PSYC300

Psychology takes on the Media:
What TV& streaming shows get right and what they get wrong about Psychology

Meeting Time: TBD Room: TBD

Instructor:	TBD	**TA:**	TBD
Office:	TBD	**Office:**	TBD
Office Hours:	TBD	**Office Hours:**	TBD
Phone:	TBD	**Phone:**	TBD
Email:	TBD	**Email:**	TBD

Welcome to a course that will take you on a journey through psychological theories, concepts and processes as depicted through TV and streaming documentary-style and fictional shows to uncover what they get right and what they get wrong in the name of entertainment. This course aims to debunk popular misperceptions common in media representation and interject more accurate psychology and social science facts into some of our favorite guilty pleasures.

Required Materials:

The following textbooks will be used as a reference for basic psychological knowledge related to the specific shows we are discussing and critiquing. Various chapters that relate to psychological principles will be assigned. Additionally, we will be reading about how fiction/script writers consider psychology in crafting their work.

1) Open Education Resource (Lumen Learning) Boundless Psychology – [Free download] https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-psychology/)
2) Smith, D. (2015). **The Psychology Workbook for Writers: Tools for creating realistic characters and conflict in fiction.** Wooden Tiger Press. [Kindle Edition - $6.99/Paperback -$9.99]
3) Benson, N., et al. (2017). **The Psychology Book: Big Ideas Simply Explained**. DK. [Kindle Edition]
4) You also will need access to Hulu – For those who don't have access, the link to join is: hulu.com. The first month of new membership is free, and the second month is $6.99. Other streaming services may suffice.

Additional source readings and media will be posted on Blackboard at least one week prior to due date. Please check Blackboard frequently to make sure you read all assigned readings. All communication will be conducted through Blackboard and via UMBC email.

Course Description
This survey course will deconstruct the ways that psychological issues, causes, interventions, and treatments are presented in some of today's most popular shows. It is designed to introduce you to how psychology and psychological science are integral to all of our lives, debunk some of the incorrect ways it's portrayed in media, but also provide examples of when TV and streaming get it right. Throughout we'll also attend to the ways

that media represent narratives about race, culture, mental health, gender, and other forms of diversity that impact attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. We'll also touch on the ways that psychology is used to influence our interest in watching particular shows. Additionally, we will discuss careers in psychology, psychological careers in the entertainment industry, and accurate depictions of these psychologists in real life situations.

This course is based in psychological theories and research science. Topic areas include:

- How media draws your attention and influences your behaviors.
- How psychology impacts attitudes and beliefs about race, racism, culture, gender, and other types of diversities and ultimately social justice.
- Critical review of media's representation of mental illness, dementia, and addiction (e.g. Hoarders, Obsessed, 16 and Recovering, This is Us, Luther, Mr. Robot, etc.)
- Exploration of entertainment's interpretation of psychological therapies, interventions, and treatments (e.g. In Therapy, Intervention, Gypsy, Sex Education, Extreme Make- over, etc.)
- Critical review of what psychologists and forensic scientists really know and do versus the TV profiler (e.g. Criminal Minds, Lie to Me, Psych, Law and Order SVU, Prodigal Son, etc.)
- Realistic views to the psychology of crime, punishment, and justice (e.g. Dexter, Bull, Narcos, etc.)
- Psychology and reality shows - casting; why do we watch; how they affect perception of the 'real world'; what they get right and wrong, etc. (e.g. Survivor, 90 Day Fiancé, The Bachelor/ette, Flip or Flop; Real Housewives of Atlanta, etc.)
- Psychologists' careers in a variety of arenas and their role in entertainment media.

Each topic will be addressed from a multi-dimensional perspective through: a) readings; b) media; c) lecture/guest lecture; d) case studies, e) activities and f) assignments.

Prerequisite: PSYC 100 or equivalent social science and one other 200-level or greater course in psychology, social or biological science.

Learning Objectives/Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:
1) Differentiate psychological science from pseudo-science or pop psychology
2) Identify issues of social justice, bias, equality and inequality as they relate to presentations of human behavior in the media
3) Discuss ethical challenges in media representations of psychological issues, social conditions, and interventions
4) Identify fact versus fiction in media presentations of psychological concepts and practices
5) Identify types of psychological research that exist, or could be undertaken, to test and correct various representations of psychology
6) Describe psychology's scientific contributions to understanding behaviors represented in programming
7) Recognize the role of real-life psychologists working in various systems represented in media

8) Identify the psychological concepts and research that apply to the creation, marketing, casting, and selling of these shows.
9) Identify a range of contributions that psychology and psychologists could make to the social good through media outlets.

