

BROOKLYN COLLEGE
 Department of Television and Radio
TELEVISION AND RADIO CRITICISM
 TVRA 4430W, TR2 (Course Code 18461)
 Fall 2018, Tues. & Thurs., 2:15 pm-3:30 pm
 Room 502, Whitehead Hall

Instructor

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 Office Hours: Wednesday, 11am - 1pm (in 1207 Ingersoll); Thursday, 3:45-4:45 pm (in 405 Whitehead); and, by appointment.

Course Description

Bulletin: Survey of television and radio criticism. Influence of the medium and of individual programs on American Society. Writing-intensive course. Prerequisites: Television and Radio 3824 (24.1) or 3951 (25.1) or 3861 (26.1), or 3871 (27.1) or permission of the chairperson; English 1012 (2).

Details: This course provides an in-depth look at the main critical and theoretical approaches to studying television in particular, and the mass media in general. Students will learn the key concepts of theoretical approaches such as semiotics, ideological analysis, narrative theory, audience studies, psychoanalysis, feminism, and cultural studies and will learn how to use these theories to understand and critically analyze media texts, industries, audiences, and institutions. This is a writing-intensive course, and we will pay considerable attention to the process of researching, writing, and editing critical essays.

Course Materials

This is a zero-cost open educational resource (OER) course. All readings for the course are available through the course website. (Note: We, as a class, might decide to change readings and topics.)

Departmental Learning Objectives

1. Students will be able to research, analyze, and write scholarly papers in the areas of electronic media and society in the United States and the world with the tools used in professional and academic media research.
2. Students will be able to learn and compare ideas from different approaches in the areas of history, law, research, and analysis related to media and society in the United States and the world.
3. Students will be able to understand the basic aesthetic and technical principles of electronic media productions, and their broader social implications.

Course Objectives

This course has the following four objectives:

1. Students will be able to use the concepts and vocabulary of key critical and theoretical approaches in media studies to express their own ideas (DLO 1).
2. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of the history of critical media studies by developing their own critical frameworks. (DLO 2 and 3).
3. Students will be able to compare and evaluate the strengths and limitations of different theoretical and methodological approaches to media criticism (DLO 2).
4. Students will be able to use these approaches to analyze media texts (DLO 1 and 3).

Anticipated Outcomes

Students will work on a number of research and writing assignments over the course of the semester. The final project will build students' ability to engage critically with media texts and with scholarly writing. The blog posts, group project, and class exercises will build students' research skills and ability to apply critical concepts.

Assignments and Grading

The first thing I want to say is: If you are having *any* problems with the course—with course materials, the format of the class, the amount of readings, other commitments—please do not simply vanish! Do come and talk with me and we will work out a way of making the course work for you. I also strongly urge you to draw on the resources of the Brooklyn College Learning Center as you write your papers. Their website is <http://lc.brooklyn.cuny.edu/> and you can reach them at 718-951-5821 or drop by 1300 Boylan Hall to make an appointment.

All assignments will receive a number grade (0-100). This number grade will be converted to your final letter grade for this course using the following scale:

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
97-100	93-96	90-92	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	0-59

You must complete all assignments in order to receive a passing grade. Any assignment handed in late will be marked down by one grade for each day it is late (e.g. from a B+ to a B). I will not accept any assignment handed in more than a week late. However, if you hand them in on time, you will have the opportunity to revise the media reviews, theory paper, and the proposal for the final paper. The revised grade will replace the original—so, hand your work in on time! (You will have one week for the revision.) I will not accept assignments by e-mail under any circumstances. You may request an extension, but only if the request is made at least 3 days before the due date—in other words, plan ahead! (This, of course, does not apply for unforeseen personal or family emergencies.) In-class exercises cannot be rescheduled so do not miss class on those days.

In addition to any further action at the College level, you will automatically receive a failing grade on any assignment that is even slightly plagiarized. Therefore, please read the section on Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct very carefully.

