



DC 229
201-210

Television Genres

Summer I 2015-16	Room:	Student Center Room 330
Tuesday and Thursday from 1 to 4.15 pm	Course Management System:	D2L
José A. Soto	Office Hours:	Tuesdays from 11am to 12.30 pm (CDM506)
Office Telephone: (312)- 362-5846	Email:	jsoto23@cdm.depaul.edu

Course Description:

Students will analyze and discuss some of the most important and influential shows in television history. Students will learn all about the writer-centric form of scripted television, where it's been and where it's heading. Students study serials and procedurals, network and cable shows, principal leads, partnerships and ensembles, comedy and drama, prevalent themes, innovations in content and form, the impact of DVR, and the impact of the internet.

Learning Domain Description:

DC 229 Television Genres is included in the Liberal Studies program as a course with credit in the Arts and Literature domain. Courses in the Arts and Literature domain ask students to extend their knowledge and experience of the arts while developing their critical and reflective abilities. In these courses, students interpret and analyze particular creative works, investigate the relations of form and meaning, and through critical and/or creative activity, come to better understand the original audience that witnessed a work of art and how its meaning and significance changes over time. These courses focus on works of art or literature, however the process of analysis may include social, cultural, and historical issues. Genres covered in this domain include literature, the visual arts, media arts, the performing arts, music, and theater.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

- Explain, in well-written prose, what a work of art is about and/or how it was produced
- Articulate and explain the "content" of that work and/or its methodology of production.



- Comment on the relationship between form and content in a work.
 - What are the generic expectations of a particular form?
 - How does an artist complicate, enrich, or subvert such expectations?
- Assess the formal aspects of their subject and put those qualities into words, using, when appropriate, specialized vocabulary employed in class and readings.
- Contextualize a work of art.
 - Do so with respect to other works of art in terms of defining its place within a broader style or genre.
 - Contextualize a work of art in terms of contemporaneous aesthetic, social, or political concerns, discussing how these might shape the work's reception and how that reception might differ amongst various peoples and historical periods.

Learning Outcomes will be met through lectures, viewings and readings on the history and story structure principles of many television forms and measured via written papers, pop quizzes and a midterm exam.

Reading:

Required: Sepinwall, Alan (2013) **The Revolution Was Televised**; Touchstone, reprint edition. ISBN-10: 1476739676, ISBN-13: 978-1476739670

Viewing:

In-class Students may find it helpful to watch the episodes we are going to watch in class beforehand, Online Students are required to watch these episodes as part of this class. All Students will definitely find it helpful to re-watch the episodes they are expected to write about. Digital copies of all episodes will be available on ColTube. <http://coltube.cdm.depaul.edu> Login with Campus Connect information.

Grading:

Final grades will be based on written papers, quizzes, a final paper, 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.

Written Papers (3) – 45%

Quizzes (3) – 30%

Final Paper – 25%



All assignments must be typed and free of grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors. It's your work; you're responsible for its quality.

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 class. The only way to see this is through participation in class, either asking questions or adding constructive comments to other student's presentations.

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. 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 the study of television is a cumulative effort, if you fail to turn in any of the assignments you will fail the course. There will be no exceptions. This is a zero-tolerance policy. I have no time or patience for those who are not going to take this class seriously. Many students have flunked my courses for this reason. If you cannot make it a priority to complete all assignments, you better consider not taking this course. One more thing, 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 television shows, the industry and its history. This will be made in an orderly fashion, no matter how vehemently or fervently 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. Students who are not insightful enough to value the learning opportunities inherent to this class tend to do poorly.

6. Use of Technology

Cellular phones and other similar devices will not be tolerated. In my mind, they are a clear indication of a bad attitude. I recommend students to turn off or switch to silence mode such devices. If your other commitments are so pressing that they cannot wait until the end of the session, it may be in your best interest to reconsider the priority you place on being here. In any case, students whose phones and/or computers make noise during class will be asked to leave immediately.



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 if he/she has excessive absences, 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. 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.

By accepting this syllabus, you are indicating that you understand the seriousness of academic dishonesty and realize I will impose the harshest sanctions possible if I can prove 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 if he/she engages in any form of academic dishonesty. I further reserve the right to recommend other sanctions as may be appropriate.

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.



11. Retroactive Withdrawal

This policy exists to assist students for whom extenuating circumstances prevented them from meeting the withdrawal deadline. During their college career students may be allowed one medical/personal administrative withdrawal and one college office administrative withdrawal, each for one or more courses in a single term. Repeated requests will not be considered. Submitting an appeal for retroactive withdrawal does not guarantee approval.

College office appeals for CDM students must be submitted online via MyCDM.

The deadlines for submitting appeals are as follows:

Autumn Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent winter quarter

Winter Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent spring quarter

Spring Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter

Summer Terms: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter

12. Special Accommodations:

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact 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

Course Organization and Schedule:

We will meet at 330 of the Student Center Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1pm. We will take a 15-minute break at 2.30 and reconvene at 2.45 pm. We will leave few minutes before the class ends 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.

Session 1

June 14

Introductions. The Basics. Classification and Creation of Genre. The Situation Comedy. Half-Hour Live Multicam Comedy.

READING AT HOME: Sepinwall: Chapter 4 “A lie agreed upon...” (You may be quizzed on this material next class).

Session 2

June 16

The One-Hour Drama. Singlecam Episodic Serial. The Western.

Homework: Breakdown a NETWORK show of your choosing. NO PREMIUM SHOWS. A handout will be provided. Due on D2L: June 21, 2016 by 1:00pm.

Session 3

June 21

The Mini. Singlecam Episodic Series with an End.

READING AT HOME: Sepinwall: Chapter 5 “I’m a different kind of cop...” (You may be quizzed on this material next class).

Session 4

June 23

Police/Medical Procedurals. Singlecam Episodic Series (No end)

Homework: Character Paper. Write a Three Page Paper on the characters of the SIX FEET UNDER pilot episode. A link and handout will be provided. Due on D2L: June 28, 2016 by 1:00pm.

Session 5

June 28

Genres based on Style. The Musical. Singlecam Episodic Serial (No end)

READING AT HOME: Sepinwall: Chapter 9 “So say we all...” (You may be quizzed on this material next class).



Session 6

June 30

Genres based on Story. SciFi. Singlecam Episodic Serial (No end?)

Homework: Do at home MIDTERM. Due on D2L: July 5, 2016 at 1:00pm.

Session 7

July 5

The information/entertainment root mix. Reality. Singlecam Episodic (Fake doc?)

READING AT HOME: Television Documentary Handout (You may be quizzed on this material next class).

Session 8

July 7

Information root. Documentary. Singlcam episodic limited series.

Homework: Theme Paper. Discuss the themes of any adult animation show of your choosing. A handout will be provided. Due on D2L: July 12, 2016 at 1:00pm.

Session 9

July 12

Animation. Bugs Bunny. Hanna Barbera.

READING AT HOME: Sepinwall: Prologue "I am the one who knocks!..." (You may be quizzed on this material next class).

Session 10

July 14

Digital. Binge. Anything goes.

Final Paper:

Watch and discuss a scripted TV show we have not covered. Talk about its genre, structure, its tensions, the type of characters and architecture the show employs and what themes the show explores. 6-10 pages. **Due on D2L Monday, July 18 by 5:00pm.**