten points will be deducted from your participation grade for each unexcused absence. Excused absences are only those that are documented medical or family emergencies. Missing one class is like missing a week and a half of classes during a regular term! You will receive a progress report on your participation at midterm.

Grade Scale: A = 100-90, B = 89-80, C = 79-70, D = 69-60, F = 59 and under.

Course Readings:


Ethan Thompson and Jason Mittell, How to Watch Television (NYU Press, 2013).
Additional readings available via Blackboard.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1:
Class 1. Wed 6/4
Introduction & Screenings
In Class: Newcomb & Hirsch, “Television as Cultural Forum” (BB); Gitlin, “Primetime Ideology” (BB)

Class 2. Mon 6/9
Readings for Discussion: Television Studies, Gray & Lotz Introduction
Williams, “Television Programming as Flow” (BB); Newcomb, “That’s Not Al Dente” (BB); Hendershot, “Parks & Recreation and the Cultural Forum” (H2WTv)

Week 2:
Class 3. Wed 6/11
Readings: Gray & Lotz, “Programs”; Corner, “Performing the Real” (RTV); Kompare, “Extraordinarily Ordinary” (RTV); Caldwell, “Televisual Apparatus” (BB); Thompson, “Comedy Verite” (BB)

Class 4. Mon 6/16
D’Acci, “TV, Representation, and Gender” (BB); Arthurs, “Sex and the City and Consumer Culture” (BB); Osborne-Thompson, “The Comedic Treatment of Reality” (RTV); Kraszewski, “Country Hicks and Urban Cliques” (RTV)

Week 3:
Class 5. Wed 6/18
Reading: Gray & Lotz, “Audiences”; Jenkins, “Survivor Fans & Collective Intelligence” (BB); Santo, “Of Niggas and Citizens” (BB); Gray, “Antifans” (BB); Punathambekar, “The Case of Indian Idol” (flowtv.org)

Class 6. Mon 6/23 EXAM ASSIGNED. PAPER PROPOSAL DUE.
Reading: Gray & Lotz, “Institutions”; Becker, “Prime-Time TV in the Gay Nineties” (BB); Banet-Weiser, “Girls Rule! Gender, Feminism, and Nickelodeon” (BB); Havens, “It’s Still a White World” (BB); Thompson, “Good Demo, Bad Taste” (BB)

Week 4:
Class 7. Wed 6/25 EXAM DUE
Reading: Gitlin, “Make it Messy” (BB); Lotz, “Television Revolutionized” (BB); Grindstaff, “Self-Serve Celebrity” (BB); Mann, “Brand Management TV” (BB); Jenkins, “Buying into American Idol” (RTV)

Class 8. Mon 6/30
Reading: Gray & Lotz, “Contexts”
Spigel, Make Room for TV (Introduction, Chapters 2-3)

Week 5
Class 9. Wed 7/2
Spigel, Chapters 4 & 5; McCarthy, “Watts, “Melancholy, Merit, and Merchandise” (RTV); McCarthy, “Stanley Milgram, Allen Funt and Me” (RTV)

Friday 7/3 Papers Due

E-Communication Policy:
- I will respond to email within 24 hours, except for Friday at 3 pm until Monday at 9 am.
- I will be happy to talk on the phone, instant message, Facetime etc with you during my office hours.
- I am also happy to meet with you in person during office hours or some other time arranged in advance!

Students are expected to:
1. **Silence and put away cell phones. Texting (including the reading of texts!) is not allowed in class.** Your social life will survive until the break, I promise.
2. **Come to class on-time.** Do not get up and leave early.
3. **Participate in class discussions.** In addition to the enlightening lectures, our goal during each class will be to have a lively, informed discussion. You will not get an “A” if you do not regularly contribute to class discussion in a productive manner.
4. **Be responsible for any information and materials missed when absent.**
5. **Complete readings and assignments as assigned.** All assignments must be handed in on time; exceptions will be made only for extraordinary cases and official documentation is needed. Exams may not be rescheduled. Do not make travel plans that conflict with exams.
6. **Proofread all work before turning it in.** Really.
7. **Seek help with writing if necessary.** The Writing Center of TAMU-CC, located in GSSC 112, provides free help for students at any stage in the writing process. More information is available at the Center for Academic Student Achievement website, casa.tamucc.edu.
8. **Properly cite sources.** Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form, and will result in an automatic zero for the assignment and further disciplinary action.
9. **Respect the privacy and opinions of fellow students.** I expect students to participate in discussion, and I expect students to respect each other’s (hopefully well-informed) opinions. Grades and course performance are considered private information. Students are not to openly discuss their grades (good or bad) inside my classroom.
10. **Meet with the instructor during office hours.** I will not discuss individual student grades in the classroom. I will, however, be happy to discuss grades on papers, exams, course performance, etc. during office hours. I also do not allow the following topics to be openly discussed in the classroom: student opinions about other faculty, student opinions about other students, student grades in other classes.

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism:** University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity
or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in an automatic zero on the assignment and further disciplinary action.

**Dropping a Class**: Events sometimes occur that make dropping a course seem necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

**Classroom/Professional behavior**: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

**Notice to Students with Disabilities**: Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible. Please have your accommodation letter from Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi Disability Services (DS) Office with you when you come see me. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Disability Services Office (located in 116 Corpus Christi Hall) at 361.825.5816.

**Academic Advising**: The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

**GRADE APPEALS PROCESS**: Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.