

Narrating Normativity in American Popular Culture

English 258, Fall 2011, American Popular Culture

CRN 82770, Section 002

MWF 2:30pm- 3:20pm

[317 Clarke Hall](#)

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COURSE INFORMATION:

CHANGE NOTICE: This syllabus is an outlined plan of the course and I reserve the right to make any changes.

DESCRIPTION: English 258 fulfills the GEC requirements for Objective 7, American Culture: Students are expected to develop knowledge critical to the understanding of the issues that shape the culture of the United States.

We encounter American popular culture throughout our daily lives: in the advertisements we view/hear, the songs we listen to, the movies and television shows we view, and the books we read. This course explores how American popular culture attempts to define what it means to be “American” by validating and normalizing particular identities, ideologies, behaviors, and/or abilities and seeks to problematize those representations. Throughout the semester, the texts and our discussions will probe the relationship between “normativity” and popular culture. Students will 1) study what is meant by the phrase “pop(ular) culture”; 2) be introduced to a series of critical methodologies to guide them through cultural texts; 3) examine how identities and/or histories impact, appear in, and are erased by popular culture; 4) practice critical thinking and writing about culture; 5) begin to understand popular culture as forming a narrative about the nation and/or the self; and 6) enhance their understanding of American popular culture and the way that it shapes our perceptions and definitions of “American.” Students will learn to 1) read the texts of popular culture as forming a narrative about American identity; 2) develop a research question and thesis about a cultural text, and support that thesis with evidence; and 3) recognize and develop multiple analyses for a single text. Throughout the semester we will explore how popular culture reflects and challenges the ways that we imagine American identities and cultures.

REQUIRED TEXTS: Please note that you do not have to purchase *all* of the movies and television episodes. Most (if not all) of the films and television series are available on reserve at the library. You might consider a [Netflix](#) membership (instant streaming in particular) or purchasing used copies via the internet. Blockbuster, iTunes and Amazon also offer streaming services.

You must have the required materials on the day they are due. You will have assigned viewings/readings for almost every class period. Please *bring a hard copy of the reading and/or your viewing notes to class every day*. I strongly suggest having a folder and notebook that you bring to class daily. Keep all materials for this course (quizzes, viewing notes, exams, etc.) until the course is over. I also suggest regular use of the Oxford English Dictionary (available through the library database system); you are expected to look up and understand vocabulary that you are unfamiliar with.

Required Primary Texts Available at the WVU Bookstore:

- Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2008. Print. ISBN-10: 0439023483

- Spiegelman, Art. *In the Shadow of No Towers*. New York: Pantheon Press, 2004. Print. ISBN-10: 0375423079

Required Primary Texts NOT Available at WVU Bookstore:

You can acquire these materials in the following ways: purchase at Amazon (used or new or using the Amazon Instant Video service), rent from Red Box, Netflix, etc., or view at WVU library via Course Reserve. Many of the television episodes are also available free via the internet (hulu.com or fancast.com, for example). If you choose to use Course Reserve, please note that the material must be used in the library and another member of the class could be using the materials.