These learning objectives will be assessed through class preparation, class engagement, project/paper, and quizzes as indicated below.

Format and Requirements

Class format will be appropriate for virtual attendance. Requirements include readings, guest lecture, multimedia, demonstrations and applications, group work, and learning and evaluative assignments.

This course requires active learning and engagement in topic areas presented in sessions and in readings. Pre-class reading discussion questions and Voice Threads will be used to prompt students to think critically about the content presented each week. All work will be expected to be date-stamped and in Blackboard 8 hours prior to the class meeting time. In addition, a discussion board will be available for critical analysis of topic areas and general class discussion. Grades will be based on the following:

Class preparation 15%
Class preparation is crucial for this class to succeed. Students should plan to attend every synchronous class session as this is a highly interactive course. (or if impossible and cleared **beforehand** with the instructor, complete alternative work by an assigned time). Prepare for class by thoughtfully completing all of the assigned readings/videos/podcasts, asynchronous lectures, and pre-class assignments.

Class preparation will be assessed by the following:
For each synchronous session students will prepare:
1) one or two comments or questions for a **pre-session discussion assignment** in Blackboard (rubric on Bb.) Prototypical pre-session postings are on Blackboard to assist you in formulating your assignment.

Class Engagement 30%
Class engagement will involve posting and asking questions during our synchronous session or in Voice Thread.

Class Engagement will be assessed by the following:
1) Students should contribute to each synchronous session with at least **two probing questions in the chat room or post at least two probing questions related to the session in the class discussion board each week** (rubric on Blackboard). As above, if synchronous attendance is not possible for a particular week, students must make a prior request to the instructor and complete alternative work by an assigned time. (10%)

2) Students will write and submit **reflections, inquisitive inquiry questions created in groups during the last 10 minutes of our session.** As above, if synchronous attendance is not possible for a particular session, students must make a prior request to the instructor and complete alternative work by an assigned time. (10%)

3) Students will **initiate at least one quality response to Voice Thread prompts and**

respond to at least one colleague's post (rubric on Blackboard) after each weekly topic area (10%)

Project 40%
The project for this course will require you to complete a detailed exploration of one topic area from the course. You can choose **one of two options**.

1) Possible projects include paired collaboration creating a video or visual project analyzing a particular show, episode, or current issue in psychology and society and the way that the issue was treated by the show and how it could have been done to provide better psychological facts to the viewer.

2) Alternatively, an individual student may choose to write a white paper (4-5-page report) that presents an isolated psychological concept and a detailed depiction of that concept across several episodes of a show or series. This white paper should suggest the more accurate presentation of psychological facts within the framework of the show and comment on how the show has influenced impression, beliefs and behaviors.
(White paper rubric and video project rubric on Blackboard; instructions for formatting the White Paper are on Blackboard.)

Quizzes 15%
Students will be expected to complete 5 section quizzes. These quizzes will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions inside Blackboard.

Due Dates: TBD

Statement on Late Assignments

If you miss class, **YOU** are responsible for accessing information that was discussed. Individual points will be deducted if there is consistent lack of participation of any member, or the Faculty determines that an individual student is not carrying responsibility for the assignment and meeting due dates consistently.

Note: Schedule of topics is subject to change due to unexpected situations. Students should check Blackboard regularly to make sure they have the correct due dates for topics and assignments.

Grades – The following grade cut offs will be used for all assignments as well as final grades
A = 90 – 100%
B = 80 – 89%
C = 70 – 79%
D = 60 – 69%
F = Below 60%

How to Be Successful
To be successful in this course you should read all course articles and the text as indicated, view all videos and listen to any podcasts, attend or listen to each lecture, and complete all assignments as noted under requirements.

This course will utilize Blackboard to provide course materials, post grades, and announce class cancellations or changes to the syllabus. Therefore, access to the internet is required and computer literacy is expected. The UMBC campus has numerous computer labs that may be open to you; you may also access course materials from an off-campus computer (e.g., at home, library, etc.). Losing your internet connection at home, printer problems, or other technology issues will not be accepted as a valid excuse for late assignments. Please allow time for the inevitable technology problems that can occur and keep up with all activities. **You are responsible for reviewing** the e-learning resources under the **Start Here** tab in Blackboard; please review tutorials and technical requirements listed in this section of Blackboard.

