First Year Seminar:

Your Entertainment Media Future: Where We Are and Where We’re Going

University of Iowa: School of Journalism and Mass Communication JMC:1000:0001 (1 semester hour)

Fall 2017 Syllabus

4:00P - 4:50P T W332 AJB

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Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday: 1-1:45; 3:15-4
Or by appointment.

COURSE OVERVIEW

What is a TV program? It used to be easy to define—a program that you watched on a television set, likely a series that had a half-hour or hour-long episode each week. With plenty of commercials Now, it’s trickier to decide what is TV and what isn’t, because the program could be much shorter or longer. It might originate from a web streaming site. Maybe you watch it on your smartphone.

As technology offers challenges and opportunities throughout popular culture, it has transformed pretty much every form of entertainment media. We now consume through new devices, new screens, which offer a whole different experience than the one your parents had with watching movies or TV, listening to music or even reading books.
Change is the only constant in media technology. And that change is accelerating, not only more radically but more rapidly. New media have always challenged old media, since well before the Internet. And old media have two choices: Adapt or die.

So where is it all leading? Who will determine the future of entertainment media? You will. Because the consumer is the one who decides which companies thrive and which ones fail, which innovations change everything and which barely register. You are in the driver’s seat. Are you taking us somewhere so wonderful that we can barely imagine it? Or are you driving us off a cliff?

What do you want? This course will help you find out, as it looks back at the entertainment media of the recent past and dares to predict what’s around the bend in the near future.

I used textbooks the first time I taught a FYS, but technology has been moving so fast that such books are now obsolete before they are even published. Some of what we will read over the course of this semester has yet to be written; some of what we will discuss has yet to happen. We will treat the syllabus calendar below as, at best, a preview of coming attractions, rather than a rigid plan, chiseled in stone. We will feel free to deviate as developments occur.

We will have regular reading and writing assignments, but those will be made as we go along rather than listed in advance on the syllabus. You can anticipate a series of short responses (500 words or less) and a longer final paper (1250-1500 words).

There will be no lectures or power points, and there will be lots of discussion.

And, just maybe, this course can entice some of you into becoming journalism majors, where the various forms of media that you consume are what we study, analyze and illuminate. Journalism degrees are held in high value throughout the communications professions, not just by news organizations, but for careers in public relations, marketing, social media, event planning and many others.

STUDENT COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- To participate in a discussion-oriented seminar that anticipates the experience the student might be more likely to have in upper class and graduate courses.
- To understand that how we consume has a profound influence over what we consume. And that the choices we make will determine the future of entertainment media and consumption
- To explore the changes of technology and demographic consumption (i.e. how different generations consume) that have shaken and revolutionized the entertainment industry.
- To see if any of the old rules of entertainment media apply within this brave new world.
- To learn the standards and expectations of written work at the university level.
- To have some fun.

**GRADING**

Students will be graded on attendance, class participation and written work, with the final grade to be determined as follows:

- Class attendance and participation: 60%
- Short written responses: 30%
- Final paper: 10%

Because we only meet once a week, attendance is **MANDATORY**. In case of crisis or calamity, please be sure to notify me well before class (or as soon as possible).

**If you attend every class session and turn every assignment in on time, the lowest grade you will receive in this course is a B.**

Full attention is common courtesy. Class time and class equipment should be devoted to class activity (not surfing the Net, unless assigned research requires it, or checking your email). Cell phones should be off and away. If you can’t be here, are going to be late or need to leave early, let me know in advance.

**The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences:**

**Policies and Procedures**

**Teaching Policies & Resources — Syllabus Insert**

**Administrative Home**

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall, or see the CLAS Academic Policies Handbook at [https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook](https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook).

**Electronic Communication**

University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences ([Operations Manual, III.15.2, k.11](#)).

**Accommodations for Disabilities**

The University of Iowa is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (which includes but is not limited to mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical...
or health-related conditions). A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet with the course instructor privately in the instructor's office to make particular arrangements. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between the student, instructor, and SDS. See https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/ for information.

**Nondiscrimination in the Classroom**
The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, racial, religious or other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University’s Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, diversity@uiowa.edu, or visit diversity.uiowa.edu.

**Academic Honesty**
All CLAS students or students taking classes offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College’s **Code of Academic Honesty**: "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the IOWA Challenge. I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

**CLAS Final Examination Policies**
The final examination schedule for each class is announced by the Registrar generally by the fifth week of classes. Final exams are offered only during the official final examination period. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. All students should plan on being at the UI through the final examination period. Once the Registrar has announced the date, time, and location of each final exam, the complete schedule will be published on the Registrar's web site and will be shared with instructors and students. It is the student's responsibility to know the date, time, and place of a final exam.

**Making a Suggestion or a Complaint**
Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit with the instructor (and the course supervisor), and then with the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

**Understanding Sexual Harassment**
Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

**Reacting Safely to Severe Weather**
In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Department of Public Safety website.
COURSE CALENDAR

Week one (8/22)
Introduction and syllabus.

Week two (8/29)
What is streaming? How did it come to replace buying and owing?

Week three (9/5)
TV or not TV? Cutting the cord.

Week four (9/12)
From the golden era of movie palaces to watching flicks on your phone

Week five (9/19)
The competition between movies and TV—is the line blurring between the two?

Week six (9/26)
New attempts to get people off their couches and into theaters. 3D, Imax, food and drink.

Week seven (10/3)
Videogames as competition for more traditional media. Often using the same technology and screens. Will movies and TV soon be as interactive as videogames? What about virtual reality headsets?

Week eight (10/10)
Popular music and the crumbling of an industry. Where the crisis in downloading started, how that evolved into streaming and why music was the first to feel the challenge of digital technology.

Week nine (10/17)
What needs to happen for Spotify and Apple to rescue the music industry. Where we stand now.

Week ten (10/24)
Where does radio fit in all this? Is Pandora radio?

Week eleven (10/31)
The publishing industry. When is a book not a book. What do we lose when community bookstores disappear and Amazon rules the world.

Week twelve (11/7)
How books continue to evolve—books with soundtracks and videos.

Week thirteen (11/14)
The war of the worlds: Amazon, Apple and Google compete for domination. How they are different, and where they are similar.
Week fourteen (11/21)
No class. Thanksgiving break.

Week fifteen (11/28)
Connecting all the dots and seeing where the path might lead.

Week sixteen (12/5)
Wrapping up. Final papers due.