TFM 430 – HISTORY OF PRIME-TIME TV
COURSE SYLLABUS/CALENDAR – SPRING 2016

Instructor: Stuart Voytilla
Classroom & Meetings: AL-201, 4:00-6:40 pm Tuesdays
Office/Hours: COM 109 Tues, Wed 2:00-3:00 pm and by appointment
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COURSE OBJECTIVE:
The course will function as a 14-week survey class designed to give students an historical perspective of television’s first 60 years of programming while providing an in-depth look behind the pixel curtain that is prime-time television today. The course chronicles the story of television from its 19th Century roots, through its invention, promotion and growth through the 20th Century… and now into the digital-driven 21st Century as well. From NBC’s first scheduled broadcast in 1941, through the next seven decades of boob tube mania in all its incantations, we’ll study the technological breakthroughs that fueled the medium and the visionaries who kept it afloat. Using visual excerpts from acclaimed TV episodes, we’ll move decade by decade through television history exploring 60 years of episodic dramas and situation comedies in an effort to come up with the best week of primetime programming ever!

HOW WE GET THERE:
1. Through lectures and Power Point visuals highlighting a historical treasure trove of TV moments taken from the Tube’s first half-century of life.
2. Through textual reading providing the fundamentals and key components to how TV works: Nielsen ratings. Advertising dollars. The ins and outs of series programming.
3. Through DVD and video screenings geared to support lectures.
4. Through Instructor-generated handouts.
5. Through completion of your own “FALL LINE-UP.”

CLASS REQUIREMENTS:
1. Active Participation –
   a. Attendance is advised. Failure to attend “Participation Day” will result in a 5% reduction in your grade.
   b. Willingness to exchange ideas during lectures and after video/DVD screenings.
   c. Ability to thrive in a team atmosphere.
2. Keeping Up with Reading Assignments.
3. Completion of Written and Oral Assignments. On time. No make-up assignments or tests unless agreed upon prior to approved absence.
4. **Completion of Semester Project.** You and your “network team” will create your very own FALL LINE-UP on your very own network.

5. **Participation Day.** WEEK 12 (4/19)… Mark it down. While attendance is advised week in and week out, it is required during this week for reasons you will come to appreciate and will help you earn a better grade in the course. Failure to attend class that week will result in a 5% drop in your grade.

**GRADING WEIGHTS:**

1. Midterm Exam #1 20%
2. Midterm Exam #2 20%
3. Participation Day 5%
4. Fall Line-Up Power Point Design 10%
5. Project Presentation Pitch 15%
6. Final Exam 30%

**CRITERIA FOR CREATIVE ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. Student/Teacher correspondence can be e-mailed. Use the email listed above and in BB, and be sure to write “TFM 430” in your email’s subject line.
2. Your Semester Project must be word-processed and proofed. No hand corrections. No white-out. Papers/PowerPoints will be graded for grammar as well as assignment execution.
3. Barring extreme hardship, late assignments or tests will be docked ONE half-letter grade PER DAY that they are late.

**READING MATERIALS:**

- **REQUIRED –**
  
  *The History of Prime Time Television*… George Lee Marshall –
  A chronicle of the history of American television depicting how commercial TV has both helped shape and been shaped by American culture.

- **SUPPLEMENTAL –**
  
  *Guide To TV*… TV Guide (CD) –
  An encyclopedia of 20th Century Television – Prime Time to Day Time.

**COURSE COMPLETION – WHAT WILL WE ACCOMPLISH?**

1) Examine 60 years of TV History and its impact on American culture.
2) Gather understanding about the Golden Age of Television.
3) Find out how Cable programming cut into Broadcast TV.
4) See how Reality Television changed the paradigm of TV watching.
5) Learn about Prime-Time Network/Cable programming strategies; about dollar dynamics; Nielsen Ratings; Commercial interruptions.
6) Create a ‘Fall Line-Up’ using any show or series in TV history to do it!

THE FALL LINE-UP PROJECT:
Imagine a perfect week of prime-time television—nights and weekends and your all-time favorite shows. The line-up of all line-ups. Cartoons and subversive silliness on sleepy Saturday mornings. Hip-hopping dance shows on idle weekend afternoons. Sunday news and variety shows. Then five nights of indelible dramas and gut-splitting comedies—Prime-Time at its very best. Each and every night a celebration of the creativity, history and future of Network TV. And you will make the call. Your SEMESTER PROJECT demands nothing less, as it invites you and your team to program a Television Network, plucking shows and series from TV history to fill your weekly slate.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

IMPROPER BEHAVIOR:
Cheating on exams, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are completely unacceptable. The first incident will cause the student to fail that assignment. A second incident will cause the student to receive a failing grade for the entire course. All cheating will be reported to the dean of student affairs. Violence or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. If you are removed from the classroom, the incident will be reported and I reserve the right to drop you from the course.

