



CP 366
501

The Business of Television

Winter 2021-2022

Location: Online

Mondays & Wednesdays 11:50 am –
1.20pm

Instructor: José A. Soto

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1.30 to 3 pm and
Thursdays from 11.50 am
to 1.20 pm (All via Zoom)

Office Telephone: +1 (312) 362-5846

Email: jsoto23@depaul.edu

Course Description:

Course provides historical background of the television business, beginning with the initial launch of the industry in the 1940s. Students examine the establishment of the regulatory system, including the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the operational structure of stations and networks, the development of cable and satellite broadcasting, and the programming policies and strategies of the present broadcasting industry.

We will explore the information and entertainment businesses, particularly that of the US, and we will understand Television's prominent role in this expanding economical landscape. Our main focus will be on how the TV Industry works, from how a network, a studio and a station operate, to how a television show generates profit at various levels and in different markets. They will examine the distinctions between broadcast, cable and streaming networks, as well as the ratings and programming strategies through diverse distribution channels.

Course Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Recognize how the information and entertainment industries in the world and in the US are built, what their current economical situation is and their influence on society.
- Critique the ruling business models of the commercial television industry, whether it is broadcast, cable or any of its digital iterations.
- Clearly distinguish operation, marketing and programming strategies of studios, networks, channels and stations.
- Define how a television show is conceived, created and sold in different markets to achieve the best revenue possible.



Students should note that this course requires the use of some business concepts and exercises, which means delving into some statistics and mathematics, especially when dealing with programming and *ratings*. I encourage students to participate on the in-class discussions to further their understanding of these subjects, and to approach me about suggestions for more in-depth readings and/or projects related to television series, movies for television, sit-coms, reality programming and other TV related subjects.

Readings:

Recommended: Basin, Ken (2019) **THE BUSINESS OF TELEVISION**; Routledge; ISBN-10: 0815368666, ISBN-13: 978-0815368663

Dominick, Joseph R.; Messere, Fritz; Sherman, Barry L. (2012) **BROADCASTING, CABLE, THE INTERNET, AND BEYOND: AN INTRODUCTION TO MODERN ELECTRONIC MEDIA**; McGraw-Hill; ISBN-13: 978-0073512037, ISBN-10: 0073512036

Head, Sydney W.; Spann, Thomas; McGregor, Michael A. (2001) **BROADCASTING IN AMERICA: A SURVEY OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA**; Ed. Houghton Mifflin Company; ISBN-13: 978-0205608133, ISBN-10: 9780205608133

If you want to keep up to date with the news of the TV industry you may access the free information service *TVNewscheck.com* You are also invited to examine the **VARIETY & THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER** magazines that report on the newest developments in this thriving industry.

The lectures might be supplemented with handouts from the instructor over the course of the quarter.

Grading:

Final grades will be based on 7 module quizzes, 7 activities, a mid-term video presentation, a final presentation, class participation and attitude. Because it has to present shows on time every hour of every day, television is one of the most demanding industries, this charge carries over to those who are preparing for it, which is why missed deadlines will result in assignment failure (0%).

MODULE 01

Module 01 Quiz – 4%:
Activity *E&M World Industry Investment* – 4%

MODULE 02

Module 02 Quiz – 4%
Activity *Product Ads* – 4%

MODULE 03

Module 03 Quiz – 8%
International Conglomerate Presentation (Midterm) – 15%

MODULE 04

Module 04 Quiz – 4%
Activity *Studios in the US* – 4%

MODULE 05

Module 05 Quiz – 0%
Activity *Window Strategies* – 4%

MODULE 06

Creating your own TV Broadcast Network (Final) – 20%

MODULE 07

Activity *The Business Side* – 0%

MODULE 08

Module 08 Quiz – 5%
Activity *Programming in the Digital World* – 4%

MODULE 09

Module 09 Quiz – 5%
Activity *TV Markets & Conventions* – 0%

Participation and Attitude 15%

Grading Standards:

Letter Grade	Minimum % of Total Points	Letter Grade	Minimum % of Total Points
A	92	C+	78
A-	90	C	72
B+	88	C-	70
B	82	D+	68
B-	80	D	60
		F	0

Course Policies:

1. Participation

At this level, students should be interested in the subject of the course. The only way to see this is through participation in class, either taking part in the online activities, asking questions or adding constructive comments to other student’s presentations and the instructor lectures.

Each meeting, whether zoom or in person brings the possibility of earning half a point in the participation percentage of the grade. It may seem small, but it quickly adds up. Just being there won’t give you full credit, you need to actively contribute to the discussions, the activities or the chat.

2. Attendance

It does not constitute a specific part of your grade, but perfect attendance is required. Most of the information you need to complete your assignments will be discussed in-class; also examples of what you have to do will be given there. Subjects and/or assignments will not be discussed outside of the programmed sessions.