- *American Beauty*. Dir. Sam Mendes. Perf. Kevin Spacey, Annette Bening, Thora Birch. Dreamworks, 1999. DVD. (ASIN: B00003CWL6)
- *Avatar*. Dir. James Cameron. Perf. Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana, Sigourney Weaver. 20th Century Fox, 2009. DVD. (ASIN: B002VPE1AW)
- *The Big Bang Theory: The Complete First Season*. Perf. Johnny Galecki, Jim Parsons and Kaley Cuoco. Warner Home Video, 2008. DVD. (ASIN: B000W91RUG)
- *Bones: The Complete First Season*. Perf. Emily Deschanel and David Boreanaz. Fox Network, 2006. (ASIN: B000HT3P60)
- *Catfish*. Dir. Ariel Schulman and Henry Joost. Perf. Nev Schilman and Michigander Abby. Universal, 2011. DVD. (ASIN: B003Q6D1YW)
- *Glee: The Complete First Season*. Dir. Alfonso Gomez-Rejon and Bill D'Elia. Perf. Lea Michele and Jane Lynch. 20th Century Fox, 2009. (ASIN: B004D9FLJE. **Available instantly on Netflix.**)
- *Jersey Shore: Season One*. Dir. Brad Kreisberg. Perf. DJ Pauly D, Jenni Farley and Brad Ferro. MTV, 2010. DVD. (ASIN: B003IB0FUS. **Available instantly on Netflix.**)
- *The Middle: The Complete First Season*. Perf. Patricia Heaton and Neil Flynn. Warner Home Video, 2010. DVD. (ASIN: B002JVWQUU)
- *Psychic Kids: Children of the Paranormal*. A&E Home Video, 2008. (ASIN: B001C28ZDE. **Available instantly on Netflix.**)
- *Super Size Me*. Dir. Morgan Spurlock. Perf. Morgan Spurlock. Samuel Goldwyn Films & Roadside Attractions, 2004. DVD. (ASIN: B0002OXVBO. **Available on Hulu.**)
- *True Blood: The Complete First Season*. Dir. Alan Ball. Perf. Anna Paquin and Stephen Moyer. HBO Home Video, 2009. (ASIN: B001FB4W0W)
- *The Wild and Wonderful Whites of West Virginia*. Dir. Julien Nitzberg. Perf. Jesco White. Tribeca and American Express, 2010. DVD. (ASIN: B003VWC4BW. **Available instantly on Netflix.**)
- *Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Prices*. Dir. Robert Greenwald. Brave New Films, 2005. DVD. (ASIN: B000BTH4K4. **Available on Google Video**)
- *X-Men*. Dir. Bryan Singer. Perf. Patrick Stewart and Hugh Jackman. 20th Century Fox, 2006. DVD. (ASIN: B000AYELVA)

In-Class Viewings of Primary Texts: We will “read” some of our texts in class; these texts are not listed above. If you are not present it is your responsibility to make sure that you watch/read/listen to the materials that you missed.

Required Secondary Readings: Unless otherwise noted, these readings are available on our course eCampus page (in the ‘Readings’ folder). Please note that secondary readings **are required, not optional**.

- Alexander, Susan. “Stylish Hard Bodies: Bounded Masculinity in ‘Men’s Health Magazine’.” *Sociological Perspectives* 46.4 (2003): 535-554. Print.
- Beck, Barnard. “The Myth That Would Not Die: The Sopranos, Mafia Movies, and Italians in America” *Multicultural Perspectives*. New York: Routledge. 122-129. Print.
- Fowles, Jib. “Advertising’s Fifteen Basic Appeals.” *Reading Popular Culture*. Boston: Prentice Hall, 2011. 111-130. Print.

- Harnett, Alison. "Escaping the 'Evil Avenger' and the 'Supercrip': Images of Disability in Popular Television." *Irish Communications Review*. 8 (2000): 21-29. Print.
- Jennings, Kevin. "American Dreams." *Signs of Life in the USA* (6th edition). Eds. Sonia Maasik and Jack Solomon. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009. 581-585. Print.
- Kendall, Lori. "Nerd Nation: Images of Nerds in US Popular Culture." *International Journal of Cultural Studies*. 2 (1999): 260-83. Print.
- Kidd, Dustin. "Harry Potter and the Functions of Popular Culture." *Journal of Popular Culture*. 40.1 (2007): 69-89. Print.
- Leeds, Jeff. "[Democracy Rules, and Pop Culture Depends on It.](#)" *The New York Times*. 2007 Feb. 2. Web.
- Mason, Carol. "The Hillbilly Defense: Culturally Mediating U.S. Terror at Home and Abroad." *NWSA Journal*. 17.3 (Fall 2005): 39-63. Print.
- Petersen, Line Nybro. "Understanding Superpowers in Contemporary Television Fiction." *Northern Lights: Film & Media Studies Yearbook*." 6.1 (2008): 91-106. Print.
- "[The Real Price of Freedom.](#)" *The Economist*. 20 Sept. 2007. Web.
- Schopp, Andrew. "Cruising the Alternatives: Homoeroticism and the Contemporary Vampire." *Journal of Popular Culture*. 30.4 (1997): 231-243. Print.
- Shames, Laurence. "The More Factor." *Signs of Life in the USA* (6th edition). Eds. Sonia Maasik and Jack Solomon. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009. 86-93. Print.
- Sheppard, Alice. "[Rockin' and Rollin' on Fox's Glee.](#)" *Disability Quarterly*. 31.1 (2011). Web.
- Spector, Judith and Katherine Wills. "Aesthetic Materialism in Alan Ball's American Beauty." *Midwest Quarterly* 48.2 (2007): 279-286. Print.
- Storey, John. "What is popular culture?." *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction*. 5th edition. New York: Pearson Longman, 2009. Print.
- "Thinking Critically, Challenging Cultural Myths." *Rereading America: Cultural Contexts for Critical Thinking and Writing*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004.
- Westlake, E.J. "Friend Me if You Facebook: Generation Y and Performative Surveillance." *TDR* 52.4 (2008): 21-40. Print.
- Several other newspaper/magazine articles (listed on course schedule).



