

**CMGT 574**  
**TELE-MEDIA: STRATEGIC AND CRITICAL ANALYSIS**  
**SPRING 2013**  
***Updated 1/8/2013***

Room: ASC G38  
Day: Wednesdays  
Time: 6:30-9:20pm

Professors: Lisa Vebber  
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Phone: (213) 604-5819  
Office Hrs: Wed, 4-6:30pm (alternate times may be arranged via e-mail)

***COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:***

In the world of television, these are head-spinning times. Media ownership is more concentrated than ever, and the big guys cannot wait to get their content onto every conceivable media platform. Dollars should be flowing in from everywhere.

But they aren't.

Content producers are having difficulty making profits on their content as production costs continue to rise and ratings continue to decline. More than ever, the digital model has the aura of inevitability, and everyone is desperate to figure out how to make money in an internet-centric, viewer-more-in-control world. Content may be king, as so many proclaim, but who is going to pay for it—and how?

This course will look at the historical model for television broadcasting, and consider how it has survived to this day. ***This overview will incorporate one of the most surprising facts of all—that even in this age of cord-cutting and gaming, facebook and tweeting, people are watching more television than ever.***

And then we will step up to the present and explore the myriad ways that television is trying to reinvent itself, at a time when radical change seems potentially more imminent than ever before. With input from industry professionals, we will look for a way forward for this remarkably resilient medium that to this day plays a very big part in the lives of so many of its viewers. How and where will programs/content be made available? How much control will content consumers, as opposed to big media, have as they schedule their viewing? How will dollars flow upstream to keep the professionally-produced content coming for the fans who crave it? And amidst constantly shifting alliances, and new developments announced almost daily, who will be making the decisions that will ultimately answer these questions?

**PREVIOUS GUEST SPEAKERS**

This course will expose the students to high-level professionals from many relevant areas of the entertainment industry. This provides an intimate setting for students to interact with these executives and is an invaluable networking opportunity. Previous classes have featured the following speakers:

- Kevin Reilly, Chairman, FOX Entertainment
- Kelly Kahl, Senior Executive Vice President, Primetime, CBS

- Marc Graboff, President of West Coast Operations, NBC Universal (now CEO of Core Media)
- John Landgraf, President FX Network
- Cindy Holland, Vice President, Content Acquisition for Netflix
- Vivi Zigler, President, Digital Entertainment, NBC (now Head of Digital for Shine)
- Andrea Hartman, General Counsel, NBCUniversal
- Liz Huszarik, Executive Vice President, Warner Bros Media Research
- Jeff Wachtel, Co-President, USA Network
- Bob Broder, Vice Chairman, ICM

### **ABOUT THE PROFESSOR:**

Lisa Vebber most recently served as Senior Vice President of Primetime Scheduling and Strategic Analysis at the NBC television network, in charge of programming strategy for NBC primetime. During her 10 years at NBC, she lead the day to day scheduling operations, handled program acquisitions, cross-platform strategy for all NBCUniversal cable channels among other duties. Prior to NBC, she held positions in programming, planning and research at G4, Disney Channel US, Disney Channel International, Sony, and Warner Brothers. Lisa did her undergraduate studies at Pepperdine University, and she holds an MA in Communications Management from the Annenberg School at USC.

### **GRADING:**

<b>Weekly Blog Entry</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>TV Autobiography</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Individual Essay</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>New Media Case Study Presentation</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Case Study Paper #1</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Case Study Paper #2</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>CEO Speech</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Upfront Group Presentation</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Take Home Final Exam</b>	<b>20%</b>

### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

**All assignments must be sent via e-mail to Professor Vebber by 6pm on the due date (except for in class presentations).**

*Weekly Blog Entry:* Every student is required to post an entry on Blackboard about a recent news article related to the topics being discussed in class. These are short: 3-5 sentences describing the article and how it relates to the current week's topic. You must also include a link to the article. Each student will sign up for one class date during the semester, in which he/she will open the class with a discussion of their chosen article of the week.

*TV Autobiography:* 1-2 page written or a Prezi document, to be presented to the class in week three. Describe your personal history with television and media. What kind of technology did you have in your home? How did you use it? How has it shaped who you are and how you consume media today? What TV programs impacted you? I will provide an example and further instructions on the first day of class.