- 1. Reading Responses (20%)** You will be responsible for leading discussion on two readings over the course of the semester. This involves writing a response paper that you will read out in class as well as creating online annotations of the reading on the course website. You will sign up for readings on 8/30. (Course Objective 3).
- 2. Media Review (20%)** You will write two reviews of a media text of your choice (an episode of a television or radio program, film, social media account, video game etc.). These should be modeled after professional reviews and should demonstrate your understanding of key concepts in critical media studies. (Course Objective 1 and 4).
- 3. Discussion Prompts (10%)** This is essentially your class participation grade. You are expected to annotate the readings with your comments and questions on a weekly basis for at least 7 of the 14 weeks of this semester. This can include links to relevant news stories. We will use these discussion prompts to guide our class sessions. (Course Objective 3).
- 4. Theory Essay (10%)** You will write a brief (750 to 1000 words) essay explaining the meaning, intellectual history, and contemporary relevance of any one of the key theoretical approaches that we will discuss in class. (Course Objectives 2 and 3).
- 5. Final Project (40%)** This has two parts: A 7-9 page paper that presents original analysis of some aspect of media texts, industries, audiences, or social context; and a creative project (video, artwork, script, social media site etc.) that engages with, or responds to, the aspect of media that you have decided to study. You will work on this project in a series of smaller exercises. (Course Objectives 1-4).

You will receive detailed descriptions of all these assignments by the second week of class. The assessment rubric for attendance and class participation are included at the end of this syllabus.

Accessibility: It is important to me that this course is accessible to all. Please contact me privately to let me know right away if you need any alternative accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or evaluation procedures in order for you to be able to participate fully in the course, or if there are any accessibility concerns that may affect your work in this course. Brooklyn College is committed to ensuring that all students have the resources they need for successful learning. The Center for Student Disability Services can help you identify and obtain these resources once you have registered with them. Students who have a documented disability or medical condition, or suspect they may have a disability or medical condition, are invited to set up an appointment by calling 718-951-5538 or emailing at Testingcsds@brooklyn.cuny.edu. You can also simply visit the center at 138 Roosevelt Hall. Please do so as soon as possible to ensure that the accommodations you need are implemented in a timely manner. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services, please provide me with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with me. All discussion with the center are confidential.

Attendance and Participation: I will take attendance every day at the beginning of class and attendance is mandatory—you do not get points for attending class. However, there is a grade penalty for missing class: with the exception of medical and religious reasons, your final grade will be reduced by 1% for each class session you miss. Students who miss 9 or more class sessions will receive a failing grade in the course. Habitual lateness will also result in a lowered final grade. Being absent also means that you will miss classroom discussion of the course material. Therefore, if you do have to miss class due to exceptional circumstances, please arrange to get notes from a classmate and to meet me to go over the notes once you have had a chance to read them. Participation means much more than just showing up; it means doing the reading and, more importantly, actively engaging with the ideas and issues brought up in the reading and in lecture. Your comments, questions and opinions are essential ingredients for making this course a challenging and rewarding experience for your classmates as well as for yourself, and I expect you to come prepared to make this contribution. Please see the rubric at the end of the syllabus for more information on how I will assess your participation. In turn, I promise you that I will come fully prepared for each class, will return your assignments in a timely fashion, and will do my best to create an atmosphere of constructive dialogue in the classroom.

Cell phones etc.: Please set your cell phone or other communication device to silent during class. I will deduct points from your participation grade if your phone rings, or if I notice you using your cell phone or texting during class. If you are a habitual offender in this respect (i.e. it happens more than twice during the semester), I will ask you to leave the classroom. If you absolutely need to have your phone on during class—please talk to me at the beginning of the semester.

E-Mail: I will regularly use e-mail to send out announcements, changes in the syllabus, reminders about due dates, etc. It is your responsibility to check e-mail regularly to keep up-to-date with these announcements. I will not accept assignments via e-mail under any circumstances. I will use the e-mail address you have listed with the College. Therefore, please make sure that this is indeed the correct address.

Department e-Group: All undergraduate TVR Majors are asked to join the department listserv by sending a blank message to: bctvr-majors-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Departmental Advising

If you have questions about your plan of study, or would like to speak to a department adviser, please contact: Professor Brian Dunphy, 303 Whitehead Hall (email: bctvradvising@brooklyn.cuny.edu. Skype Name: Tvr.undergradchair). Professor Dunphy's office hours are by appointment only (there is a sign-up sheet on the door to 304 Whitehead Hall).

