

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Colorado State University, Academic Partner

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| Voyage: | Fall 2019 |
| Discipline: | Communication Studies |
| Course Number and Title: | SPCM 100 Communication and Popular Culture |
| Division: | Lower |
| Faculty Name: | Dr. Josh Misner |
| Semester Credit Hours: | 3 |

Prerequisites: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A key feature of modern life is the pervasiveness of media and the relationship it has with popular culture. From binge-watch sessions to iconic vines and from viral memes to guerilla advertising, the marriage of pop culture and communication is inseparable, while the impact this union has on society is inescapable. To gain a critical understanding of the construction of meaning with respect to pop culture, this course looks at pop culture from four angles: media artifacts (films, ads, individual scenes), industry (media production), historical context (influence of views on race/ethnicity, gender, class, and sexuality), and audience (consumers of media and how they are influenced). By considering how pop culture both shapes and reflects the broader social power relationships in the United States, students will walk away from the course with new insight into modern life and the tools needed to navigate its ever-increasing complexity. Because this is an All-University Core Curriculum course, we have specific objectives: to place the history of popular culture within a broader context of U.S. history; to analyze a variety of texts that loosely fall into the category “arts and humanities,” and to suggest particular methods of critical thinking.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Describe popular culture texts from a Communication Studies perspective and define and utilize key media analysis terms.
- Explain the relationship between popular culture texts and their socio-historical contexts.
- Analyze the industries that produce popular culture texts.
- Analyze popular culture texts’ power to represent and shape social power and cultural identities.
- Critique and construct arguments about popular culture and/as communication through research, writing, and civic or cultural engagement.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

AUTHOR: Colorado State University Communication Department
 TITLE: Communication & Popular Culture Coursebook
 PUBLISHER: Kendall Hunt
 ISBN #: 978-1-5249-55120
 DATE/EDITION: 2018

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

| Class | Topic | Readings/Assignments (complete readings prior to class) |
|--|--|--|
| Depart Amsterdam, The Netherlands – September 9 | | |
| A1–September 11 | Introduction to course objectives. Why study pop culture? | |
| A2–September 13 | Defining & studying pop culture | Delaney, “Pop Culture: An Overview,” Kellner, “Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism, and Media Culture,” Hsu, “Stuart Hall and the Rise of Cultural Studies” |
| Gdansk, Poland – September 15-20 | | |
| A3–September 21: | What is a text? | Gray: “Text” |
| A4–September 23: | Analyzing texts: The shot | Bordwell & Thompson, “The Shot: Mise-en-Scene” pp. 112-133 and “The Shot: Cinematography” pp. 182-184, 190-194 |
| A5–September 25: | Assign groups & Illustrated Glossary; Describing Texts: Form | Bordwell & Thompson, “The Significance of Film Form” pp. 54-65 |
| Lisbon, Portugal – September 26-28 | | |
| Cadiz, Spain – September 29 – October 1 | | |
| A6–October 3: | Describing texts: Genre | View: excerpt from Looking at Movies ^[1] _[SEP] Read: Bordwell & Thompson, “Film Genres” pp. 318-335 |
| A7–October 5: | Assign Narrative Group Method Lab | Due: Illustrated glossary |
| Dubrovnik, Croatia – October 6-10 | | |
| A8–October 12: | Popular Culture, Ideology, & Hegemony | Read: Littler, “Ideology,” Lewis, “Hegemony”, and Couldry, “Power” Due: Narrative Group Method Lab |
| A9–October 14: | Ideology in Media Industries | Read: Horkheimer & Adorno, “Dialectic as Enlightenment” (pp. 1-6) |

