



**THE UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA
AT CHARLOTTE**

**COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
Summer 2015**

First Summer Session

AMST 2050 – 080 (CRN#31212)

McCloud, S.

The Supernatural and American Culture

100% ONLINE

100% online course delivered using Moodle. Despite claims that modernity is a realm of disenchantment, contemporary American culture continues to be haunted by ghosts, possessed by demons, and visited by alien others. In this course, we examine some of the multiple appearances and meanings of the supernatural in American culture.

AMST 3000 – 020 (CRN#30171)

Schact, J.

Pop Culture and the American Music Scene (W,O)

MTWR 11:30-1:30

This course will explore the impact of popular music on American culture. We'll begin with the earliest mass mediums (radio, acetates, field recordings) and the rise of rock 'n' roll. We'll continue through the youth culture movement of the second-half of the 20th century, including Woodstock, the sexual and drug revolutions, punk, hip-hop, and indie rock. We'll look at the effect music has had on other mediums, such as film and television. Finally, we'll examine the impact of the internet on the American music scene. Note: This course meets the writing intensive and oral communication goals for general education.

AMST 3020 – 080 (CRN#30134)

Belus, M.

Adolescence in America (W)

100% ONLINE

In this completely on-line class we will study the evolving role of teens in American culture. In doing so, we will review classic and contemporary films and various novels, shorts stories, poems and personal experiences. Some of the themes to be overviewed include adolescent girls, gangs, multiculturalism and teen relationships. We will begin our study by exploring teens in Colonial America and continue through contemporary adolescents with the objective to better understand the ever-changing role of the American teenager. Classes will be taught in Moodle with asynchronous modules that explore and interpret the evolution of American adolescence. Students will be expected to participate in on-line discussions and assignments and complete a class project, various reading and writing assignments, quizzes, and the final exam. Note: This course meets the writing intensive general education goal.

AMST 3020 – 081 (CRN#30163)**Bernard, M.****Cult Movies: At the Edge of Hollywood, the Mainstream, and Good Taste (W)****100% ONLINE**

“Cult movie” is a term that many of us have probably heard in reference to a particular film. However, if asked to define what exactly a “cult movie” is, we may struggle for a precise definition. This course will attempt to answer the deceptively simple question of what we mean when we say “cult movie.” In exploring this issue, we will ask several questions such as: what are the origins of cult behavior surrounding the movies? Are certain films from certain genres more likely to become cult movies than others? Can a filmmaker or studio aim to make a cult movie, or is a cult movie something that can only be determined by audience reception? Can Hollywood blockbusters be cult movies? Are some actors more cult than others? How has the cult reception of certain films varied over time as film viewing habits and formats change? Students will read, think, and write critically about films screened in class and will also present on selected films viewed outside of class. Films screened/discussed may include, but are not limited to: Freaks (1932), Wizard of Oz (1939), It’s a Wonderful Life (1946), Plan 9 from Outer Space (1959), Night of the Living Dead (1968), El Topo (1970), Pink Flamingos (1972), The Rocky Horror Picture Show (1975), This Is Spinal Tap (1984), and The Big Lebowski (1998). Note: This course meets the writing intensive goal for general education.

AMST 3020 – 082 (CRN#30166)**Eckard, P.****Growing Up Southern (W)****100% ONLINE**

Growing up in the American South often means coming to terms with a history, culture, and mindset unlike any other part of the United States. The South has such a rich, complex and diverse culture that even lifelong residents scratch their heads in wonderment. To help us understand the “Growing Up Southern” experience, we will study literature, films, and music. Our primary focus will be on the importance of family and place in shaping individual lives. Our lives are determined by our relationship with ourselves and with others, with time, with place, and with the culture in which we live. In essence, our relationships are our lives. Writing about them will help us connect the dots of our lives. We will also explore how race, religion, social class, and gender influence growing up in the South. This course meets both writing intensive and oral communication general education goals. Note: This course meets the writing intensive goal for general education. To be a member of this class, you must have on-line access with high-speed internet and be able to participate in these projects via 49er Express. You will also need access to a DVD player and have the ability to use Moodle.

AMST 3020 – 083 (CRN#30167)**Eckard, P.****Appalachian Literature and Culture (W)****100% ONLINE**

This course will focus on the literature and culture of Southern Appalachia. Through novels, stories, poetry, film, and music we will explore the rich heritage associated with this region. We will read works by James Still (River of Earth), Lee Smith (Saving Grace), Fred Chappell (I am One of You Forever), and selected writers collected in Listen Here: Women Writing in Appalachia. We will also examine Appalachian folk tales, ballads, and other oral traditions that defined people and place. Note: This course meets the writing intensive goal for general education.