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

"Academic Dishonesty is prohibited in the City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion, as provided herein."

-- CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity. Adopted by the Board of Trustees 6/28/2004

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism

and for avoiding both. You can find the full text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and Brooklyn College's procedure for implementing that policy at: <http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies>. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member **MUST** report the violation.

We learn through conversation with others, whether they are people—classmates, teachers, friends—or texts—books, articles, essays, poems, films etc. Learning should not be a solitary process. However, the assignments that you hand in for this course should represent your own thinking and should be original work that you (alone) have done for this particular course. In my opinion, the best way to balance these two seemingly contradictory approaches (collaborative learning and original individually-produced work) without knowingly—or, even unwittingly—resorting to plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct is to learn and meticulously observe the rules for citing the work of others. This work could be the great point your roommate made that you used in your paper, it could be a well-turned phrase from an academic essay, or it could be anything in between. The bottom line is: *“Plagiarism is copying the words or the ideas of another person or institution without acknowledging that you got those words or ideas from that source.”* (<http://www.sparknotes.com/help/plagiarism.html>, taken from Emory University) Look at SparkNotes' definition of plagiarism, at Brooklyn College's definition of plagiarism and the College's stand on academic integrity and the penalties for academic dishonesty. Keep in mind that it is *your* responsibility to learn what constitutes plagiarism and the correct rules for citing sources. Any assignment that is partially or wholly plagiarized will automatically receive a failing grade without a chance for revision.

COURSE SCHEDULE

All readings listed for a particular day should be read *before* that day. All readings are available on the class website as .pdf files or as links to online articles or sites. In addition to the readings listed here, we will also read news articles each week. These will be posted to the course website two days before class. All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Assignments that are part of the final project (FP) are in italics. Finally, this syllabus is subject to revision and will, very likely, be changed to match the direction the course takes as the semester proceeds.

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Tu 8/28	Introduction	No readings	
Th 8/30	Theories of Representation	* Hall, “The work of representation” (read 1.1, 1.4 and 1.5: pp. 15-19 and pp. 24-28)	
Tu 9/4	Modes of Media Criticism: Reviews, Analysis, and Critique	* Butler, “Mad Men: Visual style” (read only p. 39) * Ono, “Mad Men's postracial figuration of a racial past” (read only the first 4 pages) * Stanley, “Smoking, drinking, cheating and selling” (online) * Perdomo, “A look to the past, an insight into the present: The use of gender in ‘Mad Men’” (online)	
Th 9/6	Scalar Workshop	Hashmi & McDonald, “Scalar 101” ** Meet in Library, R. 384 **	
Tu 9/11	No class		

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Th 9/13	Critical Media Analysis	* Smith, “‘It’s just a movie’: Why you should analyze film and television” * Kearney, “Introduction, or how to cook an artichoke”	Research Topic Ideas (FP)
Tu 9/18	No class		
Th 9/20	Library Research Skills	** Meet in Library, R. 384 **	
Tu 9/25	Realism, Representation, and Power	* Beltran, “Representation”	
Th 9/27	Narrative Analysis I	* Hashmi, “Narrative analysis notes”	One-Pager RQ (FP)
Tu 10/2	Narrative Analysis II	* Butler, “Narrative structure: Television stories”	
Th 10/4	Semiotic Analysis: Signs and Codes	* Streeter, “Semiotics and Advertising” (online tutorial) * Hashmi, “Semiotics and Structuralism”	
Tu 10/9	Semiotic Analysis: Codes and Culture	* Hall, “Work of representation” (read pp. 36-45) * Fiske, “Codes of television”	
Th 10/11	Ideological Analysis	* Hashmi, “Ideological analysis notes” * Hill Collins, “Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment”	
Tu 10/16	News, Framing, Ideology	* Phillips, “The oxygen of amplification, part 2--At a certain point you have to realize you are promoting them: The ambivalence of journalistic amplification”	Media Review #1
Th 10/18	Critical Race Studies	* Omi & Winant, “Racial formations”	
Tu 10/23	Feminist Media Studies	* Valdivia, “Latina media studies” * Beltran, “Mixed race in Latinowood: Latino stardom & ethnic ambiguity in the era of <i>Dark Angels</i> ”	
Th 10/25	Hegemony	* Williams, “Traditions, institutions, and formations” * McRae, “How the 'grassroots resistance' of white women shaped white supremacy” (online)	Proposal (FP)
Tu 10/30	Library Research	No readings	

