



**Course Number** EDU 52095; Fall 2023

**Title – Impact of Media Portrayal of Teachers: the Curriculum of Popular Culture – Part II: Bringing the Classroom Into the Living Room**

**Description:** The presence of television in the lives of Americans is ubiquitous – it is everywhere! Because of this, no one can argue with the idea that television makes profound connections to the institutions it portrays in our households day after day, year after year.

The question remains, though – *Does television reflect our culture, or does it steer our culture?* As a medium, television has the advantage of reaching and representing the very latest in cultural trends and dissecting our beliefs, values, and ideologies as a society.

Because of its far-reach, television can play a role in helping us to understand the institutions of school systems and classrooms of a given time period. What television chooses to focus on and how television depicts schools can impact our own attitudes about the classroom, teachers, administrators, and schools.

This course will take a panoramic look at the depictions of teachers, classrooms and schools over the past 7 decades. By critical evaluation of the messages and mores communicated in the “school-based television show,” participants will be able to better understand the influence television has had on our evolving views of education overall.

**Dates and Ending Date:** September 20<sup>th</sup> through November 21<sup>th</sup>

**Attendance:** Attendance and participation in forums is an essential part of academic work. It is expected that students submit postings for each focus unit of the course by the last day of each unit. Excessive absences from the forum will result in failure to pass the course.

**Contact Information:** Carolyn Doolittle, Ed.D.; [carolyn.doolittle@ottawa.edu](mailto:carolyn.doolittle@ottawa.edu) or [carolyndoolittle63@gmail.com](mailto:carolyndoolittle63@gmail.com)

**Instructor Bio-** Dr. Carolyn Doolittle is currently a reading specialist in the Gardner-Edgerton School District, and has also taught in the elementary and secondary ELA classroom. After spending more than twenty years in teacher education programs as adviser, professor, and program director, she felt it was time to return to the world of K-12 teaching, to gain a sense of what the realities of teaching are for the 21st Century teacher. Dr. Doolittle holds an Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction, specializing in reading and language arts. She serves on her district’s ELA curriculum committee and as an instructional coach. In order to stay connected to the higher ed. classroom, she continues to adjunct, and present at various conferences and workshops.

**Course Prerequisites:** Students will not need to have taken Part I of the “Curriculum of Popular Culture” series to fully engage in the topics and concepts presented in this course (though we will draw upon information from that course).

**Course Objectives:**

1. investigate various popular media depictions of classroom settings and teachers through the medium of television
2. participate in critical discussion of the television’s portrayal of classroom settings
3. note changes in television’s historical depictions of teachers with contemporary portrayals;
4. engage in written analyses of the television’s portrayal of teachers, (noting biases & stereotypes);
5. note the characteristics of historical views of effective and progressive educators, and contrast with ineffective teachers;
6. reflect on the experiences of real teachers in real classroom settings;
7. make connections between the television’s depictions of teachers to one’s personal experiences as teachers and with other teachers;

8. construct a theoretical framework, grounded in cultural studies and critical analysis, of the popular culture's beliefs about teachers and classrooms, as depicted through the medium of television..

**Kansas Education Systems Accreditation Framework: The Five R's Classification for this course is Responsive Culture.**

**Course Methods and Procedures:** Because of the opportunity to have in-depth and interactive discussions with other professionals is integral to the successful development of course concepts, impressions, and ideas, **independent viewing of course materials** will be employed in this course. Each participant will be expected to view assigned television programs, focusing on various aspects of classroom portrayals, early each week, which will be followed by inquiry-driven forum discussions. Discussing topics and issues of the course with peers is essential for learning. Additionally, participants may be assigned short readings used to tie together concepts, which should be synthesized into the forum discussion. Students will note various themes, biases, and stereotypes found within media presented, reflecting on the impact these portrayals have on the attitudes toward educators and schools in general. Thoughtful comments relating to the course content, questions, answers, and reactions to others' comments will be made weekly.

As part of forum discussions, students will engage in critical analyses by responding to specific focus questions. They will note the characteristics of effective and progressive educators, connecting and making practical applications to their personal experiences as teachers and with teachers. Readings will also allow student to reflect on the experiences of real teachers in real classroom settings. Written analyses should include a synthesis of readings, film viewings, and personal experiences.

