

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School/Department:	Communications, Arts and Social Sciences
Programme:	BA in American Studies with Combined Studies
FHEQ Level:	5
Course Title:	American Television Drama
Course Code:	AMS 5400
Course Leader:	Sara Chetin
Student Engagement Hours:	120
Lectures:	22.5
Seminar / Tutorials:	22.5
Independent / Guided Learning:	75
Semester:	Fall/Spring/Summer
Credits:	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

Course Description:

The new 'golden age' of television, which has emerged since the beginning of the 21st Century, has become a significant and influential part of contemporary American culture. The course explores a number of cultural and technological shifts that have shaped the medium, and considers the ways in which writers are engaging with contemporary social and political realities and examining the values and myths of a society 'conversing with itself.' The course studies the reinvention of a variety of different genres, from crime fiction to science fiction, and students will have the opportunity to analyse some ground breaking series that offer portraits of a society undergoing crisis and change.

Prerequisites: ARW 4195 or GEP 4180

Aims and Objectives:

- To engage critically with key concepts and cultural theories related to television drama
- To develop an historical understanding of the development of American television drama from its first 'golden age' to today
- To examine the shifts in storytelling architecture and the literary influences on writing

- To recognize how the shifts in television networks and technology have changed audience reception and participation
- To assess a variety of political, social and gendered themes and how they both shape and are shaped by contemporary American television drama
- To examine how the contemporary television industry functions in terms of its writers, producers and actors
- To encourage a critical approach to contemporary American television drama.

Programme Outcomes:

5A(i, iv); 5B (i,v); 5C (i, iii); 5D (ii)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes is found in the Programme Specification. This is maintained by Registry and located at

<http://myrichmond.richmond.ac.uk/departments/artsandsciences>

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical engagement with key theories/writers/debates in a cultural/political contextual framework. (Theoretical knowledge Base)
- Demonstrate a detailed understanding of the ways in which the contemporary American television drama has evolved and been shaped by a range of political, cultural and technological developments in American society (Practical knowledge Base)
- Exercise a degree of informed critical judgement, develop thoughtful arguments and pursue independent research using theories/texts from class and own reading. (Cognitive Skills)
- Engage with a wide variety of perspectives on television production and reception and deliver work with limited supervision, reflecting good critical thinking and time management skills. (Personal Development)

Indicative Content:

- Key terms, debates and theorists of television drama
- Historical contexts of television drama
- Emergent political and social themes post 9/11
- Masculinity and its discontents; new roles/rules for women
- The new structure of the television industry and the changes in storytelling architecture
- Literary and philosophical influences on writers
- Shifting technologies, audience viewing and reception

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board.

Teaching Methodology:

The course will be taught through a combination of lectures and seminar classes. Lectures are primarily designed to give an overview of the issues and problems on a particular topic,