| Casablanca, Morocco – October 15-20 | | |
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| A10–October 22: | Media Industry Structure & Trade Press Assign pitch project | Read: Hilmes, “Media Ownership Debates,” “Analyzing Trade Magazine/Journal Articles” |
| A11–October 25: | Industry Metrics for Success, Pitch Prep, & Researching Film Industries | Read: Wardlow, “Guardians of the Galaxy 2’ and the Shift That’s Redefining Marvel,” and Doherty, “James Gunn, Old Tweets and the Return of the Hollywood Blacklist” |
| A12–October 27: | Researching Media Industries: Television | Read: Marx, “Expanding the Brand: The Post-politics of Representation on Comedy Central” |
| Tema, Ghana – October 28-30 | | |
| Takoradi, Ghana – October 31 – November 1 | | |
| A13–November 3: | Reading/Writing Cultural History & Assign Annotated Bibliography & Final Essay | Hilmes, Only Connect intro |
| A14–November 6: | Race Begin viewing 13th | Read: Bogle, “Black Beginnings: from Uncle Tom’s Cabin to The Birth of a Nation” Gates, “Bringing the Black: Eddie Murphy and African American Humor on Saturday Night Live,” Harbin, “Cultural advisers help Hollywood rework Muslim stereotypes” ^[1] _{SEP} |
| A15–November 8: | Finish viewing 13th; group discussion | |
| Salvador, Brazil – November 10-15 | | |
| A16–November 16: | Gender Begin viewing Miss Representation | Read: D’Acci, Defining Women, pp 63-73 Petersen, “In Trainwreck, Amy Schumer calls Bullsh*t on Postfeminism” |
| A17–November 18: | Finish/discuss: Miss Representation | |
| A18–November 20: | Sexuality | Read: Croteau, Hoynes, & Milan, “Sexual Orientation: Out of the Closet and Into the Media” |
| A19–November 23: | View/discuss: Queer Eye | |
| Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago – November 24 | | |
| A20–November 26: | | |
| A21–November 28: | Advertising | Read: Jhally, “Image-Based Culture: Advertising and Popular Culture,” Young and Young, “Advertising” |

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| A22–December 1: | Product Placement & Integrated Advertising, Single Sponsorship | Read: Williams, “The Technology and the Society,” Carr, “Is Google Making Us Stupid?” |
| Guayaquil, Ecuador – December 2-7 | | |
| A23–December 9: | Horizons of Popular Culture: (Re)Making Culture | Read: Taddeo, “The Ke\$ha-Loving, Command-Defying Army Auteur” |
| Puntarenas, Costa Rica – December 11-15 | | |
| A24–December 16 | Horizons of Popular Culture: Fame & Celebrity Culture; Evaluations & Final Essay Post-Script | Read: Keats, “Open-Source Celebrity: The Wisdom of the Audience” & Chaudhry, “Mirror, Mirror on the Web” |
| A25–December 19: Final Exam | | |
| Arrive San Diego, California – December 23 | | |

FIELD WORK

Semester at Sea field experiences allow for an unparalleled opportunity to compare, contrast, and synthesize the different cultures and countries encountered over the course of the voyage. In addition to the one field class, students will complete independent field assignments that span multiple countries.

Field Class & Assignment: The field class for this course is on Thursday, September 26 in Lisbon, Portugal.

Field Class attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of your field class. Field Classes constitute at least 20% of the contact hours for each course, and are developed and led by the instructor.

Ethnomusicology Tour of Mouraria, the birthplace of Fado

Description: Fado, an ethnomusical style, has roots back to the early 19th century and is characterized by mournful, sorrowful tones and lyrics about life on the sea. This musical genre was born in Portugal and comprises a major element of its unique seafaring culture. With the arrival of Portuguese Christian control in Lisbon in the XII century, the Moorish community were confined to a neighborhood just outside the city walls, thus creating Mouraria. A historically religious minority community, Mouraria continues to thrive today as a multi-ethnic community full of rich history and cultures. As we walk the narrow streets, our expert guide will uncover the history of this neighborhood and its people. Only in Mouraria will you understand the roots of Fado music and its impact on Portuguese culture. Detached from the hustle and bustle of Lisbon’s centre, Mouraria is a small village, and this neighborhood is also home one of Lisbon’s many viewpoints, offering incredible panoramic views of this beautiful city and the all-important photo opportunity. This walking tour of the

birthplace of Fado examines its origins and how life on the edge of the sea impacted the shared sense of popular culture of its people and continues to do so today.