**Readings and Course Materials:**

- Excerpts from related articles in folders of Google Drive.
- Various television episodes of depictions of teachers and classrooms (*provided by your instructor or through a streaming app of your choice*)
- Participants should have access to class materials through Google Drive.

**Evaluation/Grading Scale:**

**Assignments At-A-Glance**

Assignment/Activity	Qty.	Points	Total Points
Introductory Assignment	1	20 pts	20 pts
Weekly Forum Responses	8	10 pts	80 pts
Weekly Peer Reactions (at least 2 required per week for full credit)	8	5 pts	40 pts
What is the future of the TV teacher?	1	10 pts	10 pts
<b>Individual Forum Participation Self-Evaluation (see rubric)</b>	1	50 pts	50 pts
<b>Forum Participation Instructor Evaluation</b>	1	50 pts	50 pts
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>			<b>250 pts.</b>

Grade	Percentage
A	90 to 100%
B	80 to 89%
C	70 to 79%
D	60 to 69%
F	< 60%

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

<b>Dates:</b>	<b>Topic(s) of Study:</b>	<b>Required Viewing:</b>	<b>Activities and Assessments</b>
Week 1 September 20 to October 1	<b>Introduction to the course; Common teacher stereotypes; The 1950s – Gender Disparities</b>	<b>Viewings for Study (including, but not limited to):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course Introductory Video</li> <li>• Little Rascals</li> <li>• Mr. Peepers</li> <li>• Our Miss Brooks</li> <li>• The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis</li> <li>• Leave it to Beaver</li> </ul>	Post an introduction of yourself; Which TV teacher would you like to be? Complete Required viewings and Readings; Engage in Forum Discussions
Week 2 October 2 to 8	<b>The 1960s – The Times, They Were a Changin. . . Social relevance and race relations</b>	<b>Viewings for Study (including, but not limited to):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Novak</li> <li>• The Andy Griffith Show</li> <li>• The Patty Duke Show</li> <li>• The Bill Cosby Show</li> <li>• Room 222</li> </ul>	Complete Required viewings and Readings; Engage in Forum Discussions
Week 3 October 9 to 15	<b>The 1970s – Social Class Within the Classroom; Gender roles and sexual identity</b>	<b>Viewings for Study (including, but not limited to):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome Back Kotter</li> <li>• The White Shadow</li> <li>• Little House on the Prairie</li> <li>• Lucas Tanner</li> <li>• Paper Chase</li> <li>• The White Shadow</li> </ul>	Complete Required viewings and Readings; Engage in Forum Discussions
Week 4 October 16 to 22	<b>The 1980s – Teaching the Talented</b>	<b>Viewings for Study (including, but not limited to):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facts of Life</li> <li>• Head of the Class</li> <li>• The Wonder Years</li> <li>• Fame</li> <li>• 21 Jump Street</li> <li>• DeGrassi Junior High/High</li> <li>• Different World</li> <li>• Saved by the Bell</li> </ul>	Complete Required viewings and Readings; Engage in Forum Discussions
Week 5 October 23 to 29	<b>The 1990s – Reaching the Multitudes</b>	<b>Viewings for Study (including, but not limited to):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boy Meets World</li> <li>• Hanging With Mr. Cooper</li> <li>• The Steve Harvey Show</li> <li>• Freaks and Geeks</li> <li>• The Magic School Bus</li> <li>• The Simpsons</li> <li>• Ferris Buehler</li> </ul>	Complete Required viewings and Readings; Engage in Forum Discussions
Week 6 October 30 to November 5	<b>The 2000s – The Evolving Classroom and Progressive Perspectives</b>	<b>Viewings for Study (including, but not limited to):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boston Public</li> <li>• Friday Night Lights</li> <li>• The Wire</li> <li>• Breaking Bad</li> <li>• Gilmore Girls</li> <li>• Strangers With Candy</li> <li>• Miss Guided</li> <li>• Teach</li> </ul>	Complete Required viewings and Readings; Engage in Forum Discussions
Week 7 November 6 to 12	<b>The 2010s – The Chaotic Classroom and the Disintegration of the Teacher Character</b>	<b>Viewings for Study (including, but not limited to):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Big School</li> <li>• New Girl</li> <li>• Bad Teacher</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Schooled</li> <li>• Mr. Iglesias</li> <li>• Glee</li> <li>• Mr. D.</li> <li>• Vice Principals</li> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• Black Dog: Being a Teacher</li> </ul>	Complete Required viewings and Readings; Engage in Forum Discussions
Week 8 November 13 to 21	<b>The 2020s and Beyond – From the Sublime to the Ridiculous: What is Next for the Teacher Narrative?</b>	<b>Viewings for Study (including, but not limited to):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Corman</li> <li>• Abbott Elementary</li> <li>• This Way Up</li> <li>• Arthur</li> <li>• A Teacher</li> <li>• A.P. Bio</li> </ul>	Final Thoughts. . . <b>Self-Assessment;</b> <b>Reconstructing the Teacher Character for the 2020s – a reflection</b>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Celebrity Substitute</i></li> <li>• <i>Head of the Class (reboot)</i></li> </ul>	
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## Forum Discussion Rubric

