



## **FILM 105**

501

### **Foundations of Television**

Winter 2021-22

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:10 to 11:40  
am

Instructor: Jose A. Soto

Type of Course: Online: Hybrid

Course Management System: D2L

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

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Email: [jsoto23@depaul.edu](mailto:jsoto23@depaul.edu)

#### **Course Description:**

This course provides an introduction and framework of the history of television production. Evolving story forms will be examined from television's beginnings to the present. Developments in story and production styles will be analyzed and discussed.

#### **Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

1. Identify important events in the history of television that propelled its evolution, and/or had a significant impact in society.
2. Recognize the basic content production elements of a television show and create a basic pitch presentation for an original program.
3. Compare the structure of basic television genres.
4. Distinguish the basic principles of the business of television.

#### **Reading:**

Required: Mittell, Jason (2010) **TELEVISION AND AMERICAN CULTURE**; Michael Wiese Productions. ISBN-13: 978-0195306675; ISBN-10: 0195306678

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 2 reading quizzes, 6 module quizzes, a discussion, 5 papers, a mid-term 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**

Reading Quiz (Chapter 1) – 5%:  
Quiz on Module 1 – 4%

### **MODULE 02**

Reading Quiz (Chapter 2) – 5%:  
Quiz on Module 2 – 4%

### **MODULE 03**

Quiz on Module 3 – 4%  
Paper 01 on *Greenlight Projects (Aquaman)* – 5%

### **MODULE 04**

Old Show Pitch Presentation – 10%

### **MODULE 05**

Quiz on Module 5 – 4%  
Paper 02 on *Ratings Vs. Quality* – 5%

### **MODULE 06**

Original Show Pitch Presentation – 15%

### **MODULE 07**

Paper 03 on *Context and Series* (drama/comedy) – 5%  
Discussion on Module 7 – 5%

### **MODULE 08**

Quiz on Module 8 – 4%

### **MODULE 09**

Quiz on Module 9 – 5%  
Paper on *Representing Identity* (Chapter 8) – 5%

### **MODULE 10**

Paper on *Viewing Television* (Chapter 9) – 5%

### **ALL MODULES**

Discussions & Participation – 10%

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 course. The only way to see this is through participation in class, either taking part in the activities, asking questions, or adding constructive comments to other student's presentations and the instructor lectures.

Each meeting brings the possibility of earning one point in the participation percentage of the grade. 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 meetings. This makes attendance critical, and thus not an issue to be negotiated. However, if you have to miss a meeting 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 creation is a cumulative effort, if you fail to turn in any of the assignments you will fail it with 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 if he/she doesn't participate in any of the assignments), 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; claims that a student did not know he/she was engaging in academic dishonesty will not be contemplated.

## **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.

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 Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:10 to 11:40 am. 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 discussion and recall activities based on the lectures, videos or student presentations. 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 ORIGINS OF TELEVISION

04-Jan	Zoom Meeting	Introduction to the course.
13-Jan	Zoom Meeting	Origins of Television
13-Jan to 15-Jan	Module 01 Quiz	
14-Jan to 16-Jan	Reading Quiz	Introduction & Chapter 1

### Module 02 THE BUSINESS OF TELEVISION: TV STATION, GROUP & NETWORK

20-Jan	Zoom Meeting	TV Station, Group & Network
20-Jan to 22-Jan	Module 02 Quiz	
21-Jan to 23-Jan	Reading Quiz	Chapter 2

### Module 03 THE BUSINESS OF TELEVISION: TALENT, STUDIO & DISTRIBUTION

27-Jan	Zoom Meeting	Talent, Studio & Distribution
27-Jan to 29-Jan	Module 03 Quiz	
30-Jan	Paper on <i>Greenlight Projects (Aquaman)</i>	

### Module 04 THE PITCH (PART I)

03-Feb	Zoom Meeting	Assignment Questions & Show Selection
13-Feb	Old TV Show Pitch Submission	
14-Feb to 16-Feb	Comment on Peers' Pitches for Old TV Show	

17-Feb                      Zoom Meeting                      Pitch Feedback and Voting

**Module 05    RATINGS**

10-Feb                      Zoom Meeting                      Ratings

11-Feb to 13-Feb                      Module 05 Quiz

14-Jan                      Paper on Paper: *Quality Vs. Ratings*

**Module 06    THE PITCH (PART II)**

13-Mar                      Original TV Show Pitch Submission

14-Mar to 16-Mar                      Comment on Peers' Pitches

17-Mar (8:30 am)                      Zoom Meeting                      Pitch Feedback and Voting (*The Final*)

**Module 07    TV SCRIPTED NARRATIVES: DRAMA & COMEDY**

17-Feb                      Zoom Meeting                      TV Scripted Narratives: Drama & Comedy

18-Feb to 20-Feb                      Module 07 Discussion

21-Feb                      Paper on *Context and Series*

**Module 08    NON-SCRIPTED NARRATIVES: NEWS & DOCUMENTARY, WITH A HINT OF REALITY**

24-Feb                      Zoom Meeting                      Non-Scripted Narratives

25-Feb to 27-Feb                      Module 08 Quiz

**Module 09    IMPACT OF TELEVISION: RACE, GENDER AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

03-Mar                      Zoom Meeting                      Impact of Television: Race, Gender and Sexual Orientation

06-Mar                      Paper on *Representing Identity*

**Module 10    IMPACT OF TELEVISION: POLITICS AND CULTURE**

10-Mar                      Zoom Meeting                      Impact of Television: Politics and Culture

17-Mar                      Paper on *Viewing Television*

**Final Assignment – Original Show Pitch Presentation**

13-Mar                      Original TV Show Pitch Submission

14-Mar to 16-Mar                      Comment on Peers' Pitches





17-Mar (8:30 am)

Zoom Meeting

Pitch Feedback and Voting