

Cover Sheet for Introduction to Television Studies

Submitted by Susan Ryan, Department of Communication Studies

ryan@tcnj.edu, x2256

I. Learning goals

- This course will give students an understanding of the diverse ways that television has been conceptualized, theorized, and analyzed by media scholars in the discipline of television studies. We will use different critical perspectives to examine television (broadcast, cable, web series, etc.) as an industry, a mode of entertainment, and a site of textual meaning by exploring how economic and political forces, technological innovation, advertisers, creative producers, and audiences have interacted to shape how television has become part of our cultural and social history.
- Because television studies is a growing discipline, it was necessary to divide our class COM 117, Languages of Film and Television, into two classes. COM 117 will be taught as Introduction to Film Studies and COM 118 will be Introduction to Television Studies. Both classes will fulfill a core requirement in the R/TV/F specialization of Communication Studies since they will prepare students for more advanced classes in film studies and media analysis, but may also serve as a Communication elective in the other two specializations. In terms of the department's learning goals, the department will provide foundational knowledge in television and media theory, highlight critical thinking and analysis, as well as communication professional skills in writing and oral presentations. Students will also learn how to appreciate the generative force of diverse audiences and cultures in the design of a mediated communication form like television.

II. Student assessment

- Students will have a variety of ways to demonstrate that they are engaging with the material presented in the course. Students will be expected to take exams based on the readings in television critical analysis, theory, and history. They will be expected to write several short papers applying concepts from methodologies discussed in the readings and class as well as a larger research paper using both readings from the class and outside research. They will also create a group project of a television "pitch" for a new show of both an oral presentation and a paper using research into television genres, narratives, distribution, financing, and technology. important in assessing their comprehension of the material and ability to use it in their own critical thinking and creative productions.

III. Learning activities

Since this class has a lecture/discussion format, learning activities will begin with readings and in-class participation on material which will be tested. Students will also write short analytic papers and a longer research paper which will show mastery of the material. They will also be asked to develop a “pitch” for a new program in oral and written form based on research into similar shows, modes of production, financing, and distribution. These activities will allow students to engage with the material in both scholarly and creative ways.