

Popular Culture

This course provides an upper-level introduction to critical issues and approaches in the study of American popular culture; includes defining popular culture and high culture. Popular culture is all around us, influencing how we think, how we feel, how we vote, how we live our lives in countless ways. This course will use your own expertise as consumers of popular culture as a take-off point for exploring the various roles played by mass-mediated popular culture in our lives. Part of the task of this course will be to refine further your ability to read, research, evaluate, and synthesize materials from different disciplines into your own interdisciplinary analyses. We will look primarily at television, film, advertising, stereotypes, popular music, and computer cyberculture, with occasional forays into other types of pop culture.

Desired Results (Stage 1)

Established Competencies

Students will be able to...

- 1.1: Learn effective reading, researching, evaluating, and synthesizing materials in relation to different types of contemporary American culture
- 1.2: Analyze how critical factors as ethnicity, race, gender, class, age, region, and sexuality are shaped by and reshaped in popular culture
- 1.3: Analyze the various elements of popular culture and how they inform or reflect our attitudes, behavior, and society
- 1.4: Learn to develop thoughtful and critical analyses of culture through public speaking, presentation and discussion skills

Acquisition

Students will know...

- I. Defining Popular Culture
- II. Reading and interpreting signs of popular culture
- III. American idols and icons
- IV. Advertising
- V. Urban legends and mythical characters
- VI. Popular music
- VII. Fashion & Sports

Students will be skilled at...

- Understanding of the differences and intersections between popular (mass) culture and high culture
- Familiarity with the role and impact popular culture has on American life
- Identify examples of the portrayal of various ethnic, racial and other stereotypes in popular culture

VIII.	Films and television
IX.	World Wide Internet
X.	Video games and cybercultures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how to effectively identify and communicate their understanding of culture in broader social contexts • Connect the different fields including Sociology, Communications, Anthropology, History, Cultural Studies, English, Women's Studies, Ethnic Studies, and American Studies to popular culture • Ability to read, research, evaluate, and synthesize materials from different disciplines into your own interdisciplinary analyses. • Use television, film, advertising, fashion, internet, music, and computer cyberculture, to understand themes of popular culture • Production Analysis—who owns the media? who makes these texts? with what intentions? under what technical constraints? how democratic or elitist is the production of popular culture? how much is commerce? how much creative expression? • Textual Analysis—how do specific works of popular culture make their meanings? how do explicit meanings differ from implied ones? how do texts consciously and subconsciously shape those who hear, see, or touch them? • Audience Analysis—how do different groups of popular culture consumers, or users, make similar or different sense of the same texts? • Historical Analysis—how have these other three dimensions changed over time? how does current popular culture differ from that of ten, twenty, or thirty years ago? what accounts for the changes? • Analyzing sources for context, tone and overall message • Public speaking and presentation of learned material • Influence of popular culture on the social, economic, and political world • Communication strategies that facilitate retention of information and gaining of new knowledge from peers • Research writing as it will be learning tool in class • Individual written reflections or reports • Collaboration with peers to use technology to compile and produce projects

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating and giving multi-media presentations • Using the internet as an effective research tool
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Evidence (Stage 2)	
Evaluative Criteria	Assessment Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6+1 writing rubric for written work • TRHS research rubric for all research type projects and individual research assignments • Summative quizzes and tests • Discussion rubric 	<p>Students will demonstrate their knowledge by passing various quizzes, tests, projects, individual writing assignments, and class discussion based assessments</p> <p>Demonstrate competency in communication by using correct terminology, expressing ideas clearly, writing cohesive essays, presenting ideas and information in visual and multi-media presentations</p> <p>Demonstrate competency in technology by researching, creating, and presenting, projects, papers, and multi-media presentations</p>

1.1: Learn effective reading, researching, evaluating, and synthesizing materials in relation to different types of contemporary American culture
 Primarily be using the research rubric for all research based assignments and TRHS 6 +1 for all written work

1.2: Analyze how critical factors as ethnicity, race, gender, class, age, region, and sexuality are shaped by and reshaped in popular culture

	Advanced	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
Skill mastery	Representation of the competency includes evaluation of information that effectively connects to and addresses the learning objective and the competency.	Representation of the competency includes analysis of information that effectively connects to and addresses the learning objective and competency.	Representation of the competency includes explanation of information that connects to and addresses the learning objective and competency.	Representation of the competency includes identification of information that connects to or addresses the learning objective and competency.
Content mastery	Student effectively uses content material to exemplify an in depth understanding of critical factors surrounding popular culture	Student effectively uses content material to exemplify a clear understanding of critical factors surrounding popular culture	Student uses content material to exemplify a general understanding of critical factors surrounding popular culture	Student uses limited content material to exemplify a partial understanding of critical factors surrounding popular culture

1.4: Analyze the various elements of popular culture and how they inform or reflect our attitudes, behavior, and society

	Advanced	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
Skill mastery	Representation of the competency includes evaluation of information that effectively connects to and addresses the learning objective and the competency.	Representation of the competency includes analysis of information that effectively connects to and addresses the learning objective and competency.	Representation of the competency includes explanation of information that connects to and addresses the learning objective and competency.	Representation of the competency includes identification of information that connects to or addresses the learning objective and competency.
Content mastery	Student effectively uses content material to exemplify an in depth understanding of the various elements of popular culture and connect them to our own attitudes, behavior, and society	Student effectively uses content material to exemplify a clear understanding of the various elements of popular culture and connect them to our own attitudes, behavior, and society	Student uses content material to exemplify a general understanding of the various elements of popular culture and connect them to our own attitudes, behavior, and society	Student uses limited content material to exemplify a partial understanding of the various elements of popular culture and connect them to our own attitudes, behavior, and society

1.5: Learn to develop thoughtful and critical analyses of culture through public speaking, presentation and discussion skills

Public Speaking & Discussion Skills: please see the following website for details:

<http://www.tusculum.edu/research/documents/PublicSpeakingCompetencyRubric.pdf>

In the event that a discussion has a written component to it, we will use the TRHS 6+1 rubric