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Th 11/1	Identification	* Smith, "How do we identify with characters?" * hooks, "The oppositional gaze"	
Tu 11/6	Global Media	* Kumar, "National/transnational/global"	
Th 11/8	Audience Analysis: Negotiation	* Becker & Weiner, "Making sense of a bromance: Talking with straight men about <i>I Love You, Man</i> "	
Tu 11/13	Political Economy	* Meehan, "Conceptualizing culture as commodity" * Burkart, "Political economy"	Theory Paper (FP)
Th 11/15	Participatory culture	* Kreisinger, "Queer video remix and LGBTQ online communities" (online) * McCracken, " <i>Glee</i> : Kurt and the casting couch" (online)	Media Review #2
Tu 11/20	Algorithmic Media	* Gillespie, "Algorithmically recognizable: Santorum's Google problem, and Google's Santorum problem" * Noble, "Searching for Black girls"	
Th 11/22	No class: Thanksgiving Recess		
Tu 11/27	Social Media	* Marwick, "Instafame: Luxury selfies in the attention economy"	
Th 11/29	Games as Media	* Payne and Huntemann, "Games and gaming" * Walker, "Watching us play: Postures and platforms of live streaming"	
Tu 12/4	Asian American Media Studies	* Lopez, "Asian American media studies"	Draft 1 (FP)
Th 12/6	Final Project Presentations	No readings	

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Tu 12/11	Final Project Presentations	No readings	Creative Project (FP)
Thursday, 12/20: Final Paper due in my office (405 Whitehead) between 1 pm and 3 pm			

IMPORTANT ADMINISTRATIVE DEADLINES

Sun., September 2	Last day to add a course. Last day for 75% tuition refund
Wed., September 5	Last day to file a Pass/Fail elective application online for Fall 2018
Sun., September 9	Last day for a 50% tuition refund
Tues., September 11	Last day to submit requests for change of, deletion of, or declaration of a major/minor/concentration to be effective for Fall 2018
Sat., September 15	Last day to file for Dec. 31, 2018 and Feb. 1, 2019 graduation
Sun., September 16	Last day to drop a course without a grade of "W" Last day for a 25% tuition refund
Mon., September 17	Course withdrawal period begins. A grade of "W" is assigned to students who officially withdraw from a course.
Tues., November 6	Last day to withdraw from a class with a grade of "W" Deadline for Undergraduate students to complete and submit any incomplete work to resolve Fall 2017 & Winter 2018 INC grades.
Thurs., December 13	Reading Day

Assessment Rubrics

I will use these rubrics to assess your work in this course and hope that you will use them to guide and assess your own work. Work that "exceeds expectations" can range from a B+ to an A+ and work that "meets expectations" will be in the C to B range. Work that "does not meet expectations" will be in the range of a C- or below. In addition to the overall expectations below, each assignment description will include an assessment rubric.

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Attendance	Is present for all class sessions Is there early and prepared to start at the beginning of class	Is present and punctual for all class sessions	Misses one or more class sessions Is more than 5 minutes late for more than two class sessions
Class Participation	Asks and answers questions that demonstrate deep engagement with the material Listens attentively to classmates and contributes to discussion in a way that builds on others' comments Regularly shares ideas, research updates, articles, news stories etc. on the course site; regularly engages with others' reading annotations	Is prepared to both ask and answer questions on the readings and topic for that day Contributes positively to class discussion Listens attentively to classmates Occasionally shares ideas, research updates, articles, news stories etc. on the course site; often engages with others' reading annotations	Is inadequately prepared to ask or answer questions Rarely contributes to class discussion Is actively distracted or does not listen attentively to classmates Rarely shares ideas, research updates, articles, news stories etc. on the course site; rarely engages with others' reading annotations