Objectives:

- Explore Fado music as a popular culture artifact through a historical lens
- Analyze the relationship between environment, social context, and pop culture
- Experience Fado through visual observation, listening to music, and tasting the cuisine of the culture responsible for its creation
- Discuss how diverse elements such as environment, historical context, immigration, and acculturation can produce and enrich popular culture

You will be evaluated in this Field Class by:

- Your active participation in the day's activities;
- A 3- to 5-page reflection on experiences during the Field Class that clearly connects your experience of this tour with subsequent exploration of popular culture evident in other ports.

Field Class Paper Due: A24, December 16

Independent Field Assignments

Each port visit will serve as an opportunity to collect elements of popular culture unique to that port, as well as familiar cultural icons imported from America. Prior to each port visit, students will be assigned categories of popular culture to examine during their travels, with recaps and discussions taking place once back on the ship.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

Course Assessments:

- Pop Culture Collection/Independent field assignments (10%)
- Narrative Group Method Lab (10%)
- Pop Culture Pitch (10%)
- Race/Gender/Sexuality Individual Method Lab (10%)
- Annotated Bibliography (10%)
- Field Course Reflection (20%)
- Final (20%)
- Participation (10%)

GRADING SCALE

The following Grading Scale is utilized for student evaluation. Pass/Fail is not an option for Semester at Sea coursework. Note that C-, D+ and D- grades are also not assigned on Semester at Sea in accordance with the grading system at Colorado State University (the SAS partner institution).

Pluses and minuses are awarded as follows on a 100% scale:

| <u>Excellent</u> | <u>Good</u> | <u>Satisfactory/Poor</u> | <u>Failing</u> |
|------------------|-------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| 97-100%: A+ | 87-89%: B+ | 77-79%: C+ | Less than 60%: F |
| 93-96%: A | 83-86%: B | 70-76%: C | |
| 90-92%: A- | 80-82%: B- | 60-69%: D | |

ATTENDANCE/ENGAGEMENT IN THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Attendance in all Semester at Sea classes, including the Field Class, is mandatory. Students must inform their instructors prior to any unanticipated absence and take the initiative to make up missed work in a timely fashion. Instructors must make reasonable efforts to enable students to make up work which must be accomplished under the instructor's supervision (e.g., examinations, laboratories). In the event of a conflict in regard to this policy, individuals may appeal using established CSU procedures.

LEARNING ACCOMMODATIONS

Semester at Sea® provides academic accommodations for students with diagnosed learning disabilities, in accordance with ADA guidelines. Students who will need accommodations in a class, should contact ISE to discuss their individual needs. Any accommodation must be discussed in a timely manner prior to implementation.

A letter from students' home institutions verifying the accommodations received on their home campuses (dated within the last three years) is required before any accommodation is provided on the ship. Students must submit verification of accommodations to academic@isevoyages.org as soon as possible, but no later than two months prior to the voyage. More details can be found within the Course Registration Packet, as posted to the [Courses and Field Classes page](#) no later than one month prior to registration.

STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

The foundation of a university is truth and knowledge, each of which relies in a fundamental manner upon academic integrity and is diminished significantly by academic misconduct. Academic integrity is conceptualized as doing and taking credit for one's own work. A pervasive attitude promoting academic integrity enhances the sense of community and adds value to the educational process. All within the University are affected by the cooperative commitment to academic integrity. All Semester at Sea courses adhere to this Academic Integrity Policy and Student Conduct Code.

Depending on the nature of the assignment or exam, the faculty member may require a written declaration of the following honor pledge: "I have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance on this exam/assignment."

FILM REQUEST

Title of Film: 13th
Distributor: Netflix

Title of Film: Miss Representation
Distributor: Netflix

Title of Film: Queer Eye (season 2)
Distributor: Netflix

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

Course text

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

None