AMST 3050 – 002 (CRN#31188)**Hicks, C.****Rethinking the Modern Civil Rights Movement Comments/Justifications****MTW 12:30-3:30**

What do scholars mean when they discuss civil rights? What was the Modern Civil Rights Movement? This course will focus on activism before the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision, the traditional narratives of the Modern Civil Rights Movement (1954-1965), as well as the ways that the Black Power Movement (1966-1982) influences our understanding of civil rights activism today

AMST 3050 – 080 (CRN#30136)**McMurray, B.****Motorsports in the South****100% ONLINE**

From the gritty, rutted fairground dirt tracks to the gleaming, sleek Super speedways, racing has always been a Southern product. NASCAR stock car racing has grown from its regional roots to become one of the nation's top sporting attractions. In this 100% ON LINE course we will explore the men and machines that raced the tracks of the South, as well as the rules and regulations that every driver has been caught breaking. From the brave moonshine runners of the 40's to the slick, highly-televised races of today, we will explore why this phenomenon is such a popular sport. Characters such as NASCAR's Founder, Big Bill France, along with famous drivers Fireball Roberts, Curtis Turner, Dale Earnhardt, Sr., Bobby Allison, Cale Yarborough and Others will be featured for their impact on Southern Culture. In addition to the study of racing in films, we will examine contemporary support industries such as marketing, public relations, and souvenir merchandising.

AMST 3050 – 081 (CRN#30162)**McMurray, B.****The Catawba: River of Life****100% ONLINE**

From the highlands of the Southern Appalachian Mountains, through the rolling Piedmont of the Carolinas, to the flat swamps of the south, the Catawba River has a rich history of Native American culture and life. This course will study the Catawba River, from its source to its termination in the Atlantic Ocean, and will include the history and culture of the Catawba (Iswa) Nation, beginning with their first mention by Spanish explorers in the 1500s to the present day Catawba Reservation near Rock Hill, South Carolina. Our study of this river of life will also examine its use today by private and corporate citizens.

AMST 3050 – 082 (CRN#30164)**Harris, M.****Poker In American Film and Culture****100% ONLINE**

In this completely on-line class in Moodle, we will examine the history of poker in America -- a game invented in the U.S. shortly after the nation's birth -- focusing in particular on cultural productions, including film and literature, in which poker is of special thematic importance. Students will not only learn poker's rich story and relevance to U.S. history generally speaking, but will also come to appreciate how the game serves as a lens through which to examine numerous aspects of American culture from the early 19th century to the present day.

AMST 3050 - 083 (CRN#30165)**Bishop, N.****Activism and the Environment in America****100% ONLINE**

This course will examine environmental activism in American history and culture. We will examine the efforts of both historical and modern day activists concerning such issues as species conservation, deforestation, air and water pollution, mining and mountain top removal, chemical spills, fracking, and nuclear safety. Through critical readings, online discussion, and self-reflection, students will also examine theory, political action, and their own communities to determine how individual, community, and institutional values impact one's relationship with the environment.

AMST 3050 – 084 (CRN#30169)**Bruner, M.****From the Sopranos to Breaking Bad:****The Male Antihero in Contemporary Television****100% ONLINE**

James Gandolfini has been memorialized in countless essays about his greatest role—the role that revolutionized television, the role that paved the way for so many other troubled men who served as microcosms of the American experience for viewers and critics. What do these violent, complicated characters mean, and not just to us—to TV and how we watch it. When *Mad Men* and *Breaking Bad* are over, is the television anti-hero here to stay? The heavy, heavy shows that feature these men—and, yes, they are almost always men—are labeled brilliant because they are able to say something about the American condition through despicable guys who are somehow watchable and also somehow representative. This course will examine the idea of the anti-hero. Beginning with the character of Tony Soprano to Don Draper and Walter White, and, Americans have been enamored with the idea of the flawed hero. When is the line crossed between protagonist/antagonist? Is the anti-hero his/her own worst enemy? Drawing on readings, and the television shows *The Sopranos*, *The Wire*, *Breaking Bad*, and *Mad Men*, we will examine the development of the main characters and the deeper societal issues that fuel their appeal. (DISCLAIMER: THIS COURSE CONTAINS EXTREMELY GRAPHIC MATERIAL, AND MAY BE UNSETTLING).