RECOMMENDED PREPARATION: English 101 and English 102 (or equivalents) are not prerequisites but will better prepare you for success in English 258. I strongly dissuade you from taking this course unless you have completed, or are currently completing, English 102.

OFFICE HOURS: My office hours are 1:30pm-2:15pm on Wednesdays in G03 Colson Hall. I am also available by appointment. Office hours provide us with an opportunity to talk one-on-one. You may drop in during these times or make an appointment with me to talk about any questions or comments you have about your progress in the course.

EMAIL HOURS: I am happy to talk with you via email as well; I usually respond within 24 hours. You should not

expect a response from 8pm to 9am. You should also expect a longer response time over the weekend. I cannot discuss grades via email; if you have questions about your grade please visit my office. **You should check your e-mail daily.** I will communicate important course information to you via e-mail. You are responsible for checking your e-mail regularly and coming to class informed and prepared.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR: Our classroom is a community, and I expect professional, courteous behavior. This class will discuss a variety of opinions and ideas that you may or may not agree with or find interesting. Respect everyone and come to class curious, not hostile or indifferent. Turn off your electronic devices (including cell phones) before coming to class; there is to be absolutely no text messaging during class. *Electronic device use during quizzes and exams will not be tolerated; if you use your cell phone or other web-linked device during a quiz or exam you will automatically receive a zero (in addition to any consequence outlined in the [Student Conduct Code](#)).* All laptops, e-readers and music devices should remain in your bag unless you make prior arrangements. Do not bring your lunch to class; this is a discussion class and having food in the classroom is unacceptable. Treat your classmates as you wish to be treated; for example, try not to interrupt while others are speaking. Failure to observe these policies will result in an **F** in participation for the semester and possible removal from the class session.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: If you ever have a problem with understanding an assignment or meeting a deadline, talk to me *at least 48 hours in advance of the deadline* and we may be able to negotiate an arrangement. Deadlines are non-negotiable after you've missed them. If you miss a deadline for major assignments such as exams or PCPs *your final course grade will be reduced by 3% for every day the assignment is late. All other late work will not be accepted.* Work is considered late when it is not physically in my hands at the moment of collection (this includes work submitted to me via email without my prior instruction/consent). If you miss class on the day of a deadline you must turn in the assignment prior to the class meeting time or it will not be accepted.