Classes where students present assignments are obligatory. Any student who misses a presentation period, regardless of whether he/she is participating in the presenting group, will get a 0 on that specific assignment. This makes attendance critical, and thus not an issue to be negotiated. However, if you have to miss a class or a deadline, make sure to plan ahead, and inform the instructor in advance. Calling in advance does not automatically excuse an absence or a missed deadline, but it is the only way to present your case. If you fail to communicate before the next class period to explain an absence or a missed deadline, they will not be excused. Please note that work, non-emergency medical and dental appointments, hangovers, intramural games, visitors from out of town, fixing your roommate's computer, fraternity/sorority events, arguments with boyfriends or girlfriends and studying for other classes do not constitute excused absences or missed assignments.

In order to petition for an excused absence, students who miss class due to illness or significant personal circumstances should complete the Absence Notification process through the Dean of Students office. The form can be accessed at <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/forms.html>. Students must submit supporting documentation alongside the form. The professor reserves the sole right whether to offer an excused absence and/or academic accommodations for an excused absence.

3. Tardiness

One true thing in all professional fields is the lack of tolerance for tardiness. Employers do not generally tolerate such behavior, and employees who offer weak, irritating excuses frequently find themselves unemployed and unemployable. We will be working under the same rules.

Remember it is your responsibility to make the arrangements when a deadline or a class has to be missed. I will treat you professionally, expecting of you a responsible attitude. This means that it is you who must be worried about solving the problem, not me.

4. Missed Assignments

Since television is a demanding industry, if you fail to turn in any of the assignments or, if you miss a presentation day, you will fail that assignment with a 0. There will be no exceptions. This is a zero-tolerance policy. Turning-in an assignment does not guarantee you will have a passing grade, although the opposite will be true: Not turning them in will fail you inevitably.



5. Attitude

We are going to be spending a lot of time discussing other student's or your own work. This will be made in an orderly fashion, no matter how vehemently we feel for an argument, we have to be able to provide it in a disciplined manner. It is better to wait and later speak than not speaking at all. My evaluation of your attitude and attention will be based on your participation during discussions, as much as it will be based on your assertiveness when making a comment.

6. Zoom Etiquette

The DePaul Code of Student Responsibility applies to online behavior as well as in-person or classroom behavior. The following are policies for the course meetings with Zoom:

- General – Sign in with your preferred first name and last name. If you do not have access to a computer or smartphone with internet access, call into class. This is not optimal; try to locate an internet-enabled device to use for this course. Please stay engaged in class activities. Close any apps on your device that are not relevant and turn off notifications.
- Video – Turn on your video when possible. It is helpful to be able to see each other, just as in an in-person class. You may elect to turn off your video if you have limited internet bandwidth, no webcam or if you're unable to find an environment without a lot of visual distractions.
- Audio – Mute your microphone when you are not talking. Be in a quiet place when possible and turn off any music, videos, etc. in the background.

7. Uncivilized Behavior

Even though you are students who must constantly thrive to grow, we need to start acting professionally. This is why there will be no tolerance for uncivilized behavior. I require an orderly ambiance to be able to make the most of each session.

By accepting this syllabus, you are indicating that you understand my expectations for students concerning attitude and work ethic.

I reserve the right to drop any student with an F (0%) if he/she has excessive absences (more than four, and/or if he/she misses any of the presentation dates), engages in disruptive behavior, has a poor attitude, or in any other way is clearly not taking the class seriously.

8. Ethics

Although your grade does not contain an ethics component like some other courses, I require complete honesty in producing your work. By accepting this syllabus, you are indicating that you understand the seriousness of academic dishonesty and realize there will be serious sanctions if it is proven that you have engaged in such behavior. You are also indicating that you understand what constitutes academic dishonesty; I will not tolerate an excuse that claims the student did not know he/she was engaging in academic dishonesty.

9. Plagiarism

Plagiarism, cheating and/or fabrication will not be tolerated. They are serious offenses – both in course and in media careers. Thus, I reserve the right to drop any student with an F (0%) if he/she engages in any form of academic dishonesty. I further reserve the right to recommend other sanctions as may be appropriate.

Plagiarism is useless to you anyway. By having someone else do the work for you, you are missing an opportunity to immerse yourself in the television industry. You are also waiving your right to learn. If you are willing to do that, then you have to evaluate if it's worth the aggravation and the time you invest in this course.

More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>.

10. Withdrawal

Students who withdraw from the course do so by using the Campus Connection system <http://campusconnect.depaul.edu>. Withdrawals processed via this system are effective the day on which they are made. Simply ceasing to attend, or notifying the instructor, or nonpayment of tuition, does not constitute an official withdrawal from class and will result in academic as well as financial penalty.