Individual Essay: Each student must write a two page MAXIMUM paper answering the following question: "Which new media company do you think has the greatest potential in the next five years and why?" The goal of this is to set a baseline of preconceived notions on the subject, so this essay should be completed with minimal research. We will revisit these later in the semester to see if opinions have changed, and use it as the basis for a future assignment.

New Media Case Study: Each student will research and present a case study about a New Media company. Presentations should be approximately 5 minutes, and no student may do the same company as another student. Company selection will be on a first come, first serve basis with me.

Case Study Assignments: I will provide questions with the case study and students will answer in 1-2 pages. We will discuss the case studies in class, so no late papers will be accepted. Case Studies are provided in the Course Reader.

CEO Speech: I will provide a list of industry executives, and students will select one and write a speech from that person's point of view. We will then present/ discuss in class. Detailed instructions will be made available when students select an executive.

Upfront Group Project: Broadcast Network Upfront  
Each group will be assigned a broadcast network, and will create and present a Fall 2013 primetime schedule based on parameters provided by me. Groups will need to use and apply what they have learned in all of the topics discussed in class – Marketing, Research, Economics, Strategy, Development and Distribution.

Take Home Exam: Students will have one week to complete a take home exam consisting of essay questions. Plan on 4-5 pages total.

## **COURSE MATERIALS:**

### Required Books:

CMGT 574 Course Reader

Ulin, Jeff *The Business of Media Distribution: Monetizing Film, TV and Video Content in an Online World*

Lotz, Amanda *The Television Will Be Revolutionized (2007)*

### Other recommended reading:

Vogel, Harold L. *Entertainment Industry Economics: A Guide For Financial Analysis, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition*

Blumenthal, Howard J. and Goodenough, Oliver R *This Business of Television: The Standard Guide to the Television Industry 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (2006)*

Palmer, Shelly *Television Disrupted: The Transition from Network to Networked TV (2006)*

Carter, Bill *Desperate Networks (2006)*

Various media websites, current articles, etc. as discussed, recommended or assigned in class

**Late assignments/Emergencies:** No late assignments will be accepted. If you have a legitimate and verifiable emergency that makes it impossible to turn in your assignment on time you must: (1) email me before the beginning of class the day the assignment is due to notify me of your emergency, (2) provide official proof (doctor's note or other evidence) and (3) arrange to email the assignment at a time to be determined.

## **Statement for Students with disabilities**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to us as early in the semester as possible. DSP can be found in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

### **Statement on Academic Integrity**

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *Scampus*, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11:00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/>. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

All work you submit must be your own and you may not inappropriately assist other students in their work beyond the confines of a particular assignment. **There is a no-tolerance policy for academic misconduct in this course!** The minimum penalty for academic misconduct will be a failing grade (F) for the course – further academic and disciplinary penalties may be assessed.

## CLASS SCHEDULE:

Classes will consist of lectures, discussions and appearances by guest speakers. Because of the need for flexibility in scheduling of guest speakers, there will be some fluidity in the class schedule. The schedule provided below will provide you with an approximation of the layout of the class. Names of guest speakers are not included at this time.

DATE	WEEKLY TOPICS	ASSIGNMENTS
1/16/13	Introduction to the course; Basic Overview of TV; Distribution Chain	
1/23/13	Research: Measuring Viewership across platforms GUEST SPEAKER	
1/30/13	Autobiographical presentations: Broadcast vs. Cable vs. Digital	TV Autobiography due
2/6/13	TV Economics GUEST SPEAKER	Individual Essay due
2/13/13	Legal and Business Affairs; Rights, ownership, windowing GUEST SPEAKER	
2/20/13	Student Presentations: New Media Case Studies	New Media Case Study due
2/27/13	The Business of Making Content GUEST SPEAKER	
3/6/13	Broadcast and Cable Network Strategy	
3/13/13	Monetizing Content GUEST SPEAKER	Case Study #1 Paper due
3/20/13	SPRING BREAK	
3/27/13	Content Distribution - Digital and other revenue streams	
4/3/13	Marketing	CEO Speech due
4/10/13	You Tube GUEST SPEAKER	
4/17/13	Netflix GUEST SPEAKER	Case Study #2 Paper due
4/24/13	Upfront Presentations	Upfront Group Project
5/1/13	Pulling it all together Take Home Final Exam Question distributed	
5/8/13		Final Exam Paper due