STANDARD OF WORK (BASED ON THE MLA GUIDE):

- All work, *including daily assignments*, must be typed using MLA guidelines: 12 point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with 1" margins.
- All assignments must use the appropriate heading: name, course title, instructor's name, assignment name, date.
- Assignments longer than one (1) page must be stapled or clipped together.
- Include page numbers and your last name (in the header) on all assignments longer than one page.
- Carefully edit and proofread all texts to eliminate problems in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Use spell-check and read your documents aloud so you can hear your errors.
- Do not fiddle with the physical appearance of an assignment in an attempt to achieve the illusion of length. This assumes that I cannot tell the difference between quantity and quality. A paper that is shorter than the assigned length but presented honestly will earn far more respect.
- ***Documents that do not meet these and other assignment-specific requirements will be dropped as much as one full letter grade.*** Pay attention to these details for handing in your final drafts. Superficial errors do not signify poor thinking; but they can indicate, for some readers, a lack of precision and nonchalance toward the task. You'll have to plan your writing process to make time for proofreading—printing a just-written paper 10 minutes before class time will not yield terrific results.
- I suggest that you purchase a writing handbook (such as *Easy Writer*) to aid your writing. These texts offer guidelines and activities to help you with mechanics. The Writing Center is another resource available to you—to help you to brush up on your understanding of basic skills, but also to support you in all aspects of the writing process.

WVU WRITING CENTER is located in G02 Colson Hall. Call 304-293-5788 to schedule an appointment or stop by to see if a tutor is available.

Web address: http://english.wvu.edu/centers_and_projects/wcenter/writing_center_home

E-MAIL: Assignments are not accepted via e-mail unless the assignment calls for e-mail submission or you make *prior arrangements*. In cases where assignments require e-mail or eCampus submission, students must meet deadlines. Excuses about e-mail or computer failure are unacceptable; set delivery notification on the e-mail if you are concerned. Make sure you attach your document in .doc or .rtf format; if I cannot open the document, it is late. All assignments must be sent to tpershin@mix.wvu.edu.



When communicating via email (at school, at work, etc.) it is important to practice professional, courteous writing. Do so by honoring the conventions of the genre. Emails (in all communication other than that with a casual correspondent) should have an address (i.e. hello, dear, etc. and the addressee's name) and a signature (i.e. thank you, regards, etc. and your name), and be written using full sentences and proper grammar (*not* text-speak). Communicating with your professor via email is professional correspondence; please treat it as such.

PLAGIARISM/CHEATING: Academic dishonesty is wholly unacceptable and will be dealt with accordingly.

Plagiarism is defined as “material that has been knowingly obtained or copied in whole or part, from the work of others...including (but not limited to) another individual's academic composition” (*WIP* xxi). Cheating refers to “doing academic work for another student, or providing one's own work for another student to copy and submit as his or her own” (*WIP* xxi). You cannot use work from other courses in this course; you fail to meet the requirements of this individual course by doing so. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses that will result in failure of the assignment and/or the course. Plagiarism cases will *always* be filed with the university. If you have questions about plagiarism/cheating or are confused by MLA please visit my office.

SOCIAL JUSTICE: I am committed to a classroom that strives to use inclusive language, minimize assumptions, emphasize respect of difference, honor privacy, and employ topics that allow but do not require exploration of gender, sex, sexuality, race, nationality, ability, class and so on. These topics make for productive, thoughtful, but sometimes tough discussions. If for any reason you find yourself feeling uncomfortable, feel free to come and speak with me. I will do my best to ensure that this classroom is a space where everyone feels comfortable and respected. Finally, if you have a conflict between a religious holiday and a graded assignment, please contact me in advance so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

Some of the course materials may contain content that is disturbing to some viewers. But, alas, this is popular culture and I could not (nor did I wish to) censor our course materials. If you feel offended (so much so that you cannot critically respond to the work) come and talk to me. I maintain an open door policy regarding such issues. My only request is that we participate in honest inquiry and respectful, informed debate.

