

Winter 2014

English 110: Introduction to Television Studies (CRN: 23349)

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4-5:50PM, McKenzie 214

Instructor: Chelsea Bullock

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Office: PLC 530

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:30-4:00PM and by appointment

Course Website: [eng110win2014.wordpress.com](http://eng110win2014.wordpress.com)

Course hashtag: #eng110uo

Twitter handle: @chelsea\_bullock

**Course Description:**

This course provides an introduction to Film and Television Studies. Students will learn important aspects of the history and theories of screen culture, as well as how to analyze and interpret television texts and contexts. Coursework emphasizes the formal and thematic aspects of television. By the end of the term, students will have the basic media analysis skills and a critical knowledge of television.

This course satisfies the Arts & Letters group requirement.

**Goals:**

- Gain basic understanding of Television aesthetics
- Learn TV studies vocabulary
- Develop skills to critically analyze television and its political and cultural impact

**Required Texts:**

There is no textbook for this course. All readings will be linked on our syllabus (as web articles or Google documents) and/or emailed to you as PDFs. You may print them and bring them to class or access them (and your notes) in class on the device of your choice, but you will be expected to have access them in class.

### **Attendance:**

Attendance is **REQUIRED**. You may miss **2 classes** (I take attendance every class, but please keep track of your absences!) without it affecting your grade. A third absence will lower your final course grade by  $\frac{1}{2}$  a grade. If you miss a **4th class you automatically FAIL** the course without notice. No exceptions. Frequent tardiness will also be counted as an absence.

- You are responsible for what you miss in that class. **Do not** send me an e-mail asking about what you missed.
- Students may “make up” missed classes by turning in a 4-page paper that describes, in detail, what was discussed in class during the missed day. This requires obtaining the notes of *at least 2* classmates and piecing together the missed lecture/class discussion from these notes and from discussions with classmates (i.e., NOT me). The paper should discuss the missed reading *and* all viewing material. This paper **MUST** be turned in within 2 weeks of the missed class. This is the **ONLY** way to “make up” a missed class. You must take care of obtaining notes from classmates on your own. After 2 weeks, the absence will be counted. You may submit no more than 2 of these papers per term. **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY.**

### **Expectations:**

- Assignment formatting: Unless otherwise noted, all work must be typed, in 12 point Times New Roman (or another reasonable font; turn in an assignment in Comic Sans or Wingdings and you fail), one-inch margins and all work will be turned in via Google Drive—see link below—by the time and date noted in the schedule of assignments. Failure to meet these formatting requirements will lower your grade.

- Active participation is required. To facilitate discussion, **you need to read the assigned** material before class (and be sure to bring the reading to class) and take notes while watching the television programs.
- Professional behavior: The best way to get the most out of this class is to stay focused on what is happening in our classroom. Our time together is brief and valuable; I expect your full attention during class time. Disrupting the class (falling asleep, carrying on side conversations, texting, checking Facebook or e-mail during class, arriving late or leaving early, etc.) will result in you being counted absent for that class period (fair warning: I will not always publicly announce your transgressions during class—I will just mark you absent). If you are consistently disruptive, I will just ask you to leave for the day. If for some reason you must be reachable, please talk to me before class.
- Twitter: Television was born as an inherently social media that took up residence inside family spaces and connected rather than isolated. It's a difficult charge to watch television with other people and *not* talk about it. However, vocalized conversations are distracting and can make it impossible for those around you to hear what's happening. As a solution, I request that you use Twitter on your computer or mobile device. I will be live-tweeting our screenings and invite your participation. It's an easy way to ask me questions. I will use Twitter to note points of interest and discussion topics that we'll address as a class following the screening. Please note, I am *only* giving you license to use Twitter (not Facebook, not Snapchat, not Messages). If I notice any abuse of this privilege during class time, I will mark you absent (per the section above). Follow along and join in the conversation by using our course hashtag: #eng110uo

## Assignments

**Mini-Exams** (50% of course grade):

You will be graded on five exams, given every other Thursday starting week two. The mini-exams will test reading comprehension, vocabulary, and the information and ideas discussed in class. They will include a multiple-choice component that will be completed in class and a take-home short essay portion that will be turned in the following Tuesday via electronic submission.

