



**TV 289**  
**501**

**The Business of Television**

Winter 2018-2019

Room:

CDM 202

Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:50 am – 1.20pm

Instructor: José A. Soto

Office Hours: Mondays from 10:30 am to  
1 pm and Wednesdays from  
3 to 5.00 pm (Loop CDM 506)

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**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 and a station operate, to how a television show generates profit at various levels and in different markets. They will examine the distinctions between cable and broadcast 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 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.

### **Reading:**

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

Head, Sydney W.; Spann, Thomas; McGregor, Michael A. (2001) **BROADCASTING IN AMERICA: A SURVEY OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA**; Ed. Houghton Mifflin Company

Shane, Ed (1999) **SELLING ELECTRONIC MEDIA**; Focal Press

Walker, James; Ferguson, Douglas (1998) **THE BROADCAST TELEVISION INDUSTRY**; Allyn And Bacon

Parsons, Patrick R.; Frieden, Robert M. (1998) **THE CABLE SATELLITE TELEVISION INDUSTRIES**; Allyn And Bacon

You are also invited to examine *Variety* and *The Hollywood Reporter* trade magazines that account the newest developments in this thriving industry.

It might also be useful to subscribe to these free daily or weekly news emails:

**Media Daily News**

**TVNewsday**

**CTAM Smart Brief**

Lectures will be supplemented with handouts and videos from the instructor over the course of the semester.

**Grading:**

Final grades will be based on an assignment about International Conglomerates; two exams; a Mid-Term; a Final Assignment about developing a Television Channel; and class participation.

- 1.- International Conglomerates – 25%:** Students will be asked to research an international conglomerate, excluding any reviewed in class, and create a written report on them. They will present a summary of their results in class.
- 2.- Two Exams – 10% (each) – 20% Total.**
- 3.- Mid-Term Exam – 10%**
- 4.- Final Assignment – 35%:** Each group of three will need to develop a detailed plan for the creation of a Broadcast Television Channel. They will need to create a business plan, a programming grid and the marketing strategies required to operate such enterprise. The group will submit a written report and present a summary on the day of the final exam.
- 5.- Participation – 10%**

**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. Classes where students present assignments are obligatory. Any student who misses a presentation period, regardless of whether he/she is participating in front of the 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 serious 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. 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 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 speak 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 (0%) if he/she has excessive absences (more than four, and 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. 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 the course and in media careers. Thus I reserve the right to drop any student with an F (0 points) 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 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

## **13. 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 at The CDM Building in the Loop, Room 202, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11:50 am. I will start the class with a summary of the most important news in the Entertainment and Television Industries. Then we will proceed to the lecture at hand. 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	Date	Subject	Assigned	Due Date
1	8-Jan-19	Introduction to the Television Business		
2	10-Jan-19	The World Entertainment Industry - Part I		
3	15-Jan-19	The World Entertainment Industry - Part II		
4	17-Jan-19	The World Entertainment Industry - Part III		
5	22-Jan-19	The US Entertainment Industry		
6	24-Jan-19	The US Entertainment Industry	International Conglomerate Exam 1	
7	29-Jan-19	Conglomerates		Exam 1
8	31-Jan-19	Conglomerates		
9	5-Feb-17	Conglomerates		
10	7-Feb-17			International Conglomerate
11	12-Feb-19	TV Stations		International Conglomerate
12	14-Feb-19	TV Studios/TV Networks		
13	19-Feb-19	Film and TV Production Business (Windowing)	Mid Term	
14	21-Feb-19	The TV Show	Final Assignment - Your TV Channel	
15	26-Feb-19	Rating & Share		Mid Term
16	28-Feb-19	Programming		
17	5-Mar-19	Programming		
18	7-Mar-19	Marketing and Advertising TV Shows	Exam 3	
19	12-Mar-19	International Markets		
20	19-Mar-19 (11:30 am)			Exam 3 Final Assignment - Your TV Channel