TECHNOLOGY IN CLASS:
Please set Cell Phones and Pagers to silent mode before each class. Do not text at any time during class, especially during screenings. You will be reminded about this before lecture or a screening, but if I then see you texting, etc. during class, you will be asked to leave class for the day. Using laptops during screenings is also unacceptable (unless you have a learning challenge that requires it). Whether it is a laptop or a cell phone, glowing screens all over the room are simply too distracting for your classmates who are trying to focus on the course material. Please, no talking during screenings.
TFM 430 – HISTORY OF PRIME-TIME TV
COURSE CALENDAR – SPRING 2016

USING THIS CALENDAR: All assignments are due by the date listed. For example, Week 4 (February 9) reading (“Marshall pp. 99-121”) is due before the Week 4 class session. Screening titles may change depending upon the needs of the class. Online/home screening may be added based on availability.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THE SCHEDULE: The California Faculty Association is in the midst of a difficult contract dispute with management. It is possible that the faculty union will call a strike or other work stoppage this term. I will inform the class as soon as possible of any disruption to our class meeting schedule.

Week 1: (1/26) Introduction of Class – Review Syllabus
Lecture: Genius, Deceit & the Birth of TV
Screening: Modern Marvels/Television -- Window to the World

Week 2: (2/2) Lecture: Invention Revisited: ‘50s TV/The Golden Age of Television
Screening: Your Show of Shows/Twilight Zone

ASSIGNMENT DUE:
Marshall – pp. 1-47

Week 3: (2/9) Lecture: ‘Lucy, You Got Some ‘Esplaining’ To Do’
Serious Programming Begins with Comedy
Screening: I Love Lucy/Honeymooners/Dragnet

ASSIGNMENT DUE:
Marshall – pp. 49-96

Week 4: (2/16) Lecture: Just Sit Right Down and I’ll Tell You a Tale
Escaping Black & White TV
Screening: Bonanza/Gilligan’s Island/Dick Van Dyke Show

ASSIGNMENT DUE:
Marshall– pp. 99-121
Review Midterm #1 Study Guide (BB)
Review Chronology – pp. 351-357 (Marshall)

Week 5: (2/23) MIDTERM EXAM #1 (BRING PARSORE AND #2 PENCIL)

Lecture: Best of Time/Worst of Time
The ‘60s – A Tale of Two Decades
Screening: Red Skelton/Andy Griffith Show/Laugh In/M*A*S*H*

ASSIGNMENT DUE:
Study for MIDTERM/Use Study Guides in BB
Review Chronology – pp. 351-357 (Marshall)
Week 6: (3/1) Lecture: New Global Audience/Telstar & The Socially Aware Sitcoms of The ‘70s
Screening: Writer Speaks: Norman Lear/All in the Family/Mary Tyler Moore
ASSIGNMENT DUE:
Marshall – pp. 123-169
Peruse Fall Line-Up Program Grids

Week 7: (3/8) Lecture: Those ‘70s Shows – Drama/MOWs… & Roots
Screening: ’1968’/Roots
ASSIGNMENT DUE:
Marshall – pp. 171-197

Week 8: (3/15) Lecture: Miracle @ Lake Placid
The ‘80s: TV’s 2nd Golden Age
Screening: Do You Believe In Miracles/Hill Street Blues
Network Teams Chosen
ASSIGNMENT DUE:
Marshall – pp. 199-216
TV Guide – Begin Episodic Review of Fall Line-Ups (preparation for group projects)
Review Chronology – pp. 357-362 (Marshall)

Week 9: (3/22) Draw for Prime-Time Grid
MIDTERM EXAM #2 (BRING PARSCORE AND #2 PENCIL)
Lecture: Like Sands Through an Hour Glass – The Dayparts of Television Programming
Screening: Best of Carson/SNL
ASSIGNMENT DUE:
Study for MIDTERM
Review Chronology – pp. 357-362 (Marshall)

3/28-4/1 SPRING BREAK

Week 10: (4/5) Submit: Original Program Grid
Lecture: Deregulation/Cable Upstarts & Conspicuous Consumption
Screening: Miami Vice/Cosby/Cheers
ASSIGNMENT DUE:
** Copy Original Program Grid for Chosen Year
TV Guide – Continue Episodic Review
Marshall – pp. 219-248
Begin New Fall Line-up
Week 11: (4/12)  Lecture: The Fourth Network/Fox  
**Screening:** Married with Children/X-Files  

**ASSIGNMENT DUE:**  
Marshall – pp. 251-285  
Work on New Fall Line-up  

Week 12: (4/19)  **PARTICIPATION DAY!**  
Submit New Fall Line Up Grid  
Lecture: Television from the ‘90s into the 2000s – Freedom of Choice  
**Screening:** Seinfeld/C.S.I.  

**ASSIGNMENT DUE:**  
Marshall – pp. 291-346  
Continue Preparing Fall Line-Up & Pitch  

Week 13: (4/26)  Submit: Team Pitch Presentations  

**ASSIGNMENT DUE:**  
Presenting Teams turn in their Final Grids (hard copy and electronic)  
Assignment: Polish Pitch Presentation  

Week 14: (5/3)  Submit: Team Pitch Presentations  

**ASSIGNMENT DUE:**  
Presenting Teams turn in their Final Grids (hard copy and electronic)  
Study for Final  

**FINAL EXAM:** (Bring PARSCORE and #2 Pencil)  

**Tuesday, May 10th 4-6 pm**  
Study for Final  