DISABILITY AND ACCOMMODATION: If you have a disability that could affect your progress in this course, please contact the Office of Disability Services (www.wvu.edu/~socjust/disability/). ODS can be contacted at G30 Mountainlair, by phone at (304)293-6700 voice/TDD (304)293-7740, or email at access2@mail.wvu.edu. We can arrange to accommodate your learning style based on ODS recommendations. Please notify me at the semester's beginning of your learning needs.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

ATTENDANCE: If you are enrolled in this class, your regular attendance is assumed. You should arrive a few minutes ahead of time and be prepared to begin at 2:30. Three late arrivals will be counted as an absence, as will being more than 15 minutes late to class. You are allowed *up to three absences (one full*

week) for the semester without penalty. A fourth absence will compromise your grade by one full letter. Each additional absence will lower your final grade by an additional letter grade. There are no excused absences (this includes illness, family issues, transportation challenges, athletics, extra-curricular activities, weather, etc.). If you accumulate seven or more absences (two-plus full weeks of class), you will **automatically fail** the course. Plan for the unexpected and use your absences wisely! If you miss class, you miss important, necessary material; obtain notes, handouts, and information from a classmate. Students who are registered for the course but do not attend during the first two weeks of the semester will automatically receive an F in the course. Students who wish to withdrawal from the course must do so on their own using the STAR system.

PARTICIPATION (10%): Participation includes coming to class prepared and on time, bringing all necessary materials, actively taking part in class discussions, asking questions, contributing your knowledge and insights in whatever form is appropriate, and striving to make all your contributions excellent on a daily basis. It also includes doing the reading and writing for each class. Just showing up is not participating.

A: You are prepared for every class period and contribute to class discussion every (or almost every) day; this includes bringing the course readings on a daily basis. You have insightful and relevant contributions and go “above and beyond” an average engagement with the day’s readings. You respond to your peers comments and questions and help facilitate dialogue in the classroom.

B: You are prepared for every class period and contribute to most class discussions; you usually have the course readings. Comments are relevant and insightful and demonstrate a careful reading of the texts assigned. You respond to other’s comments on a regular basis.

C: You are typically prepared for class and contribute to class discussion approximately half of the time; you bring the course readings about half of the time. Sometimes your contributions are off-topic or prevent dialogue from moving forward. During group work, you take on a quiet role.

D: You rarely comment or add insight to class discussion; you rarely bring the course readings. You do not display your preparedness for class, which is reflected by class discussion and low quiz scores. You may show little interest in the material and are off task during class (reading non-relevant material, sending text messages, sleeping, etc...).

F: You arrive late to class, are unprepared for class discussion, distract others, intentionally offend others, fail to follow the classroom policies and procedures and/or have missed 6 or more classes.

QUIZZES (10%): Unscheduled quizzes should be expected throughout the semester. Quizzes cannot be made up and will not be administered if you arrive late to class; missed quizzes will be recorded as a zero. Quizzes ensure that you are reading the required material, help you gauge your reading practices, and help you prepare for exams. If you read/view *carefully*, you should pass the quiz. If you find that you are having trouble with this aspect of the course, despite reading/viewing the assigned materials, *come talk to me*. We can go over strategies for preparing for quizzes, reading critically, and retaining what you read.

VIEWING NOTES (10%): Since many of the texts we’ll discuss in class will be viewed outside of the classroom it is necessary that students take viewing notes in order to be prepared for a detailed class discussion. Viewing notes **must** include at least one research question about the text; a research question will ask a critical question of the text and may be used to develop class discussion. An example research question might be, “How is ‘youth’ portrayed in *American Beauty* and what critique or commentary does that portrayal offer?” You do not have to have an answer to your question! Viewing notes should show evidence of careful, attentive viewing. The format and content of your viewing notes is entirely up to you; make them useful for class discussion. Viewing notes will be collected on twelve occasions according to



the schedule of work (see below); only ten of those submissions will count toward the student's final grade.

POP CULTURE PAPERS (PCPs) (25%): Writing is a necessity of academia and every profession. One's ability to 1) communicate his/her ideas clearly and articulately, 2) thoroughly support his/her argument with evidence, and 3) embrace revision as a beneficial and necessary step in the writing process in English 258 will help her/him prepare for her/his future profession. Throughout the semester, you must complete 5, 1.5-2 page (double spaced) PCPs. These short papers should critically and analytically engage with texts *based on the prompt provided*. You should *not* summarize what you read/viewed or give your emotional response to the text (in other words, you should not discuss whether or not you liked the text). Make sure you support your thoughts with evidence (quotes) from the text(s) that you are discussing. Please use proper MLA citation and follow the standard of work outlined below. Unfortunately, we don't have time to go over all of the nitty-gritty aspects of writing, so I expect you to look to the writing guides and office hours for help. Consult these resources often for PCPs and exam essays. *You will hand in a check sheet each time that you hand in a PCP*. This check sheet is available on our eCampus page. The length of this assignment requires that you pay particular attention to paragraph structure including thesis, transitions between ideas, integration of support, etc. ***PCPs with 5 or more spelling and/or grammar errors will automatically receive a C.***



