

**Instructor: Caroline Claiborn**

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Office: PLC #530; Phone: (541) 346-1314

Office Hours: T & Th 4-5:30pm, W 1-2pm

**Location: 214 McKenzie**

CRN: 26789

Class: T & Th 10-11:50am

## **The Daily Show** ENG/CINE 399, Winter 2016

**Course Description:** This class examines the recent development of cable news comedy programming as it relates to the history, industry, and criticism of television in the United States. Focusing on the cable program *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart, the course uses readings and screenings to address a range of topics, such as: television aesthetics and comedy, comedic writing and rhetoric, current events and cable news, the development of cable and new media programming, and more.

The English Department's assessment procedure for undergraduates is built around **six desired learning outcomes:**

1. Read literary and cultural texts with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of their conventions;
2. Draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate texts within their cultural, political, and historical contexts;
3. Perform critical, formal analyses of literary, cinematic, and other cultural texts;
4. Write focused, analytical essays in clear, grammatical prose;
5. Employ logic, creativity, and interpretive skills to produce original, persuasive arguments;
6. Employ primary and/or secondary sources, with proper acknowledgment and citation, as they contribute to a critical essay's thesis.

### **Required Materials:**

1. Access to Canvas, UO Email, Internet, and MS Word or Pages.
2. Note-taking materials and folder for class work.

**Attendance:** Attendance is REQUIRED. You may miss 2 classes without a grade penalty (I take attendance every class, but please keep track of your own absence record). A third absence will lower your final course grade by 1/3 of a letter grade (from a B+ to a B, for instance). If you miss a 4th class you automatically FAIL the course without notice. Frequent tardiness will also be counted as an absence. Please see me IN ADVANCE about any absences you expect to incur. You are responsible for what you miss from class due to absences.

### **Classroom Standards:**

•Our class will be a space of productive thought and inquiry. Please feel free to express any thoughts or comments about our subject matter in a respectful way. Listen to others when they are talking, do not engage in side conversations, and be courteous even when disagreements arise. *Those who choose not to discuss the films in a respectful way will be asked to leave the class, and possibly the course.*

•Active participation is required. To facilitate discussion, carefully read the assigned material before class and take notes while watching the films and television programs. Although you may use laptops to take notes, there should be no cell phones, no texting, no Internet use. It is vital that students respect the classroom and each other. *Consistently disrupting the class (falling asleep, talking while others are trying to talk, checking Facebook or e-mail during class, arriving late or leaving early, etc.) will result in an absence.* You may bring quiet and non-messy food and/or drinks to class so long as you take care of all trash and leave the classroom clean.

**Emails:** While I strive to maintain a relaxed attitude in class to help facilitate discussion, I request that your email correspondence with me maintain a *professional etiquette*. Please refrain from emailing with questions already explained in the syllabus or available on Canvas. Use proper spelling and punctuation, and include a greeting and salutation. *Emails that fail to do so will not receive a response.*

**Access for Students with Disabilities:** The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me in week one if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You may also wish to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or [uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu).

### **Grade Evaluation & Breakdown:**

#### Readings & Worksheets: 20% of Course Grade

Along with each assigned reading you will complete a corresponding “Reading Worksheet.” This worksheet will help you focus on the reading’s main ideas and relevance to our course topics. You should print out and complete all worksheets to turn in at class time on the day they are listed as due in the course schedule (below). Worksheets can be found on Canvas under “files.”

#### Clip Analysis Worksheets: 20% of Course Grade

You will be expected to view any clips listed in the “Course Schedule” below before class on the day they are scheduled. While the clips are not listed by name or URL in the “Course Schedule,” they are numbered so that you can find links to them on Canvas. For each clip of a television program that I assign you to view, you will complete a corresponding “Analysis Worksheet.” This worksheet will help you comprehend and describe the many layers of meaning embedded in television texts, as well as the context in which the clip was produced. You should print out and

complete all worksheets to turn in at class time on the day they are listed as due in the course schedule (below). Worksheets can be found on Canvas under “files.”

*Project: 50% of Course Grade*

Your primary assignment for this course is a long-term project that is broken down into several steps (listed below). For each of these steps, you will receive specific instructions as the term progresses. The completed project will be an essay linking the formal aspects of a clip from *The Daily Show* (which you will choose) to industrial, economic, and/or political factors that we will study in course readings, and that you will develop further with your own research.

