

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

NOTE: ANY CHANGES TO A CSD MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF THE RELEVANT APPROVAL PROCESSES, INCLUDING LTPC.

Academic School/Department:	CASS
Programme:	Communications
FHEQ Level:	5
Course Title:	Celebrity and Fan Culture
Course Code:	COM 5218
Course Leader:	John Chua
Student Engagement Hours:	120
Lectures:	22.5
Seminar / Tutorials:	22.5
Independent / Guided Learning:	75
Semester:	Fall, Spring or Summer
Credits:	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

Course Description:

This course charts the development and critical context of contemporary celebrity and fan cultures. It outlines key theoretical approaches and explores the topic through a variety of media, from artists like Andy Warhol, Lady Gaga, Eminem, and Alison Jackson, to fanfic and other fan culture artifacts. It considers the creation and reception of celebrity texts: for example, around Harry Potter, and fanhood as a performative critique of celebrity. In the process, relevant PR and media strategies are examined.

Prerequisites:

GEP 4180

Aims and Objectives:

This course aims to explore the basic ideas and historical background necessary to understand how celebrity and responses to celebrity have emerged and developed.

Attention is paid to the Romantic genesis of the phenomenon. Most emphasis is on contemporary developments and issues. Students are required to engage critically and analytically with their own experiences and involvement in these phenomena. By the end of this course successful students will be able to:

- Effectively problematize the concept and culture of celebrity
- Understand the development of celebrity and fan cultures within a framework of cultural history
- Critically examine responses to celebrity in a variety of media.
- Interrogate their own and their peers' engagement with these cultures

Programme Outcomes:

5A(i); 5A(iii); 5C(i); 5D(ii)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification. This is located at the Departmental/Schools page of the portal.

Learning Outcomes:

- Development of a detailed understanding of the ways in which celebrity is a cultural artifact - celebrities as networks of texts, and fan culture as a means of empowering fanhood through alternative texts.
- Students are expected to engage in a sophisticated, critical and knowledgeable way with major thinkers, debates and intellectual paradigms related to celebrity and fan cultures and put them to productive use
- Students are expected to demonstrate the ability to formulate and synthesize arguments cogently, retrieve and generate information, and select appropriate criteria to evaluate sources, with a detailed understanding of appropriate methods
- Students are expected to deliver work in oral and written formats with limited direction or supervision, demonstrating the capacity to consider and evaluate their own work using justifiable criteria

Indicative Content:

Key definitions, issues and theories about celebrity and fanhood

- Romantic origins
- The influence of mass media
- The cultural history of fanhood
- Theoretical development: from "charisma" to consumption
- The impact of electronic media
- Pseudo-events and pseudo-people

- Critiques of celebrity – expressed and implied
- The ethnography of fan culture
- The rise of the “celebritariat”: celebrity and politics

Assessment:

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved at Academic Council on June 28, 2012.

Teaching Methodology:

General subject matter will include art, literature, cinema, television, style, and music. The course will use video presentations and consist of lectures, screenings and class discussion. There will be an emphasis on student engagement with the research process and the critical exploration of a variety of sources, databases and archives. Where possible, visits will take place to relevant locations and exhibitions. Student work is assessed through a variety of ways using both formative and summative approaches. Feedback is intended to help improve student approach to learning and achieve better results.

Bibliography:

IndicativeText(s):

Bailey, Steve, *Media Audiences and Identity: Self-Construction in the Fan Experience*, Palgrave Macmillan , 2005

Gray, Jonathan, Sandvoss, Cornel and Lee, C, *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World*, New York University Press, 2007

Marshall, David, (Ed) *The Celebrity Culture Reader*, Routledge, 2006

Rojek, Chris, *Celebrity*, Reaktion Books, 2004

Please Note: The core and the reference texts will be reviewed at the time of designing the semester syllabus
