

## **RTV 3405: TV and American Society Summer A 2017 – Section 0959**

**When:** Tuesday:  
3:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

Wednesday:  
3:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

Thursday: 3:30 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

**Instructor:** Robert H. Wells

**Contact:** [rhwells@ufl.edu](mailto:rhwells@ufl.edu);  
(352) 846-1107

**Office hours:** Wednesdays and Thursdays  
2 p.m. to 3 p.m. or by appointment

**Where:** CSE A101

**Office:** GO34 Weimer Hall

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Television remains the most popular entertainment form in the United States. While the technology, the industry, and the audience has changed over history, TV's political, social, and cultural influence is still significant today. This course will introduce you to television from multiple perspectives. We will cover the history of television, the television industry and the telecommunication profession, the unique narrative and affordances of television, its cultural influence on American and international societies, and theories of television effects.

You will learn...

- To analyze television programs critically and identify its persuasive attempts
- To apply political, social, psychological theories in explaining television effects
- How television content is produced and programming logic
- How technology changes affect the relationship between producers and audiences
- The history of television as a technology and cultural artifact
- Basic ethics and demands of the telecommunication profession

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**

Mittell, J. (2010). *Television and American Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.

More required readings will be available on the course site: <https://lss.at.ufl.edu>. Select “e-Learning in Canvas,” and log in using your Gatorlink ID. If you have problems with Canvas or any computer problems, please contact the UF Helpdesk by phone: (352) 392-4357 or by email: [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).

## WHEN YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

Please post general questions that others also may have on the Discussion Board on Canvas. For questions that pertain to you personally as a student, you may email me.

## GRADES

Exam 1	100 Points
Exam 2	100 Points
Exam 3	100 Points
Paper	75 Points
Participation	25 points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>400 Points</b>

A	90 percent or more	D	60 to 69 percent
B	80 to 89 percent	E	0 to 59 percent
C	70 to 79 percent		

There are three exams in this class, each worth 100 points. The exam will consist of multiple-choice questions. There will be no make-up exams. The dates of the three exams are:

Exam 1: May 18 (Thurs.)

Exam 2: June 1 (Thurs.)

Exam 3: June 14 (Wed.)

Paper: June 15 by 11:59 p.m. (Thurs.)

**Information on current University of Florida grading policies can be found at:**

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

## PAPER

You will write a paper that analyzes a television show of your choice. The paper should be 10 pages (not including references), Times New Roman, 12 point, double-spaced, APA style. You

must cite any references used. Do not use other people's facts or information without properly citing them. We will discuss the paper in more detail one day in class (The discussion is scheduled for May 31). The paper will be submitted to me through Canvas. I will accept no late submissions. If you submit your paper late, you will get a zero for the assignment. **I am using a PC, so if you are using a Mac, you must convert the file so that I can read it. PDF files are preferred.**

These are some of the points the paper must include:

- Why you chose the television program
- The show's genre
- The show's intended audience
- The history of the show's production, including the writers and producers
- The show's ratings and if you think they should be higher or lower and why
- Why the show might be on the channel it is shown on
- The ideology presented in the show
- The main protagonists and antagonists of the show
- The show's narrative and episodic structure
- The potential positive and negative effects of the ideology(s)
- The stereotypes presented in the show and potential negative and/or positive effects of them as well as how they are used
- Any examples of transmedia storytelling with the show
- How convergence technology may affect the show
- How you think the show affects you psychologically
- Based on the above topics you've learned more about in this class, what you might do differently with the show if you were in charge
- Minimum page length must be met

## **Participation**

You will be given the opportunity to earn participation points throughout the semester. These points will be earned through participation in group activities and discussions. You must be present in class to receive participation points.

## **CLASS POLICY**

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. The class will start promptly at 3:30 p.m. If you come in late or have to leave early, please do so quietly without disturbing others in the class. In semesters past, missing classes has been connected with a lower scores on the exams and a lower overall class score.