For more information on DePaul's withdrawal policy visit: <https://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/support-services/academic/Pages/late-withdrawal-process.aspx>

11. Special Accommodations:

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should inform the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at:



Student Center, LPC, Suite #370

Phone number: (773)325.1677

Fax: (773)325.3720

TTY: (773)325.7296

12. Preferred Name & Gender Pronouns

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the quarter so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Please also note that students may choose to identify within the University community with a preferred first name that differs from their legal name and may also update their gender. The preferred first name will appear in University related systems and documents except where the use of the legal name is necessitated or required by University business or legal need. For more information and instructions on how to do so, please see the Student Preferred Name and Gender Policy at <http://policies.depaul.edu/policy/policy.aspx?pid=332>

Course Organization and Schedule:

We will meet Mondays and Wednesdays from 11:50 am to 1:20 pm. Students should've reviewed all the pertinent material for the module before the class starts. We will begin by answering questions that students may have regarding the content of the class or upcoming assignments. Then, we will proceed to the lecture and learning activities. Towards the end of the class, we will leave a few minutes to answer specific questions of the projects you will be handling.

This syllabus is subject to modification; there may be several circumstances that will most likely change it. I reserve the right to amend the class schedule, or the syllabus, if circumstances make it necessary. You may receive at least one revised syllabus or schedule before the quarter is over. If assignments or deadline dates change, I will inform you well in advance. Constantly reviewing D2L announcements and emails is recommended for these purposes.

Schedule

Module 01 THE ENTERTAINMENT AND MEDIA INDUSTRY IN THE WORLD

03-Jan	Zoom Meeting	Introduction to the course.
05-Jan	Zoom Meeting	E&M Industry WW 01
10-Jan	Zoom Meeting	E&M Industry WW 02



12-Jan	Zoom Meeting	E&M Industry WW 03
<u>17-Jan</u>	<u>No-Class</u>	<u>Martin Luther King Day</u>
12-Jan to 16-Jan	Module 01 Quiz (availability)	
19-Jan	Activity <i>E&M World Industry Investment</i> (due)	
Module 02	THE ENTERTAINMENT AND MEDIA INDUSTRY IN THE US	
19-Jan	In-Person Meeting	E&M Industry US
19-Jan to 23-Jan	Module 02 Quiz (availability)	
24-Jan	Activity <i>Product Ads</i> (due)	
Module 03	CONGLOMERATES	
24-Jan	In-Person Meeting	Conglomerates 01
26-Jan	In-Person Meeting	Conglomerates 02
26-Jan	International Conglomerate Presentation (Midterm) (Company selection)	
31-Jan	In-Person Meeting	Conglomerates 03
02-Feb	In-Person Meeting	Conglomerates 04
02-Feb to 06-Feb	Module 03 Quiz (availability)	
04-Feb	International Conglomerate Presentation (Midterm) (due date for written and video)	
07-Feb	International Conglomerate Presentation (Meedterm) <i>Feedback and Voting</i>	
Module 04	THE ELEMENTS OF THE TELEVISION BUSINESS	
07-Feb	In-Person Meeting	Elements of TV Business 01
09-Feb	In-Person Meeting	Elements of TV Business 02
09-Feb to 13-Feb	Module 04 Quiz	
14-Feb	Activity <i>Studios in the US</i> (due)	
Module 05	THE CORE OF THE TELEVISION INDUSTRY: WINDOWING	
14-Feb	In-Person Meeting	Windowing 01
16-Feb	In-Person Meeting	Windowing 02

16-Feb to 20-Feb Module 05 Quiz

21-Feb Activity *Window Strategies* (due)

Module 06 CREATING YOUR OWN NETWORK

21-Feb In-Person Meeting Creating your own Network

11-Mar **Creating your own Network** (due written and video)

12-Mar to 14-Mar **Creating your own Network** (feedback)

Module 07 THE OPERATION OF A COMPANY (PRODUCTION COMPANY, STUDIO OR NETWORK)

23-Feb In-Person Meeting The Operation of a Company

28-Feb Activity *The Business Side* (due)

Module 08 PROGRAMMING

28-Feb In-Person Meeting Programming 01

02-Mar In-Person Meeting Programming 02

02-Mar to 06-Mar Module 08 Quiz

07-Mar Activity *Programming in the Digital World* (due)

Module 09 MARKETING & TELEVISION MARKETS

07-Mar In-Person Meeting Marketing & Television Markets 01

09-Mar In-Person Meeting Marketing & Television Markets 02

Activity *TV Markets & Conventions* (due)

09-Mar to 13-Mar Module 09 Quiz

Final Assignment – Creating your own Network

14-Mar (11:30 pm) Zoom Meeting Feedback and Voting