AMST 3050 – 085 (CRN#30170)**Bruner, M.****American Humor and Comedy****100% ONLINE**

Americans are a funny lot. We have been known to laugh at just about every aspect of public and private life--political gaffes, personal faults, and the newest viral videos, to name a few. Humor and comedy in this country has been used to uncover and dissect diverse social, cultural and political values, ideas and tensions. Constance Rourke suggests that American humor and comedy began with the close of the American Revolution, when the country "was freed from the worry of self-preservation" and its citizens began to regard themselves as "works of art." This course will use a variety of humor and comedy that has permeated American culture both historically and contemporarily. We will start by examining theories and functions of laughter and humor, and then explore the proliferation and types of comedy and humor in literature, media and performance by tracing the evolution of a nascent American "work of art" to what we now consider a distinctly American sense of humor based on national character(s) and experience(s).

AMST 3100 – 080 (CRN#30135)**Belus, M.****The 1930s****100% ONLINE**

In this 100% on-line course using Moodle and Second Life, we will examine how diverse social, economic, artistic, literary, philosophical and political forces shaped American society during the 1930s. We will discuss the complex and multifaceted nature of American culture during a tumultuous era that experienced the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl, the demise of the American Dream, the New Deal, and the rise of modern activism. The 1930s powerfully impacted the lives of ordinary people living under extraordinary circumstances. What can we learn from their experiences?

AMST 3100 – 081 (CRN#30168)**Kitrick, L.****The 1970s****100% ONLINE**

What do the 1970's bring to mind? Disco? Leisure suits? That '70s Show? Once passed, decades tend to be stereotyped and are actually more contradictory and varied than we remember or imagine them to be. While the 1970's saw plenty of dancing and too many dads in polyester, the decade also gave birth to glam, punk, and rap. The colorful 1970's also had a dark side—Watergate, the energy crisis, and continuing outbreaks of violence. The protest movements of the 1960's became increasingly more radical in the 1970's while receiving more mainstream attention. In addition, new developments in the arts, marketplace, and government that took place in the seventies continue to affect us today. In this course we will examine the politics, technology, and popular culture (including film, literature, music, and television) that made the 1970's an especially complex and dynamic decade.

Second Summer Session

AMST 3000 – 021 (CRN# 40083)**Hoffman, D.****Basketball in American Film (W,O)****MTWR 11:30-1:30**

This course examines the sport of basketball as a uniquely American and democratic innovation whose portrayal in cinema constitutes a metaphor for creative expression and explores populist issues of mentoring, leveling of race relations, and redemption from crime. Films will include Hoosiers (1986), Hoop Dreams (1994), Coach Carter (2003), Finding Forrester (2000). Note: This course meets the writing intensive and oral communication goals for general education.

AMST 3020 – 084 (CRN#40081)**Belus, M.****Food in America (W)****100% ONLINE**

100% online course delivered using Moodle. Food...we need it, we love it, but how does it shape our lives beyond our basic needs for sustenance? How does it impact us culturally? Ethnically? Romantically? In this 100% online course we will study the changing dynamic of food as it connects Americans through our rituals with family and friends, through media and advertising, and through our personal behaviors and relationship with food. Other topics we will cover include critical perspectives on gender and food, modified foods, fad diets, and the influence of the fast food industry on individuals and the nation. Course requirements include numerous reading assignments of books and articles, as well as formal and informal writing assignments. Note: This course meets the writing intensive general education goal.

AMST 3020 – 085 (CRN#40084)**Bernard, M.****The American Nightmare: Horror Film and American Culture (W)****100% ONLINE**

While some film genres come and go, the horror film has been a staple of American cinema since the release of Universal's *Dracula*, the first sound horror film, in 1931. This course traces the history of the American horror film, looking at how the genre has changed over time and how these changes reflect both cultural anxieties of our society and economic imperatives of the commercial film industry. This course acknowledges the transnational dimension of the term "American" and, accordingly, will consider the horror film's origins in German Expressionism and the recent influence of Asian cinema and international co-production on the genre. In keeping with the online nature of the course, a majority of films for the course will be available to watch online via Netflix, Amazon Instant Video, and YouTube. Participation in this course may require a subscription to one or more online streaming services. Warning: films assigned for this course may contain graphic content not suitable for all audiences. Note: This course meets the writing intensive goal for general education.

AMST 3020 – 086 (CRN# 40091)**Obie-Nelson, K.****Race in America (W)****100% ONLINE**

This course will examine the evolution and impact of race in America. Students will analyze racial ideology and the controversial issues surrounding race throughout history and culture. Students will learn how racial constructs have been and still are perpetuated within American society through such mediums of media, politics, labor, law, and education. This course will evoke critical thinking from students as they examine race in the world in which they live and the impact of racial paradigms and relations from the past, present, and future of American Society and culture. Note: This course meets the writing intensive goal for general education.