- Step One: Select & Describe Clip (5%)
- Step Two: Research Plan (10%)
- Step Three: Annotated Bibliography (15%)
- Step Four: Final Essay (20%)

*Class Participation: 10% of Course Grade*

This course utilizes exercises like in-class discussions and group work to build comprehension and achieve course goals, your active participation in class is essential, to your own progress as well as to your fellow students. Active participation means that you come to class on time and prepared, with all assignments for the day completed (see course schedule). It also means that you are ready to discuss the material that is due, and genuinely engage in any class activities, like taking notes or participating in conversations about class material. Your participation grade will be determined by your scores on frequent, in-class work that I will collect.

**Grading Scale:**

A	94-100%	B-	80-83.99%	D+	67-69.99%
A-	90-93.99%	C+	77-79.99%	D	64-66.99%
B+	87-89.99%	C	74-76.99%	D-	60-63.99%
B	84-86.99%	C-	70-73.99%	F	0-59.99%

**Writing & Formatting:** This is an English Department course and as such your writing on all assignments will meet the highest standards. I will pay attention not only to your ideas but how those ideas are presented. This means that I will grade your written work on its content, organization, and presentation, as well as its use of grammar, punctuation and sentence structure. Please type all written work, using Times New Roman 12pt. font and 1” margins.

**Late Work & Extensions:** Except in the case of documented emergencies, late work will receive a 10% penalty for each day past due. However, if you need an extension please come talk to me at least 24 hours before the assignment is due. I will require you to document your need for an extension and set a new due date (usually via e-mail).

**WARNING:** This class will screen media that contains explicit depictions of sex, violence, adult themes, coarse language, and material that some might find offensive. If you think that this might be a problem for you, please come talk to me about whether we can find a solution, or if this is the best class for you.

**Academic Honesty:** All assignments must adhere to standards of academic honesty outlined in the Student Handbook. Do not turn in work prepared for other classes. Document all sources consulted in preparing your work, including movies, websites and other material obtained on the Internet. If in doubt, document. Plagiarism will result in failure for the course and additional sanctions determined by the director of Student Judicial Affairs. Please consult *The Little Seagull Handbook* 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://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode/tabid/69/Default.aspx> Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources.

**Registration:**

The only way to add this class is through DuckWeb. The last day to add this or any class is the Friday of week one.

**Incompletes:**

Approval for “incompletes” will be granted only in cases when some minor but essential aspect of the course cannot be completed by students in good academic standing due to unforeseen circumstances beyond their control.

## **Course Schedule**

**Week 1: TV’s Industrial Contexts for News & Comedy**

**Tuesday (1/5):**

**Agenda:** Introductions & Syllabus, Screen Introductory Clips

**Thursday (1/7)**

**Agenda:** Map out a History of *The Daily Show* in Context, Screen & Analyze Clip #1 as a class, & Introduce Project: Step One

**Due:** “The Success of *The Daily Show — Colbert Report*” (155-190) by Theodore Hamm & Worksheet, Clip #1 & Analysis Worksheet

**Week 2: TV’s Industrial Contexts for News & Comedy**

**Tuesday (1/12)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Readings and Clip #2.

**Due:** “Here Comes Television: Remaking American Life — 1948-1954,” (113-155) and “The Halcyon Years: Beyond Anyone’s Wildest Dream — 1955-1963” (156-204) by Gary Egerton & Worksheets, Clip #2 & Analysis Worksheet

### **Thursday (1/14)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Readings

**Due:** “Television and the Presidency: Eisenhower and Kennedy” (205-234) and “A Great Awakening: Prime Time for Network Television — 1964-1975” (237-284) by Gary Edgerton & Worksheets, Clip #3 & Analysis Worksheet

### **Week 3: TV’s Industrial Contexts for News & Comedy**

#### **Tuesday (1/19)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Readings & Clip #3

**Due:** “Jon Stewart, Brian Williams, And Ted Koppel’s Giant Head” (1-24) and “Representing Reality” (25-42) by Geoffrey Baym & Worksheets, Clip #3 & Analysis Worksheet

#### **Thursday (1/21)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Readings & Introduce Step Two: Research Plan Assignment.