**Electronic devices:** Electronic devices, including laptops for note taking, are prohibited during class. Please turn cellphones off or to silent mode during class and keep them tucked away unless you are dealing with an emergency. Although I understand how these technologies are now integrated into our daily lives, improper use of the technologies during class can be especially distracting to others around you.

**Academic Honesty:** You are expected to honor UF's honor code and act with the utmost integrity. UF's honor code is found here: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

If you are found violating UF's honor code in this class, which includes but is not limited to cheating and plagiarizing, you will be reported to the Dean of Students.

**Class Room Accommodation:** According to UF policy, students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide appropriate documentation to you, and you should provide this documentation to me when requesting specific accommodation. It is your responsibility to initiate this conversation early in the semester, and you should meet with me during office hours to discuss this.

**Resources:**

Division of Student Affairs (352) 392-1261. <http://www.ufsa.ufl.edu>

Counseling & Wellness Center (352) 392-1575. <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu>

Disability Resource Center (352) 392-1261. <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>

SNAP (352) 392-7627. <http://www.police.ufl.edu/community-services/student-nighttime-auxiliary-patrol-snap/>. There is also a SNAP app available for Apple and Android.

**Evaluations:** At the end of the semester, we will take time to do class evaluations. The link to the evaluations is located here: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/>. Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

**COURSE CALENDAR --** You are expected to have completed the readings for the day before coming to class. The calendar may be adjusted during the semester but any adjustments will be made clear in class and on Canvas.

Date	Topic	Reading
Week 1		
May 9	Welcome & Introduction	

(Tues.)		
May 10 (Wed.)	Defining television; History of TV	Textbook: Introduction (p.1-13); Textbook: Ch.11
May 11 (Thurs.)	TV & Convergence; The TV Industry	The cultural logic of media convergence -Jenkins (2004); Textbook : Ch. 1
Week 2		
May 16 (Tues.)	Participatory Audiences; Exchanging Audiences	Spoiling Survivor-Jenkins (2006); Textbook: Ch. 2 and Recounting the Audience-Lotz (2009)
May 17 (Wed.)	Serving the Public Interest	Textbook: Ch. 3
May 18 (Thurs.)	Exam 1	
Week 3		
May 23 (Tues.)	TV and Political Citizenship; Making Meaning	Textbook: Ch. 4 and Not Your Parents Presidential Debate-McKinney & Rill (2009); Textbook: Ch. 5
May 24 (Wed.)	TV Narratives ; Transmedia Storytelling	Textbook: Ch. 6; Searching for the Origami Unicorn- Jenkins
May 25 (Thurs.)	Screening America; Identity on the Screen	Textbook: Ch.7; Textbook: Ch. 8
Week 4		
May 30 (Tues.)	Viewing Television; Television for Children	Textbook: Ch. 9; Textbook: Ch. 10
May 31 (Wed.)	American TV's Global influence; Discuss Papers	Textbook: Conclusion, p. 438-449
June 1 (Thurs.)	Exam 2	
Week 5		
June 6 (Tues.)	History of Media Effects and Methods of Studying TV	20th century media effects –McDonald
June 7 (Wed.)	Cultivation Theory; Agenda setting/Framing/Priming	TV news and cultivation of fear-Romer et al. (2003); Framing, agenda setting, and priming-Scheufele & Tewksbury (2007)
June 8	Social Cognitive Theory;	Watch: <a href="#">Social cognitive theory</a> ; TV viewing and

(Thurs.)	Excitation Transfer Theory & Catharsis Hypothesis	psychological arousal-Zillmann (1991)
Week 6		
June 13 (Tues.)	Media Literacy and TV; The Future of TV	Confronting the challenges-Jenkins (2005) (skim: pp.15-104)
June 14 (Wed.)	Exam 3	
June 15 (Thurs.)	NO CLASS; PAPERS DUE by 11:59 p.m. on Canvas; Submit as PDF file	