UMBC Honor Statement on Academic Integrity
By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC's scholarly community in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal. To read the full Student Academic Conduct Policy, consult the UMBC Student Handbook, the Faculty Handbook, or the UMBC Policies section of the UMBC Directory.

Psychology Department Statement on Diversity
UMBC is committed to diversity at all levels and seeks to create a campus community rich in intellectual, cultural, and ethnic diversity. Diversity is defined in its fullest scope embracing racial and ethnic identity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, disability, foreign nationality, non-traditional student status, family income, body size, and other important characteristics. All participants in this class—including the professor, teaching assistant(s), and students—should strive to create an atmosphere that welcomes, encourages, and respects all members of the class and diverse viewpoints. During this course many viewpoints may challenge your thinking on a topic.

UMBC Statement on Disabilities and Information for Obtaining Accommodations
UMBC is committed to eliminating discriminatory obstacles that may disadvantage students based on disability. Services for students with disabilities are provided for all students qualified under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the ADAAA of 2009, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act who request and are eligible for accommodations. The Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) is the UMBC department designated to coordinate reasonable accommodations that would allow students to have equal access and inclusion in all courses, programs, and activities of the University. If you have a documented disability and need to request academic

accommodations, please register with the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) as soon as possible. To begin the registration process please visit the SDS website and review the registration information, including disability documentation guidelines and how to submit the SDS registration form online using the confidential data management software called Accommodate. https://sds.umbc.edu/accommodations/registering-with-sds/

Psychology Statement on UMBC Title IX Policy

Title IX is a federal law that guarantees equal access to educational opportunities and prohibits gender- or sex-based discrimination in educational settings. According to Title IX, all forms of discrimination based on "sex (including pregnancy), gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression" are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. Discrimination and harassment include sexual and gender-based harassment, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, and sexual intimidation, as well as relationship violence and sex- and gender-based stalking. UMBC policies on Title IX are posted here: https://oei.umbc.edu/

According to this policy, all UMBC faculty, staff, and graduate students (including your instructors and teaching assistants) are considered Responsible Employees. As such, they are required to share any disclosures of sexual assault, domestic violence, relationship violence, stalking, and/or gender- based harassment (regardless of where or when it took place), including the names of involved individuals, with the University's Title IX Coordinator, **Mikhel Kushner** oei@umbc.edu or 410-455-2735.

Responsible Employees also have a mandatory obligation to report disclosures of or suspected child abuse or neglect. After this mandatory referral is made, a student's involvement with Mikhel Kushner and the University Title IX processes are at the student's discretion.

OEI Covid-19 Update

UMBC's new Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) is open and fully operational, with staff working remotely during this time.

Quasi-confidential Reporters may submit reports of possible Title IX violations without identifying information. OEI has officially launched the new online reporting form for sexual misconduct and/or discrimination which permits anonymous reporting by students, faculty, and staff. https://umbc-advocate.symplicity.com/titleix_report/index.php/pid393257?

UMBC's Counseling Center https://counseling.umbc.edu/, University Health Services, https://uhs.umbc.edu/ and the Women's Center https://womenscenter.umbc.edu/ are all providing services remotely at this time. Employees can also seek support through the University's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) https://hr.umbc.edu/benefits/benefit-information/employee-assistance- program/.

- To speak with a Counseling Center clinician, call 410-455-2472 and leave a message including your name, email address, phone number, and UMBC ID#. After-hours support, on weekends and between 5 p.m. and 8:30 a.m., can be reached at 410-455-3230.

- During the remote instruction period, University Health Services is providing services using phone and video tools weekdays, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Call 410-455-2542 and leave a message, and a provider will contact you.

Women's Center professional staff are available for individual meetings and support by phone or video chat. To schedule an appointment, email WomensCenter@umbc.edu. If you are already working with a specific staff member and need to set up additional meetings, feel free to contact that staff member directly.

What this means for you as a student:
- The university cares about you and takes the guarantee of equal access to educational opportunities and prohibition against gender- or sex-based discrimination in educational settings very seriously.
- If you disclose an incident that falls under the examples above to any faculty, staff, or graduate student, they are a "Responsible Employee" and are required to report the incident, along with your name, to the Title IX office. You will not be required to engage with the Title IX office in any way based on this report.
- If you disclose an incident that falls under the examples discussed above to a *Quasi- confidential Reporter*, they may submit a report to the Title IX office, but will do so without using your name.
- If you disclose an incident that falls under the examples discussed above to a *Confidential reporting source*, they are not required to submit a report to the Title IX office.
  If you or someone you know has experienced gender- or sex-based discrimination, UMBC is here to help and provides many resources. Please don't hesitate to contact one of the resources, above.

