

ANALYZING TELEVISION

EM&C 3345 Section: 001

Instructor Information

Instructor: JIMMIE REEVES

Office M&C 516

Location:

Office 742-3385

Phone:

Office MW, 10:00-12:00 am.

Hours:

Course Information

Course ANALYZING TELEVISION

Title:

Location: MC 00053

Course EMC3345

Number:

Time/Days: T-TH 2:00-3:20 pm

Holy Day Observance

A student who is absent from class for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence with no penalty.

Officially Approved Trips

A student who is absent from class due to representing the university on an officially approved trip is responsible for material missed and shall be allowed to make up work with no penalty. The university official responsible for the trip should notify me in advance of the student's departure and return schedule.

Civility in the Classroom

Note: This is a cell-phone restricted building. Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class, unless otherwise approved by the instructor, students are prohibited from engaging in any form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result, minimally, in a request to leave the class. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not necessarily limited to: leaving cell phones and beepers on, eating and drinking in the classroom, excessive tardiness, leaving the lecture early, making offensive remarks, missing deadlines, prolonged chattering, reading newspapers during class, sleeping, talking out of turn, shuffling backpacks or notebooks, demanding special attention.

Disability Accommodation Information

Any student who, because of a disability, may require classroom accommodations in order to meet course requirements should contact me as soon as possible. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services. No requirement exists that accommodations be made prior to completion of this approved university procedure.

Academic Integrity.

It is the aim of the faculty of Texas Tech University to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of students to present as their own any work that they have not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense and renders the offenders liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension.

Course Description

Probing new ways of thinking about the meanings and pleasures of American commercial television, this course is designed to challenge students to become actively engaged in the critical enterprise.

Assigned Readings

Plan on reading every assignment. Reading assignments are listed on the class schedule. Since the readings will both inform and enhance material covered during class, I expect you to complete the reading assignments prior to the class meeting time. The following textbooks are required for this course:

1. Channels of Discourse, Reassembled: Television and Contemporary Criticism (COD), edited by Robert Allen.
2. This Thing of Ours: Investigating the Sopranos (TTOO), edited by David Lavery.

Attendance

I expect you to attend every class. Daily attendance will be taken. Ten points will be deducted from your attendance grade for each absence over two. Therefore, if you have two excused absences and three unexcused absences, thirty points will be deducted from your attendance grade.

Expected Learning Outcomes and Assessment Methods

I have revised this section to reflect the Department of EMC's mission statement: *To train storytellers proficient in convergent media forms who are able to create, analyze and compete in diverse U.S. and global media marketplaces.*

The main objective areas in EMC 3345 are Critical Thinking, Storytelling and Diversity. This course is designed to cultivate critical thinking skills by introducing you to key concepts in story analysis and narrative theory—with an emphasis on the depiction of race, class and gender. A fourth area, ethics, is an objective in all the courses in this university. Therefore, the learning goals and assessment methods are organized into these four areas.

Learning Goals	Assessment Methods
Area 1: Critical thinking. Students will cultivate critical thinking skills associated with textual analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students will identify and discuss the major critical tasks (description, interpretation, and evaluation) associated with the analysis television texts.• Students will identify and discuss the	Examinations; Class Discussion

<p>major areas of inquiry (the community of creators, textuality, intertextuality, and text reception) associated with contemporary television criticism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will demonstrate their mastery of the terms and concepts of semiotics in an interpretive analysis of a television text. 	
<p>Area 2: Storytelling. Students will develop a richer understanding of storytelling as a creative endeavor and a cultural form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will demonstrate their mastery of the terms and concepts of narrative theory in a descriptive analysis of television textuality. • Students will demonstrate their mastery of the terms and concepts of genre theory in a descriptive analysis of intertextuality. • Students will identify and discuss the major characteristics of postmodern style. 	Examination; Vlog.
<p>Area 3: Diversity: Students will identify and discuss major strategies for analyzing the textual and intertextual treatment of race, class, and gender on television</p>	Examination; Class Discussion.
<p>Area 4: Students will consider the ethical dimensions of television programming.</p>	Vlog.