Category	In Progress 0 – 3 pts.	Proficient 4 pts.	Distinguished 5 pts.
<b>Your Reactions:</b> Quality of thought, reasoning, comprehension and completion of assigned weekly materials	Comments are a reiteration of material expressed in the textbook or comments made by others and do not clearly reflect completion/understanding of the assigned material.	Comments are thoughtful and reflect a basic understanding of the material. Comments do not clearly display evidence of completing and understanding assigned material.	Comments are insightful and reflect mature graduate level thinking and analysis. Postings demonstrate clear evidence of completing and understanding assigned material.
<b>Your Reactions:</b> Timeliness, quality and relevance of postings to classmates' forum posts	Posted response may lack depth, respect, or relevancy. Rules of netiquette (see below) are not followed. Simple affirmations of peers' ideas are given ("I like. . .")	Thoughtful engagement of the student is shown in the forum with relevant and respectful responses to classmates' postings. Discussion goes beyond a simple affirmation of peers' ideas (more than "I like. . .")	Thoughtful engagement of the student is shown in the forum discussion with relevant and respectful responses to classmates' postings. Rules of netiquette are always followed. Contributions to forum through peer response greatly enhance the overall discussion.
<b>Your Response:</b> Commitment to class discussions	Minimum time spent interacting in discussions. One or less peer response is given.	Adequate time spent interacting in discussions. A minimum of two peer response are posted.	Significant amount of time spent participating in discussions. More than two peer responses are given.

### A Note about Netiquette

The following guidelines outline expectations regarding courtesy in our interactions with one another:

- Maintain a professional and respectful tone in all postings.
- Avoid language that is ambiguous or may easily be misinterpreted.
- Refrain from responding to posts that you find off-putting. Choose instead to respond to another learner whose post has given you something productive to think about.
- Use humor cautiously. Remember that you do not have the benefit of body language and voice inflection to help your co-communicator understand the real intent of your expression.
- Remember the "bulletin board" nature of the discussion board; anything posted is in the public domain and can be viewed and read by everyone in the class.
- Personal comments intended for one individual should be sent/emailed directly to that individual rather than posted on the discussion board.

## Individual Forum Participation Rubric

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

You will receive a participation grade at the end of the semester. Your grade is based on your contributions and preparedness while participating on the forum. In the first column, you will evaluate yourself according to the given criteria based upon the time period in question. In the second column, your instructor will evaluate your progress along the same criteria. Should any major discrepancies arise between your evaluation and mine, an individual discussion will be held to discuss the grade.

**My evaluation      Prof's evaluation**

**A. Online presence (20 points)**

- *No absences/present on forum every week (10)*
- *1 absence/Missed 1 week's forum discussion (5)*
- *More than 1 absences/Missed more than 1 forum discussion (0)*      \_\_\_\_\_/10      \_\_\_\_\_/10

**B. Timeliness in Participation of Blogging (10 points)**

- *I always contribute to the forum on time (5)*
- *I have been late once in posting or responding on the forum (4)*
- *I posted or responded late on the forum discussion more than once (2)*
- *I am almost always late in posting on the forum (0)*      \_\_\_\_\_/5      \_\_\_\_\_/5

