

RTV 3405 TV and American Society

Fall 2015 – Section 0884

When: Tuesday
5:10 p.m. to 7:05 p.m.

Thursday: 5:10 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Where: WEIM 1064

Instructor: Robert H. Wells

Contact: rhwells@ufl.edu;
(352) 846-1107

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays
4 p.m. to 5 p.m. or by appointment

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.

GRADES

Exam 1	100 Points
Exam 2	100 Points
Exam 3	100 Points
Paper	100 Points
TOTAL	400 Points

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: Sept. 22 (Tues.)

Exam 2: Oct. 27 (Tues.)

Exam 3: Dec. 1 (Tues.)

Paper: Dec. 8 (Tues.)

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 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. 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 shows 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
- 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

CLASS POLICY

Attendance: The class will start promptly at 5:10 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: You are allowed to bring laptops or tablets for note taking, but uses of other electronic devices are prohibited during class, especially cellphones. Please turn your phone off or to silent mode during class and keep it tucked away unless we are using them for class purposes. 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/>.

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	Readings
Week 1		
Aug 25 (Tues.)	Welcome & Introduction	
Aug 27 (Thurs)	Defining television	Textbook: Introduction (p.1-13)
Week 2		
Sept 1 (Tues.)	History of TV	Textbook: Ch.11
Sept 3 (Thurs)	TV & convergence	The cultural logic of media convergence - Jenkins (2004)
Week 3		
Sept 8 (Tues.)	The TV industry	Textbook : Ch. 1
Sept 10 (Thurs)	Participatory audiences	Spoiling survivor-Jenkins (2006)
Week 4		
Sept 15 (Tues.)	Exchanging audiences	Textbook: Ch. 2; Recounting the Audience-Lotz (2009)
Sept 17 (Thurs)	Serving the public interest	Textbook: Ch. 3
Week 5		
Sept 22 (Tues.)	Exam 1	
Sept 24 (Thurs)	TV and political citizenship	Textbook: Ch. 4 and Not Your Parents Presidential Debate-McKinney & Rill (2009)

Week 6		
Sept 29 (Tues.)	Making Meaning	Textbook: Ch. 5
Oct 1 (Thurs)	TV Narratives	Textbook: Ch. 6
Week 7		
Oct 6 (Tues.)	Transmedia storytelling	Searching for the Origami Unicorn-Jenkins
Oct 8 (Thurs)	Screening America	Textbook: Ch.7
Week 8		
Oct 13 (Tues.)	Identity on the screen	Textbook: Ch. 8
Oct 15 (Thurs)	Viewing Television	Textbook: Ch. 9
Week 9		
Oct 20 (Tues.)	Television for Children	Textbook: Ch. 10
Oct 22 (Thurs)	American TV's global influence; Discuss papers	Textbook: Conclusion, p. 438-449
Week 10		
Oct 27 (Tues.)	Exam 2	
Oct 29 (Thurs)	History of media effects & Methods of studying TV	20 th century media effects -McDonald
Week 11		
Nov 3 (Tues.)	Cultivation Theory	TV news and cultivation of fear-Romer et al. (2003)
Nov 5 (Thurs)	Agenda setting/Framing/Priming	Framing, agenda setting, and priming-Scheufele & Tewksbury (2007)
Week 12		
Nov 10 (Tues.)	Social cognitive theory	Watch: Social cognitive theory
Nov 12 (Thurs)	Excitation transfer theory & Catharsis hypothesis	TV viewing and psychological arousal-Zillmann (1991)

Week 13		
Nov 17 (Tues.)	Media literacy and TV	Confronting the challenges-Jenkins (2005) (skim: pp.15-104)
Nov 19 (Thurs)	Future of TV (wrap up)	
Week 14		
Nov 24 (Tues.)	No Class	
Nov 26 (Thurs)	No Class (Thanksgiving)	
Week 15		
Dec 1 (Tues.)	Exam 3	
Dec 3 (Thurs)	No Class (Work on Papers)	
Week 16		
Dec 8 (Tues.)	Papers Due by 11:59 p.m.; Submit on Canvas	