MIDTERM EXAM (20%) AND FINAL EXAM (25%): A large portion of the exams will be completed in-class. They may also have a take-home portion.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

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|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| A+ → 100-98 | B+ → 89-88 | C+ → 79-78 | D+ → 69-68 | F → less than 60 |
| A → 97-94 | B → 87-84 | C → 77-74 | D → 67-64 | |
| A - → 93-90 | B - → 83-80 | C - → 73-70 | D - → 63-60 | |

PLEASE NOTE*:** The best way to be successful in this course is to do the readings, participate and attend class regularly, and complete *all* of the course assignments. ***Failure to complete the essays and exams will result in failure of the course. Additionally, do not rely on former viewings of the films or episodes; always (re-)view the material to prepare for the class period!

COURSE SCHEDULE:

NOTE: When a television series is assigned, the season and episode is abbreviated; for example, 1.9 indicates that you should view season 1, episode 9 of a series. All readings/viewings are due on the date listed.

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>REQUIRED READING/VIEWING AND ASSIGNMENTS</u> |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M, Aug. 22: | Introduction to course; syllabus review |
| W, Aug. 24: | Storey, "What is popular culture?" and "Thinking Critically, Challenging Cultural Myths" |
| F, Aug. 26 (last day to add/drop): | Kidd, "Harry Potter and the Functions of Popular Culture" |

UNIT 1: BUYING THE AMERICAN DREAM: COMMODITY CULTURE

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| M, Aug. 29: | Fowels, "Advertising's Fifteen Basic Appeals"; introduction to the unit |
| W, Aug. 31: | <i>American Beauty</i> |

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| F, Sept. 2: | Spector, "Aesthetic Materialism..." |
| M, Sept. 5: | Labor day; no class |
| W, Sept. 7: | <i>Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Prices</i> ; Viewing Notes #1 |
| F, Sept. 9: | Shames, "The More Factor" |
| M, Sept. 12: | " A Lesson Served with Fries " and <i>Super Size Me</i> ; Viewing Notes #2 |
| W, Sept. 14: | Alexander, "Stylish Hard Bodies..." and in-class viewing |
| F, Sept. 16: | In-class viewing: Brahm Amadhi on the Commodification of Food PCP #1: Write a paragraph where you analyze an advertisement of your choice using the appeals from Fowels's list. Which appeals are present in the ad and how do you know? Be sure to fully explain these connections. Also, remember to include the ad that you used with your PCP. The ad can be from a newspaper, magazine, or online. |
| UNIT 2: PRIVACY, DEMOCRACY, FREEDOM | |
| M, Sept. 19: | Introduction to the unit |
| W, Sept. 21: | Leeds, " Democracy Rules, and Pop Culture Depends on It " |
| F, Sept. 23: | <i>In the Shadow of No Towers</i> (all) |
| M, Sept. 26: | " The Real Price of Freedom ," <i>The Economist</i> and " How Privacy Vanishes Online ," <i>New York Times</i> |
| W, Sept. 28: | <i>Catfish</i> ; Viewing Notes #3 |
| F, Sept. 30: | Westlake, "Friend Me if You Facebook" |
| M, Oct. 3: | Optional mid-term review PCP #2: If you are involved in social networking, analyze your "profile." In other words, provide a close reading of your page. How does your page narrate your life and personality? (Think about the associations of your profile like your friend list, groups, etc.) If you don't have a social networking page, explain why. In either case, use what we have talked about thus far to shape your argument. Note: If you are not attending the mid-term review your PCP <u>must be in my mailbox in 100 Colson Hall by 3:20p.m.</u> |
| W, Oct. 5: | Mid-term exam |
| UNIT 3: THE AMERICAN SELF | |
| F, Oct. 7 (mid-semester): | Jennings, "American Dreams," introduction to the unit |
| M, Oct. 10: | <i>Jersey Shore</i> 1.1 |
| W, Oct. 12: | Beck, "The Myth That Would Not Die..." |
| F, Oct. 14: | <i>The Wild and Wonderful Whites of West Virginia</i> ; Viewing Notes #4 |
| M, Oct. 17: | Mason, "The Hillbilly Defense..." |
| W, Oct. 19: | <i>Bones</i> 1.1; Viewing Notes #5 |
| F, Oct. 21: | No class |
| M, Oct. 24: | Kendall, Lori. "Nerd Nation..." PCP #3: Write a paragraph in which you consider how popular culture narrates the 'personalities' or stereotypes of particular states/commonwealths of the USA. You will select a text that is not part of ENGL 258. Your analysis should present a thesis-driven |