**C. Responsible Participation/Attitude/Active Engagement in Blogging Activities (30 points)**

- *I am an active and responsible participant in forum activities, making significant, evocative contributions. I volunteer questions and answers for others on the forum. I always complete my other course assignments on time. I am always enthusiastic toward activities and the forum. (15)*
- *I am generally active in forum activities, making important contributions. I often volunteer questions or answers in the forum discussions. I mostly complete my course assignments on time (late once). I generally have a positive attitude toward forum activities. (10)*
- *I am not very active on forum discussion activities, making a few contributions. I occasionally offer answers in forum discussions. I am sometimes late in completing course assignments. My attitude toward activities and the forum fluctuates between positive and negative. (6)*
- *I do not participate in forum activities. I make inconsequential comments on the forum. I offer no questions or answers to others' questions on the forum. I am unprepared most weeks. I am always late in submitting course assignments/have incomplete assignments. I have a negative, resistant, or hostile attitude toward activities on the forum. (0)*

\_\_\_\_\_ /15      \_\_\_\_\_ /15

**D. Synthesis of Information from Resources (30 points)**

- *I always synthesize information from all resources in my forum postings and add other outside sources of information. (15)*
- *I generally synthesize information from all required resources in my forum postings. (12)*
- *I sometimes synthesize information from at least 2 resources in my forum postings. (8)*
- *I mostly speak to one source of information on my forum postings. (0)*

\_\_\_\_\_ /15      \_\_\_\_\_ /15

**E. Respect for others (10 points)**

- *I always show respect for others members and regularly engage every member of our class. (5)*
- *I generally respect others in class and online, and sometimes respond to each member of the class. (4)*
- *Sometimes I reply insensitively to online comments, or often do not respond to everyone consistently (2)*
- *I respond inappropriately to online comments, or usually do not respond to most members of the class. (0)*

\_\_\_\_\_ /5      \_\_\_\_\_ /5

**Totals:**      \_\_\_\_\_ /50      \_\_\_\_\_ /50

## **Common Films and Television Forum Participation**

Each week, there will be television shows that are commonly viewed by the whole group, as well as related current and past TV shows and other forms of media. These will be discussed on the Blackboard forum. You will need to synthesize the storylines and elements of these media to draw conclusions on the overarching messages being communicated about teachers and classrooms. Don't wait until the last minute to make your forum postings, so that other people can have the opportunity to read your postings and respond to them. Use the graphic organizer below to help you take notes while viewing media:

Name of movie/film/TV show:

Date viewed:

Short Synopsis (Big Ideas):

Evidence of Teacher Stereotyping:

Other Notable Elements:

Your Reactions to the Media:

## Elements to Consider When Reviewing Visual Media

**Subject:** What is the film about? What is its plot? Its storyline? What genre does it fall into? What is the value of the subject? How important is it to you?

**Theme:** What are the big underlying messages and ideas of the film? Are they important messages to society? To you?

**Acting:** How believable are the actors and actresses? Do they express a wide range of experience and emotion? A depth of realism? Does their timing seem natural? Are the characters they portray believable relative to the situations they're in?

**Dialogue:** Are the lines spoken by the characters appropriate and natural for the time, place, and situations they're in? (Example—a phrase like “gee whiz” might strike you as corny but would be completely appropriate in a film taking place in 1950). Are lines spoken convincingly? Are they spoken to give the viewer clues about what is happening; that is, would they be spoken if the situation portrayed were happening in real life?

**Setting:** How are the locations, props, and costumes used to create atmosphere? Are they appropriate to the era in which the film is set? To what level of detail are the settings realistic? How are settings used as devices of character development?

**Lighting:** How is lighting used to set the tone and atmosphere of a scene? Are shadows or intense contrasts of light and dark used to communicate plot and character development? (For example, a dramatically side-lit face causes one-half of the face to be brightly lit while the other half is hidden in shadow. This often communicates that the character is lying or is deeply confused.) Are such lighting devices overused?

**Sound:** Does the film's soundtrack rely on sound effects to create drama and emotion, or does it use sound to enhance the drama and emotion created by other means, such as acting and editing? Are the different parts of the soundtrack (dialogue, ambient sound, special effects, and music) mixed at effective volumes so you can hear what you're supposed to hear? How creatively are ambient sound and sound effects used to foreshadow a turn of events or establish the mood of a scene?

