

Welcome to Prof. Leah Nielsen's ENGL0240: Cultural Studies course for Spring 2020.

What is Cultural Studies?

This course provides an opportunity to practice critical thinking and analysis of cultural texts, in our case television. This semester we will learn the basics of Cultural Studies theory, and apply what we learn to television shows. In other words, our goal is to learn to use the critical theory as a lens for examining the assigned television shows so that we may to analyze and form our own interpretations on our culture.

Culture itself is manifested in media of all sorts (music, film, TV, web, advertising, fashion, architecture, and other forms). To narrow the scope of the class, I have chosen 21st Century television as our focus. We will consider the social and political implications of television shows as objects of analysis and as consumer products. For viewing ease, all of our shows will be Netflix original programming.

All students will watch 3 episodes of all the assigned shows. Then each of you will select one of these shows to study more closely by watching its full first season. You will present what you have learned through your examination of the show to the class in a panel discussion.

On Thursdays, we will meet to discuss Cultural Studies Key Terms and Concepts. Over the weekend, you will watch the assigned television show. On Tuesdays, you will work online.

While you do NOT need to LOVE television to take this course, it would be best if you were not philosophically opposed to TV.