Goals, Objectives: We will examine the socio-cultural and other functions of soap operas, “telenovelas” and other melodramatic creations. What we call soaps are mediated serials that are constructed by commercial organizations and consumed by audiences in the U.S. and around the globe. These dramas have witnessed wide-ranging success in their countries of origin such as in the U.S., Mexico, and Brazil, and have gained important export value to countries such as Germany and Russia, and France, England.

We will explore, question and discuss why soaps and other serials have continued to be so successful. We will appreciate the melodramatic form as it functions for mass entertainment. However we will also critique the content and acknowledge the negative social impact of melodramas on society. The student should become a more discerning media consumer and/or responsible media creator, keeping in mind potential social, cultural, economic, political influences of mass media.

Class Format: The course consists of lecture, class experiential learning, and informed class discussion based on course materials. The course will make use of topical texts, articles, in-class visuals, out of class visual exposure (watching television or film individually or in groups). Grading will be based on completed, quality work, in-class discussion-participation, a midterm and final. The examinations will consist of subjective and objective sections. Students are urged to take copious notes. If you do not take notes, there is no way you can do well in this class.
Policies: This is not solely a lecture class where you sit back and just listen. Lectures will be balanced with activities to be completed in or out of the classroom. Students will be prepared for discussion that draws squarely from the readings and from other pertinent materials needed for successful participation. Extraneous commentary used to cover-up for not reading are obvious and do not count. Students will be civil, expressing points or counter-points in a collegial and professional manner. Assignments will meet due date. Assignments will be well crafted in upper division quality. Students are responsible for obtaining missed notes and info for assignments. Signing an attendance sheet for someone else under any circumstances is cheating. Cheating on assignments, exams, etc. can result in a failing grade in the course and the incident will go into your files at the department and college levels. Students will have excellent attendance. Those with excessive absences will fail the course. Students will know the University’s Code of Conduct.

Course Requirements
• Articles retrieved through webct
• Usage of Webct and Email
• Written Essay Assignments
• Feedback sheets
• Other materials TBA
• Selective TV and other media exposure
• Participation
• Excellent attendance

Proportion of Work
Midterm 30%
Written Assignments 20%
Participation (in class; using webct; presentations; feed-back sheets) 20%
Final 30%

SCHEDULE
Week 1. Jan. 17+ Introductions, Course Overview, What are Melodramas?

Week 2. Jan. 24+. Soap Opera and Similar Forms
• To be Continued, Intro and Ch.1

• To be Continued, Ch.9, 10
•Suggested: Anger, D. Conclusion: Who watches, why and what soaps tell us about ourselves. In Other worlds: Society seen through soap opera, pages 127-144.

Week 4. Feb.7+ Telenovelas and Soaps
•Readings in To be Continued: Ch. 13,14, 15

Week 5. Feb.14+ Telenovelas and Soaps (cont’d)

Week 6. Feb.21+ Telenovelas and Soaps

Week 7. Feb.28+ Tuesday, Soaps and Review. MIDTERM EXAM Thursday March 2.

---

March 5-11 is SPRING BREAK

---

Week 8. March 14+. Contemp. Serialized Sexuality: Sex & the City

Videos: Sex and the City
Guest Speaker

Week 9. March 21+ TBA

Week 10. March 28+. TBA

Week 11. April 4+ Girls/Women Redefine Destiny: Buffy the Vampire Slayer
• Stratton, J. (2005). Buffy the Vampire Slayer; What being Jewish has to do with it. Television and New Media, 6, 2, pages 176-199.

Video: Buffy
Guest Speaker

Week 12. April 11+ Girls/Women Redefine Destiny: Buffy the Vampire Slayer & Review

Week 13. April 18+ Presentations, Critique of Melodrama

Week 14. April 25+. Presentations, Critique of Melodrama
Last Week of Semester

CHECK LISTINGS FOR FINAL EXAMINATIONS