AMST 3050 – 086 (CRN# 40082)**Belus, M.****Contemporary American Childhood****100% ONLINE**

In this 100% online course, we will explore the evolving nature of childhood in American society from the mid-20th century to the present. We will examine representations of childhood in film, literature, and popular culture over the past several decades. We will also study the role of family, school, and peers in shaping children's lives, as well as controversies over child rearing, child health, inequality in education, and other issues that affect childhood in America today. Students will be expected to complete various projects, online presentations, reading and writing assignments and group work.

AMST 3050 – 087 (CRN#40085)**Bishop, N.****Poverty in America****100% ONLINE**

In this course, we will study the correlation between social, economic and political consequences of poverty in America and how poverty is often not recognized in our society. We will look at misconceptions and myths about poverty and the poor, including the "working poor." The course will examine the roles that race, gender, class, and age play in connection with poverty. We will ask such questions as: "What constitutes poverty?" "Who is affected by poverty?" "What is the feminization of poverty?" "What are the consequences of poverty on communities, families, and individual lives?" "What action is needed to address poverty in America?" Through critical readings, online discussion, and self-reflection, students will analyze how individual and community values and societal attitudes, systems, and policies can either perpetuate or alleviate poverty in America.

AMST 3050 – 088 (CRN#40086)**Bruner, M.****Television in America****100% ONLINE**

In this 100% on-line class in Moodle, we will study television's evolution as a technology, economic, and cultural influence on American society from the 1950s to the present. We will focus on prime time commercial broadcasting, but will also look at game shows, children's programming, and soap operas. Much required viewing as well as reading in media history and cultural interpretation.

AMST 3050 – 089 (CRN#40088)**Bauerle, S.****The Zombification of American Culture****100% ONLINE**

The current popularity of zombies in media highlights uncertainties about issues surrounding society, individuality, gender, religion, and science in American culture as well as reflects an interesting juxtaposition between the zombie's need to literally consume others and the quest for the American Dream. This course will examine graphic novels/comics, video games, films, and popular television programs to better understand the role of the zombie figure and the fear of the apocalypse in Americans' psyches.

AMST 3050 – A21 (CRN#40617)**Grano, D.****Sports, Media, and Culture****MTWR 3:00-5:00**

Analysis of the systems of media production and patterns of media representation that constitute contemporary sports culture. Focus on current issues in sport including controversies surrounding race, gender, sexuality, performance enhancement, concussions and other matters of political and social importance.

AMST 3050 – A80 (CRN# 40090)**Nooe, E.****Southern Culture Past and Present****100% ONLINE**

Southern Culture can be viewed as "a fiction of geographically bounded and coherent set of attributes to be set off against a mythical non-South." Consciously and unconsciously, Americans both in and outside the South have constructed images and expectations of the region that are manifested in what we identify as Southern Culture. Throughout this course, we will take an interdisciplinary approach exploring the South through history, anthropology, literature, and media to examine an array of topics such as Native Americans, slavery, sports, and tourism. We will also examine how incidents associated with these topics reinforce and, at other times, contradict popular conceptions of the South.

AMST 3050 – A81 (CRN#40092)**Obie-Nelson, K.****Sports in America****100% ONLINE**

This is a 100% online course using Moodle. This course explores the relationship between sports, culture, and society. Students will be exposed to the historical, cultural, and sociological aspects of the world of sports. This course will analyze the controversial issues surrounding these aspects as well as evoke critical thinking from the students as they examine sports in their own lives and in the world in which they live. Students will take an in-depth look at such topics as race, gender, commercialization, and the media and how these topics impact, disrupt, and/or distinguish sport society. The course will primarily focus on intercollegiate and professional sports.

AMST 3100 – 082 (CRN#40087)**Bruner, M.****The 1950s****100% ONLINE**

American Studies is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of a topic or period in American History. In a decades class, focusing on a shorter time period than is possible in a history survey provides the opportunity to look in more depth at the music, popular culture, literature, theater, art, sports, religion, race relations, gender roles, medicine, business, education, etc. of the period. Get ready to slip back in time to a fascinating period of Sputnik and spies, The Red Scare, James Dean and drive-ins, the birth of Rock and Roll, Elvis, Youth Culture, and Marilyn Monroe.

AMST 3100 – 083 (CRN# 40089)**Bauerle, S.****The 1990s****100% ONLINE**

The 1990s have been described as one of the most diverse and interesting periods in American history. The underground became mainstream as music, fashion, literature, film, and pop culture strived to test and transcend boundaries as society explored rebellion and idealism. The last decade of the millennium marked an explosion of economic, cultural, technological, and political activity in almost every aspect of American society. Some of the trends that we will trace through the 90s include: the rise of the grunge movement in music, movies, and fashion; the impact of the War on Terror and national traumas like the Oklahoma City Bombing and Los Angeles Riots; and the dramatic cultural transformations surrounding race, gender, and sexuality.