**Due:** “Publicizing Politics” (43-60) and “The Slow Death of CBS News” (61-78) by Geoffrey Baym & Worksheet, **Project Step One: Select & Describe Clip**

### **Week 4: The Economics of Cable News, Late Night Comedy, and New Media**

#### **Tuesday (1/26)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Readings and Clip #4

**Due:** “*You Can’t Air That*” *Four Cases of Controversy and Censorship in American Television Programming*: Chapter on *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* by David Silverman, AND: “Tracing the ‘Fake’ Candidate in American Television Comedy” (64-84) by Osborne Thompson & Worksheets, Clip #4 & Analysis Worksheet

#### **Thursday (1/28)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Readings & Introduce Step Three: Annotated Bibliography.

**Due:** “The Sky’s The Limit: Satellites, Cable, and the Reinvention of Television — 1976-1991” (285-322) by Gary Edgerton & Worksheet, **Project Step Two: Research Plan**

### **Week 5: The Economics of Cable News, Late Night Comedy, and New Media**

#### **Tuesday (2/2)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Reading & Clip #5

**Due:** “The Business of America Is Show Business: U.S. TV in Global Context — 1992-Present” (349-389) by Gary Edgerton & Worksheet, Clip #5 & Analysis Worksheet

#### **Thursday (2/4)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Reading & Clip #6

**Due:** “*The Daily Show* and the Reinvention of Political Journalism” (101-122) by Geoffrey Baym & Worksheet, Clip #6 & Analysis Worksheet

## **Week 6: The Economics of Cable News, Late Night Comedy, and New Media**

### **Tuesday (2/9)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Reading & Clip #7

**Due:** “Networked News: Stewart, Colbert, and the New Public Sphere” by Geoffrey Baym & Worksheet, Clip #7 & Analysis Worksheet

### **Thursday (2/11)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Reading & Clip #8

**Due:** “Introduction” from *Television and New Media: Must-Click TV* by Jennifer Gillan & Worksheet, Clip #8 & Analysis Worksheet

## **Week 7: Politics and *The Daily Show***

### **Tuesday (2/16)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Reading & Introduce Step Four: Final Essay

**Due:** “Distinctions” (1-18) by Liesbet Van Zoonen from *Entertaining the Citizen* & Worksheet, **Project Step Three: Annotated Bibliography**

### **Thursday (2/18)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Readings & Clip #9

**Due:** “Politics as Soap Opera” (19-36), “Connections: A Fan Democracy” (53-68), and “Personalization: The Celebrity Politician” (69-86) by Lisbet Van Zoonen & Worksheets, Clip #9 & Analysis Worksheet

## **Week 8: Politics and *The Daily Show***

### **Tuesday (2/23)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Readings & Clip #10

**Due:** “Introduction: The Changing Face of Politics on Television” (3-14) and “Rethinking Civic Engagement in the Age of Popular Culture” (15-34) by Jeffrey Jones & Worksheets, Clip #10 & Analysis Worksheet

### **Thursday (2/25)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Reading & Clip #11

**Due:** “From Insiders to Outsiders: The Advent of New Political Television” (35-62) by Jeffrey Jones & Worksheet, Clip #11 & Analysis Worksheet

## **Week 9: Politics and *The Daily Show***

### **Tuesday (3/1)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Readings & Clip #12

**Due:** “The Comedian Talk Show Host as Political Commentator: Dennis Miller, Bill Maher, and Jon Stewart” (91-124) and “The Common Sense of Nonsense: Parody and Political Critique” (125-140) by Jeffrey Jones & Worksheets, Clip #12 & Analysis Worksheet

**Thursday (3/3)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Reading & Clip #13

**Due:** “The Competing Senses of Political Insiders and Outsiders” (141-160) by Jeffrey Jones & Worksheet, Clip #13 & Analysis Worksheet

**Week 10: Politics and *The Daily Show***

**Tuesday (3/8)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Readings & Clip #14

**Due:** “The State of Satire. Satire of the State” (3-36) by Gray, Jones & Thompson and “‘And Now The News?’ Mimesis and the Real in *The Daily Show*” (85-103) by Amber Day & Worksheets, Clip #14 & Analysis Worksheet

**Thursday (3/10)**

**Agenda:** Discuss Reading & Clip #15

**Due:** “John Stewart and *The Daily Show*: ‘I Thought You Were Going to Be Funny’” (104-123) by Morealle & Worksheet, Clip #15 & Analysis Worksheet

**Week 11:**

**Final Essay Due (TBA)**

Finals Week Office Hours M, T, W 10am-3pm