

**RTVF 13 - Exploring American Television****Catalog Description**

Transfer Status: CSU

Unit(s): 3.00

Lecture: 51.00 Contact hours/102.00 Out of class hours/153.00 Total hours/3.00 Unit(s)

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Course Description: Students explore new trends in television production and distribution in American TV, potential genres include situation comedy, crime drama, western, legal drama, sci-fi, medical drama and reality TV. Content will be analyzed from a variety of perspectives including social, cultural, political, historical, and economic to explore how television impacts culture and the individual.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Describe the economic structure of commercial broadcasting in the United States.
2. Categorize a TV series into its genre based on the characteristics including its format, characters, length and plot structure.
3. Describe how new technologies are changing the way television programming is produced and distributed to audiences.
4. Critique the role TV plays in stereotyping.
5. Analyze the depiction of sexuality and violence in American television programming as it reflects changing social and cultural norms.
6. Describe the network and affiliate model of television production and distribution used in early television and its current relevance.
7. Analyze ethics as it applies to advertising in American television.

Course Content

Topic Titles / Suggested Time Topic	
	<u>Lecture</u>
<u>Topics</u>	<u>Lec Hrs</u>
Course Introduction	3.00
Survey of Broadcast Television	6.00
Understanding Television Production	9.00
Exploring Television Genres	15.00
Mass Media Effects	9.00
Advertising	9.00
Total Hours: 51.00	

Methods of Instruction

- A. Class Activities
- B. Discussion
- C. Homework: Students are required to complete two hours of outside-of-class homework for each hour of lecture
- D. Lecture
- E. Multimedia Presentations
- F. Reading Assignments

Methods of Evaluation

- A. Quizzes
- B. Homework
- C. Written Assignments
- D. Mid-term and final examinations
- E. Short papers
- F. Essays and research papers

Examples of Assignments**Reading Assignments**

1. Read the chapter in the textbook on the business structure of American broadcasting. Be prepared to discuss the relationship between program ratings and advertising revenue and how ratings performance influences program scheduling.

2. Read the chapter in the textbook on the characteristics of the situation comedy genre. After viewing a selected TV situation comedy, be prepared to analyze its structure and content to determine which genre characteristics are present.

Writing Assignments

1. Read the textbook chapter on sex and violence in American TV programming. View three hours of prime time TV programming (8-11pm) on one of the assigned networks. Write an essay analyzing the use of sexual situations and dialog in the programs, product commercials and network program promotions. Write a minimum of 500 words.
2. View two accounts of the same news event from different TV news outlets. In writing, compare and contrast the coverage. Discuss your assessment of the reasons for coverage differences. Write a minimum of 400 words.

Out-of-Class Assignments

1. You have been given the task of designing a three-hour prime time TV program schedule for an American TV network to attract a target audience of 18-24 year old females. You will choose a minimum of six half-hour series from the provided program list based on the criteria in the textbook. You will also indicate the time of each program and the reasons for your choice of series and time of broadcast.
2. Watch one of the TV programs on the supplied list with special emphasis on the commercials that are broadcast during the program. Name and describe each commercial in terms of the product being sold; the various emotional appeals used to attract potential consumers and the assumed age and gender of the target audience.

Recommended Materials of Instruction

Robinson, M.A. (2019). *Sitcommentary: Television Comedies That Changed America*. Rowman & Littlefield, 1st.

Wasko, J. & Meehan, E.R. (2020). *A Companion to Television*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2nd.

Castleman, H. & Podrazik, W.J. (2016). *Watching TV: Eight Decades of American Television*. Syracuse University Press, 3rd.

Minimum Qualifications

Mass Communication (Masters Required)

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