Testing

Only one test will be administered during the course. The test is scheduled for the November 14.

Vlogs

Since late work will interfere with the critique system, strive to turn in all assignments on time: twenty points will be deducted from vlogs submitted from two to seven days late; thirty points will be from vlogs submitted from seven to fourteen days late; and vlogs submitted after fourteen days will not be accepted.

1. DESCRIPTIVE/INTERPRETIVE VLOG. In this two- to three-minute analysis, you will consider the meaning of your favorite television character. This involves both describing the character and interpreting what it says about race, class, and/or gender relations in contemporary American society.
2. EVALUATIVE VLOG. In a presentation that includes all of the analytical tasks addressed in class—description, interpretation, and evaluation—make critical sense of your favorite television show. This vlog should demonstrate your mastery of the

course material and showcase your insights into American culture. Ultimately, in three- to four-minutes, I want you delve into the meanings and pleasures of the selected series.

Final Grades.

The final grade will be calculated as follows:

Description	Percentage of Grade
Attendance	20
Descriptive vlog.	20
Evaluative vlog.	20
Examination	40
Total	100

Course Outline

Course Schedule

NOTE: Although I will make every effort to adhere to this schedule, I reserve the right to revise as necessary during the progress of the course. Such changes will be announced in class.

Date	Topic/Content	Readings
Week 1 (Aug. 16-30)	Syllabus Distributed and Discussed What is Criticism? Viewing: Pilot to <i>The Sopranos</i>	
Week 2 (Sep. 3-6)	Critical Tasks Areas of Critical Analysis	COD, Introduction, pp. 1-30.
Week 3 (Sep. 9-13)	Descriptive Methods: Semiotics and Structuralism	COD, Chapter 1 (Seiter), pp. 31-66.
Week 4 (Sep. 16-20)	Descriptive Methods: Narrative Theory	COD, Chapter 3 (Kozloff), pp. 67-100.
Week 5 (Sep. 23-27)	Discourse Analysis Viewing/Analysis: Lee's Jeans Commercial	
Week 6 (Sep. 30-Oct. 4)	Story Analysis Character Analysis	
Week 7 (Oct. 7-11)	Presentation on Vlog production Organize Critique Groups Vlog Preparation Day on October 12.	
Week 8 (Oct. 15-18)	Descriptive/Interpretive Vlog Due Oct. 16 Viewing: <i>The Sopranos</i> , "A Hit is a Hit."	
Week 9 (Oct. 21-25)	Intertextual Analysis: Genre, Gender, Race, and Class	COD, Chapter 7 (Kaplan), pp. 247-283 & Chapter 4 (Feuer), pp. 138-160.
Week 10 (Oct. 28- Nov. 1)	Intertextual Analysis: Postmodernism Viewing: <i>The Sopranos</i> , "College."	COD, Chapter 9 (Collins), pp. 327-353.
Week 11 (Nov. 4-8)	Historical Analysis: TV III and Branding	TTOO, Prologue (Lavery), pp. Xi-xviii; Chapters 1-6, pp 2-59.
Week 12	Review for Examination on Nov. 12.	

(Nov. 11-15)	Viewing: The final episode of <i>The Soprano</i> , “Made in America.” In-class Examination on Nov. 14.
Week 13 (Nov. 18-22)	Vlog Preparation Week.
Week 14 (Nov. 25-29)	Evaluative Vlog Due on Nov. 26.
Week 15 (Dec. 2-4)	Return and Discuss Examination View Selected Vlogs. Course Evaluation.

Texas Tech University

Statement of Ethical Principles

“DO THE RIGHT THING”

Texas Tech University is committed to the values of mutual respect; cooperation and communication; creativity and innovation; community service and leadership; pursuit of excellence; public accountability; and diversity.