argument about how the text represents the state and consider how that stereotype helps and/or hurts that state.

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| W, Oct. 26: | <i>The Big Bang Theory</i> 1.1 and 1.2; Viewing Notes #6 |
| F, Oct. 28 (last day to drop a course): | Harnett, “Escaping the ‘Evil Avenger’...” |
| M, Oct. 31: | <i>The Middle</i> 1.1 and 1.2; Viewing Notes #7 |
| W, Nov. 2: | Sheppard, “ Rockin’ and Rollin’ on Fox’s Glee. ” |
| F, Nov. 4: | <i>Glee</i> 1.1 and 1.9; Viewing Notes #8 |
| M, Nov. 7: | <i>Psychic Kids</i> 1.1 and 1.2; unit wrap-up |
| UNIT 4: SOCIAL ALLEGORY: FANTASY AND MYTH | |
| W, Nov. 9: | Introduction to unit |
| F, Nov. 11: | <i>X-Men</i> ; Viewing Notes #9 |
| M, Nov. 14: | Petersen, “Understanding Superpowers...”; begin reading <i>The Hunger Games!</i> |
| W, Nov. 16: | <i>True Blood</i> 1.1 and 1.2; Viewing Notes #10 ; continue reading <i>The Hunger Games</i> . |
| F, Nov. 18: | No Class ; continue reading <i>The Hunger Games</i> . |
| Nov. 21- Nov. 25: | Thanksgiving Break; No Class. Continue reading <i>The Hunger Games!</i> |
| M, Nov. 28: | Schopp, Andrew. “Cruising the Alternatives...”; continue reading <i>The Hunger Games</i> . PCP #4: Identify another text (outside of those in 258) which functions as “social allegory” and write a review of the text which 1) summarizes the plot (this does not need to be comprehensive but should highlight the most important elements) and 2) explains how the text functions as social allegory. Consider the conventions of the “review” genre and mimic them appropriately. (If you are unfamiliar with the genre or simply need a reminder, use the library databases to find reliable examples.) |
| W, Nov. 30: | <i>True Blood</i> 1.3 and 1.4; Viewing Notes #11. Finish <i>The Hunger Games</i> . |
| UNIT 5: NO FUTURE | |
| F, Dec. 2: | <i>The Hunger Games</i> (all) |
| M, Dec. 5: | <i>The Hunger Games</i> PCP #5: Using one or two of the concepts and/or methodologies we’ve discussed throughout the semester, turn a critical eye toward <i>The Hunger Games</i> . Your PCP should 1) explain how the concept/methodology can be applied to <i>The Hunger Games</i> , 2) provide at least two examples from the text, and 3) analyze those examples using the concept/methodology. |
| W, Dec. 7: | <i>Avatar</i> ; Viewing Notes #12 |
| F, Dec. 9: | Optional final review |
| Dec. 12-16: | Finals week (Final: Wed., Dec. 14: 8-10am; subject to revision); final pick-up date T.B.D. |