**Music:** How much of a film's score is original and how much is taken from other sources? Is the music used as a crutch? To generate excitement or tension, such as the classic four-note refrain from *Jaws*, or is it used to complement the feel of a scene? How well matched is the music to the action or mood on-screen?

**Cinematography:** Are camera techniques used only in conventional ways or does the film use any unique visual style? Do shot lengths and angles vary? Is camera movement relied on to create excitement? Is composition used creatively to convey meaning?

**Special effects:** What purpose do special effects serve in the scene(s) where they're used? If the effects are supposed to be spectacular, are they? If the effects are supposed to be subtle, are they natural and convincing? Are they consistently believable or of uneven quality?

**Editing:** How does the pace of editing establish the rhythm and momentum of the film? Is it appropriate to the action taking place? (for example, chase scenes typically use fast-paced edits, while calm conversations use longer shots between edits.) Are creative transitions between shots, such as dissolves, used or overused?

**Overall direction:** Has the film's director skillfully blended all the visual and acoustic elements together? Is the director clearly more comfortable with one element, such as dialogue, at the expense of another, such as creative camera work? Does the technical form of each shot—the distance, angle, and movement—bring out the inner nature of the subject matter the director is filming (for example, many directors slowly zoom in to the face of a character who has just gotten some horrible news; this movement would serve as a metaphor of the character's state of inner shock. The director might also fade away all ambient sound to further indicate the character's momentary mental isolation.) How

well did the film achieve its objectives to be funny, exciting, frightening, sad? Did any of the talent rise above their usual abilities?

## University Policies and Procedures

**University Policies and Procedures:** Students are to review the Student Handbook for all policies and procedures. Student Handbooks can be found on the Ottawa University website and on the flash drive you received at orientation.

**Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism:** Academic dishonesty will result in failure on a particular assignment or possible failure in the course. Dishonesty includes such actions as cheating on examinations or assignments, turning someone else's work in as if it were your own, and plagiarism. Plagiarism includes failing to adequately cite sources of information, using someone's ideas, information, and/or words as if they were your own, etc.

The Ottawa University Student Handbook states, "The penalty for plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty will be failure in the course in which the academic dishonesty occurred."

**Instructional Variance:** Course content and schedule may vary from outline to meet the needs of a particular group of students. The instructor will explain the rationale for any variance as it occurs.

**Homework requirement information:** Homework for accelerated courses requires 4-8 hours of independent work each week (outside of class). Some students may conclude homework study in fewer hours and some students may require additional hours beyond this estimate. Careful consideration should be given to this estimate when planning your personal schedule for this course. Online students should also follow this expectation beyond the time he/she spends interacting within the online course.

**Information Literacy:** Ottawa University supports the information literacy of its faculty and students. Faculty and students will receive ongoing training in the use of academic resources through its library personnel. Faculty members are advised to utilize the Myers' Library online databases for class preparation and student assignments. Students are encouraged to incorporate research materials from the Myers' Library online databases in fulfilling course assignments. Each database in the Myers' Library collection offers a tutorial for its use. Additionally, an online tutorial regarding research for all academic disciplines will be available.

**Special Accommodations:** If you are a student with a disability that may affect your learning, please contact the campus ADA Coordinator, Denise Haushahn, [denise.haushahn@ottawa.edu](mailto:denise.haushahn@ottawa.edu) or 913/266-8805), immediately to evaluate your request and implement any special accommodations required. The following is the procedure for requesting accommodation:

1. Students must declare their disabilities and request related classroom accommodations by: (a) completing an Accommodations Request Form, and (b) submitting recent documentation of a disability.
2. Requests for accommodation, along with documentation, must be received for evaluation at least one to two weeks prior to implementation of accommodations (that is, 1 - 2 weeks prior to the term start).
3. Additional information is available in the "General Policies" section of the Student Handbook at [www.ottawa.edu](http://www.ottawa.edu) under "General Policies."

Ottawa  University  
Mission Statement

The mission of Ottawa University  
Building on its foundation as a Christ-inspired community of grace and open inquiry, Ottawa University prepares professional and liberal arts graduates for lifetimes of personal significance, vocational fulfillment, and service to God and humanity.