— 2005 Texas Tech University Strategic Plan

Texas Tech University is committed to being an ethical institution. In recognition of the rights and inherent dignity of all members of the Texas Tech University community, the university is committed to supporting the following principles and to protecting those rights guaranteed by the Constitution, the laws of the United States and the State of Texas, and the policies adopted by the Board of Regents. As members of the Texas Tech community, faculty, students, staff, administration, and all stakeholders accept responsibility for abiding by and promoting the ethical principles of the university described below. Although legal behavior and ethical behavior overlap in many areas, they are quite distinct from each other. While we follow legal requirements, an ethical institution goes beyond them to achieve the following values.

Mutual Respect

Texas Tech University is committed to an open and diverse society. Each member of the Texas Tech community has the right to be treated with **respect** and dignity. This right imposes a duty not to infringe upon the rights or personal values of others. Professional relationships among all members of the Texas Tech community deserve attention so that they are not exploited for base motives or personal gain.

Cooperation and Communication

Texas Tech University is committed to the promotion of professional relationships and open channels of **communication** among all individuals. The university will publish and disseminate in a timely manner its values, policies, procedures, and regulations, as well as any other information that is necessary to protect and educate all members of our community. We encourage and provide opportunities for the free and open exchange of ideas both inside and outside the classroom. While the free expression of views in orderly

ways is encouraged, personal vilification of individuals has no place in the university environment.

Creativity and Innovation

Texas Tech University is committed to ethical institutional programs that meet the teaching, research, and service objectives of each discipline and department, to policies that are consistent with those objectives, and to a working and learning environment that encourages active participation. Such exemplary environments often challenge existing worldviews, requiring trust in the process of discovery and the acceptance of uncertainty and ambiguity within ethical parameters. The university supports all its members in life-long learning—a process that is both challenging and rewarding—and encourages **creative** and **innovative** means to achieve this goal through both opportunities and incentives.

Community Service and Leadership

Texas Tech University is committed to ethical **leadership** practices at all levels and to our tradition of **community service**, both within the university community and in our relationships with the greater community. We strive for exemplary professional and **community service** through research, creative works, and service programs that extend beyond the university environment. We strive to provide excellent service in a caring and friendly environment and encourage such involvement in the community by all faculty, students, staff, and administration.

Pursuit of Excellence

Texas Tech University is committed to achieving **excellence** in all aspects of its community. We expect this in the expertise and performance of our faculty, staff, and administration, as well as the continuing education of our students. A high standard of professionalism, including opportunities for professional contact and continuous growth, is expected of our faculty, students, staff, and administrators. The university is committed to academic integrity and to the effective and just implementation of a system designed to preserve and protect it. The university intends to be a model of **excellence**, following best practices in its professional work, displaying the highest standards in its scholarly work, and offering venues to showcase national and international examples of achievement.

Public Accountability

Texas Tech University is committed to transparency in governance, personal responsibility, and both individual and organizational integrity. Being responsible requires us to be thoughtful stewards of our resources—**accountable** and respectful to ourselves, to each other, and to the publics we serve. A sense of institutional and public responsibility requires careful reflection on one’s ethical obligations and the duty to respect commitments and expectations by acknowledging the context and considering the consequences, both intended and unintended, of any course of action. We promptly and openly identify and disclose conflicts of interest on the part of faculty, staff, students, administration, and the institution as a whole, and we take appropriate steps to either eliminate such conflicts or ensure that they do not compromise our procedures and values. When we make promises, we must keep those promises. We strive to do what is honest and ethical even if no one is watching us or compelling us to “do the right thing.”

Diversity

Texas Tech University is committed to the inherent dignity of all individuals and the celebration of **diversity**. We foster an environment of mutual respect, appreciation, and tolerance for differing values, beliefs, and backgrounds. We encourage the application of ethical practices and policies that ensure that all are welcome on the campus and are extended all of the privileges of academic life. We value its cultural and intellectual **diversity** because it enriches our lives and the community as a whole, promoting access, equity, and excellence.