COURSE DESCRIPTION
We will explore the social, cultural, economic, and historical dimensions of theme parks (Disney, Six Flags, among others) from a global perspective. Through readings, discussion, films, short research projects, we will increase our understanding of theme parks at the beginning of the 21st century.

COURSE GOALS
Improve critical thinking by developing evaluative, problem-solving, and expressive skills.
Enhance group communication skills through discussions, small-group work, presentations or debates.
Develop intellectual curiosity and better understand the role of a student in an academic community.

Specific learning goals for our section:
Students should be able to offer a comprehensive social science based definition of a theme park.
Students should be able to discuss the history of theme parks from the 16th century onward to the present.
Students should understand the following dimensions of theme parks:
The underlying economics of the contemporary theme park industry including ownership structures, investment patterns, revenue streams, variable pricing models—with specific current data about industry leaders like Disney.
The branding, marketing and merchandising processes of the theme park industry across multiple media and commodity platforms.
Critical cultural analyses of the narrative content of theme parks, including analyses of race and gender images and ideologies.
The role of technological innovation in theme parks including roller coasters and other types of ride attractions, animatronics, utility corridors, crowd control and line management models, payment systems and IT.
How theme parks create a fantasy recreation world for consumers with linkages to the larger corporate mediascape.
The globalization of theme parks, mature versus emerging theme park consumer markets, and the importance of both new and abandoned theme parks as part of capital accumulation and the built environment.
More generally, the seminar should facilitate the development of research, critical thinking, writing and public presentation skill sets.

**REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS**
There is no assigned text. We will create our own set of customized readings based on our research and class discussions.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**
Your final course grade will be based on attendance and participation (20%), a short research paper—about seven double spaced typed pages—on an approved topic related to the themes of the seminar (30%), your class presentation of that paper (20%), and three short research homework assignments (30%). The grading system for this class is A through F. The following grading scale applies for this seminar:

93-100 (A), 90-92 (A-), 87-89 (B+), 83-86 (B), 80-82 (B-), 77-79 (C+), 73-76 (C), 70-72 (C-), 67-69 (D+), 60-66 (D), 59-0 (F)

**SCHEDULE OF TOPICS and ASSIGNMENTS**

- **January 27**: Introduction to the class
- **February 3**: What are theme parks?
- **February 10**: Historical development of theme parks
- **February 17**: Business dimensions of theme parks: ownership, revenue and profit
- **February 24**: Cultural analysis of theme parks
- **March 2**: Technological innovation in theme parks
- **March 9**: Discussion of research projects (one page proposal due in class)
- **March 16**: Spring Recess, no class meeting
- **March 23**: Class presentations of research projects
- **March 30**: Class presentations of research projects
- **April 6**: Class presentations of research projects

Note: The final written version of your paper is due by May 6 at 12 noon.

**CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS AND INFORMATION**

- **Class attendance and participation**: Attendance and active class participation are required.

- **Classroom Environment**: As members of the seminar, you are expected to read, discuss, and think critically about seminar topics and your responses to them. This does not mean that you are not supposed to disagree or have emotional reactions to the material, but you should also be willing to engage those reactions - and your classmates - in respectful and thoughtful ways.

- **Blackboard and E-mail**: Students are expected to check their Stony Brook e-mail account and log into Blackboard regularly for important course information from their instructor and Undergraduate College Advisors.
• **Americans with Disabilities Act:** If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, located at ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building, Room 128 (631) 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

• **Academic Integrity:** Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be held personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (School of Health Technology & Management, Nursing, Social Welfare, and Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at [http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/academic_integrity/index.html](http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/academic_integrity/index.html)

• **Critical Incident Management:** Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of University Community Standards any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and the School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures.

• **Course Evaluation:** Each semester Stony Brook University asks students to provide feedback on their courses and instructors through an online course evaluation system. The course evaluation results are used by the individual faculty, department chairs and deans to help the faculty enhance their teaching skills and are used as part of the personnel decision for faculty promotion and tenure. No individually identifiable data are ever reported back to the university or instructor. Students who have completed previous evaluations can view all faculty ratings at: [https://classie-evals.stonybrook.edu/](https://classie-evals.stonybrook.edu/)

• **Academic Success and Tutoring Center (ASTC):** The ASTC provides free academic support services for all undergraduate students, including one-on-one tutoring, small group tutoring, academic success coaching, and public speaking seminars. Learn more about these services and additional campus resources at [www.stonybrook.edu/tutoring](http://www.stonybrook.edu/tutoring).

• **UGC Events and Programs:** Getting involved and participating in campus life is an essential part of being a successful college student. As part of your 101 seminar, attending events and submitting reflection papers about those events was/is part of required course assignments. Although you will not have the same event requirements and assignments in this 102 seminar, you are expected to continue participating in events offered by your Undergraduate College as part of your Undergraduate College affiliation. (For students who are part of University Scholars, attendance at Scholars programs continues to be a requirement in Spring 2016.)