I will automatically drop your lowest grade, so each exam will be worth 12.5% of your grade. There are no make-ups for exams; please note the dates on the syllabus to be sure you'll be here for them. The exams will be cumulative: anything we have read up to the exam is fair game.

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### **Electronic Submission:**

With the exception of the in-class exams, all assignments will be handed in and graded electronically; this means that instead of handing in a paper copy, you will turn in your paper as a Google document. You may work in any format you prefer; when you are done, you should upload your document to Google Drive and hit the blue "SHARE" button in the upper right hand corner. Change the settings from (default) "Private" to "Anyone who has the link can view." Copy the long "link to share" and paste it into the box on the ASSIGNMENT HAND-IN page (see below for the url).

This process provides a time stamp of your submission, so please make sure you submit work on time. You will see my comments on your document (if applicable) and your grades will all be recorded in Blackboard's Grade Center. See me in week one if you have concerns about these requirements.

**ASSIGNMENT HAND-IN PAGE:** <http://bit.ly/1cRNARV>

[Group Presentations](#) (20% of course grade):

Refer to the linked Google document for assignment details.

**Final Writing Assignment** (20% of course grade):

Refer to the linked Google document for assignment details.

**Participation** (10% of course grade):

Your participation grade will be assessed based on your in-class written work, contributions to class discussions, and your group's leadership in class discussions.

**Course Grade Breakdown**

Mini-Exams: 50%

Group Presentations: 20%

Final Writing Assignment: 20%

Participation: 10%

Total: 100%

**Notes on grades:**

I am always happy to talk with students about grades in office hours (or by appointment). Please note that federal law ([FERPA](#)) prevents me from being able to distribute or discuss grades via email. If you ask me a question about your grades over email understand why I redirect you to attend my office hours.

Between this syllabus and Blackboard's Grade Center, you have access to all information needed to calculate your grade in the course, be it week 2 or week 10. Please do not ask me to do the math that determines what your individual overall grade is at any point in the quarter when I have provided you with all tools you need to do so independently.

**Late Work/Extensions:**

Your work is due at the beginning of class. Work that is turned in any other time is late. For up to one week after the assignment is due, you may turn in a late assignment; it will receive half of the credit you would have earned for the assignment (an 80% would be graded as a 40%, for

example). Assignments turned in one week after the due date (or later) will not be accepted and will receive a grade of 0.

The only exceptions to my late work policy are documented emergencies. However, if you need an extension please come talk to me at least 48 hours before the assignment is due. I am much kinder and more understanding if you let me know that you believe you require an extension *ahead of its due date*. I will require you to document your need for an extension and set a new due date.

### **Email Policy:**

I will respond to your email within 48 hours during the week. If you email me and two days (weekends *do not count*) pass with no reply, please email me again with a friendly reminder that you have yet to receive a reply to your message.

If your emails do not contain a salutation, clear message, and closing (with your full name), I will ignore them. Pro tips can be found [here](#).

### **Technology Clause:**

Servers crash. Printers malfunction. Passwords are forgotten or stolen. I will do my best to be understanding of any digital hiccups we may encounter together, but you also need to anticipate these problems and leave yourself a cushion of time in which you can formulate a plan B when assignments or emails are due.

### **Important Dates and Deadlines:**

Please bookmark and refer to [UO's Academic Calendar](#) to remain apprised of deadlines to drop, change grading options, etc.

### **Academic Honesty:**

All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. Please consult *Rules for Writers* for a definition of plagiarism and information on documentation, and refer to the Student Conduct Code on the Office of Student

Conduct and Community Standards

website: <http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode/tabid/69/Default.aspx>. In cases where academic dishonesty has been clearly established, the award of an F for the final course grade is the standard practice of the English department. Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources.

When in doubt, err on the side of over-citing.

#### Access for Students with Disabilities:

If you have a disability (physical or learning), which you think may affect your performance in this class, please see me during the first week of the term so we can make arrangements, if necessary, for your full access to all classroom activities.

### Class Calendar

I may change, add, or substitute assignments and readings. Please make note of announcements made in class and via email as it is your responsibility to remain aware of when and what assignments and readings are due.