Veterans:
If you are a veteran or on active reserve status and you are interested in information regarding opportunities, programs and/or services at UMBC, please visit https://registrar.umbc.edu/veteran- students/ or email veterans@umbc.edu
Academic Success Center:
This Center provides free assistance with written assignments, study skills improvement, and other topics to enhance academic success. For more information, view the website: https://academicsuccess.umbc.edu/
COVID INFORMATION:
Up-to-Date and Archival COVID-related UMBC information: Main Campus - https://covid19.umbc.edu/
For Student at the Shady Grove Campus - https://www.usmd.edu/coronavirus
UNIVERSITY CLOSURES ("INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY"):
In the event class is cancelled (e.g., a "snow day") on a day for which there is an in-person assignment due (e.g., in-class quiz), the assignment/exam will be held the next scheduled day of class. However, on- line assignments (e.g. Blackboard quizzes) will NOT be rescheduled due to campus closures (unless the closure is simultaneously associated with a document crash of Blackboard). It is University policy that any cancelled classes are to be rescheduled at a time that is convenient to the majority of the students in the class.

Closure information can be found at:
- E2Campus alerts - https://my3.my.umbc.edu/alerts
- UMBC homepage- https://www.umbc.edu
- myUMBC https://my.umbc.edu/
- Hotline: 410-455-6789

Student Information: (Please

Print) NAME:

Email address:

YEAR AT UMBC: or other
 University (Fr, So, Jr, Sr)

MAJOR:

REASON FOR TAKING THIS COURSE:

CAREER GOAL:

ANY INFORMATION YOU WOULD LIKE ME TO KNOW:
(e.g., concerns, constraints, etc)

Please sign that you have read the syllabus and understand your responsibility and
requirements for the course

_____
Signature and Date

PLEASE NOTE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS BELOW: *While I try to maintain a safe
environment that encourages the open discussion of issues that are related to sensitive issues
in psychology, class is not a forum for understanding and discussing personal experiences. I
am happy to discuss individual issues and questions that relate to class material and course
structure with you. If you need referral due to discomfort around certain topics, I am happy to
provide that referral to Campus Health.*

Class	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
1		**Calling all fans:** **What does Psychology have to do with TV and streaming media anyway?**	**orientation**
2		**Calling all scientists:** **What does TV and streaming media have to do with Science and how could it do even more?**	**OER Social Behavior** **Begin reading Smith for class 5**
3		**Calling the question:** **Racism, Bias, Ethics, Psychology, TV, & Social justice**	**OER Discrimination based on Sex and Gender; Social Influence and behavior** **Benson -Social Psychology**
4		**Science vs. Pseudo-Science:** **What is Psychology anyway?**	**OER: Intro to psych discipline** **Benson- Philosophical Roots**
5		**Psychology & the Showrunner: The script, the pitch, the sell**	**Smith text-Flip the Script and State of Being**
6		**The Psychology of Perception A different type of vision**	**OER- intro to perception; Emotion** **Benson-TBD**
7		**Psychology takes on TV mental health and illness: "I had plans for that rock"**	**OER: Psych disorders Benson – Laws of Hysteria**
8		**Psychology takes on TV therapy, intervention, and treatment:** **"Have a seat on my couch… just 50 minutes to a new you"**	**OER Therapy Smith: Blame the parents** **Benson-TBD**
9		**Psychology takes on the TV Profilers and Investigators: "Just one more thing"**	**OER Memory Reasoning and inference Smith: Me an My Shadow**
10		**Psychology takes on the Criminal Justice: "These are their stories…kind of, sort of"**	**OER Memory; Emotion; Attention** **Benson- Be the Self**
11		**Psychology takes on reality shows:** **"Will you accept this rose… please ignore the thorns?"**	**OER Social Psych; Personality Smith: personality plus** **Benson- Four Temperaments**
12		**Psychology takes on reality shows (2):** **Casting and living one's life in the reality bubble.**	**OER Ego development; Social self; Personality**

13		**Psychology and the Media: Careers**	**OER Careers in psychology**
14		**Psychology and the Media: The potential to entertain AND do good**	**OER: Ethics Media Psychology APA** **Benson- The Reasoning Soul**
15		**Looking forward: Pitch your own show based in Psychological Science**	