DATE	READINGS DUE + SCREENINGS	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
<b>Week 1 - Mise-en-Scene/Staging</b>		
Tues. 1/7	Course introduction; group presentation sign-up; <a href="#">Mittell, "Why Television"</a>	
Thurs. 1/9	Mittell, "Staging" section (176-183); Klein, " <a href="#">The Hills, Jersey Shore, and the Aesthetics of Class</a> "	
<b>Week 2 - Cinematography/Camerawork</b>		

Tues. 1/14	Group presentation; <i>The Hills</i> ; Smith, <a href="#">"It's Just a Movie"</a>	
Thurs. 1/16	Mittell, "Camerawork" section (183-194); <i>Jersey Shore</i>	Exam 1
<b>Week 3 - Editing</b>		
Tues. 1/21	Group presentation; <i>Mad Men</i> (S05 finale)	Exam 1 questions due
Thurs. 1/23	Mittell, "Editing" section (195-202); Greif, <a href="#">"You'll Love the Way It Makes You Feel"</a> ; <i>Scandal</i> pilot	
<b>Week 4 - Sound</b>		
Tues. 1/28	Group presentation; <i>Paperman</i> ; Mittell, "Sound" section (205-212); <a href="#">Yale film resource on sound</a>	
Thurs. 1/30	<i>Scandal</i> S01E02; Nussbaum, <a href="#">"Primary Colors"</a>	Exam 2
<b>Week 5 - Narrative and Plot</b>		
Tues. 2/4	Group presentation; <i>The Bachelorette</i> ; Feuer, <a href="#">"Why I'm Embarrassed to be a Bachelor Fan"</a>	Exam 2 questions due
Thurs. 2/6	<i>Arrested Development</i> ; <i>Portlandia</i> (clips); Butler chapter 2 excerpt (pages 55-71); Mittell, <a href="#">"An Arresting Development"</a>	
<b>Week 6 - Cable and Distribution</b>		
Tues. 2/11	Group presentation; <i>The Wire</i> ; Nussbaum, <a href="#">"When TV Became Art"</a> ; Butler, "An Introduction to Television Structures and Systems: Ebb and Flow in the Postnetwork Era" (3-18)	
Thurs. 2/13	<i>Real Husbands of Hollywood</i> ; Lindsey, <a href="#">"Cable's Number One Sitcom?: Real Husbands of Hollywood"</a> ; Morley, "Broadcasting and the Construction of the National Family" (from <i>The Television Studies Reader</i> )	Exam 3
<b>Week 7 - Genre</b>		



Tues. 2/18	Group presentation; <i>Mythbusters</i> ; Staiger, " <a href="#">It's a Myth So Let's Blow It Up: The Pleasures of Mythbusters</a> "	Exam 3 questions due
Thurs. 2/20	<a href="#">Mittell on Television Genres</a> ; <i>The Price is Right</i> ; <i>Modern Family</i>	
<b>Week 8 - Star Texts (<a href="#">resource</a>)</b>		
Tues. 2/25	Group presentation; <i>The Cosby Show</i> ; Butler chapter 2 excerpt (pages 80-92)	
Thurs. 2/27	"The Cosby Show, audiences and the myth of the American dream" by Jhally & Lewis; <i>Real Housewives of Atlanta</i> clips	Exam 4
<b>Week 9 - Commercials and Advertising (<a href="#">resource</a>)</b>		
Tues. 3/4	Group presentation; <i>Top Chef</i> ; Jenkins, "Buying into American Idol: How We Are Being Sold on Reality TV"; Butler, excerpts from "The Television Commercial" (150-3, 204-5)	Exam 4 questions due
Thurs. 3/6	Bercovici, " <a href="#">Can Twitter Save TV? (And Can TV Save Twitter?)</a> "; Watercutter, " <a href="#">Twitter TV Ratings Are Here, But No One Knows What They Really Mean</a> "; Shah, " <a href="#">Nielsen's New Twitter Ratings Are a Scam</a> "; <i>Jimmy Kimmel Live</i>	
<b>Week 10 - Conclusions</b>		
Tues. 3/11	<i>Friday Night Lights</i> pilot, <a href="#">RIP, FNL by Subramanian</a>	
Thurs. 3/13	<i>Here Comes Honey Boo Boo</i>	Exam 5

Our scheduled final exam time (when your final written assignment must be submitted) is: Thursday, March 20 at 1:00PM