



'House' Ending Its Run This Season



After eight seasons and 177 episodes, Fox and the producers of House have decided that the current season of the medical drama will be its last.

The series, which stars Hugh Laurie as an unconventional doctor who frequently clashes with his colleagues and patients at a New Jersey hospital, has been a valuable property for the network. In addition to serving as a launchpad for other Fox efforts, the series rounded out its seventh season with more than 10 million viewers. In its most recent airing, House garnered a 2.5 rating in the coveted adults ages 18 to 49 demographic and 7.1 million viewers overall. (House ranked as one of primetime's top 10 series in its second, third and fourth seasons.)

The series was picked up for its current eighth season after protracted negotiations between House studio Universal Media Studios and Fox, which was looking to shave as much as 20 percent from its license fee. Fox made the formal announcement Wednesday, issuing a joint statement from executive producers David Shore, Katie Jacobs and Laurie.

"After much deliberation, the producers of House M.D. have decided that this season of the show, the eighth, should be the last. By April this year they will have completed 177 episodes, which is about 175 more than anyone expected back in 2004," they wrote.

They added: "The decision to end the show now, or ever, is a painful one, as it risks putting asunder hundreds of close friendships that have developed over the last eight years — but also because the



show itself has been a source of great pride to everyone involved."

The news comes as Fox has an increased roster of hourlong dramas, including J.J. Abrams' Alcatraz and Kiefer Sutherland-Tim Kring's Touch, both of which opened to impressive numbers and are considered likely to be the net's Monday lineup in the future.

The network also has yet to make a decision on the fate of its pricey time-travel dinosaur drama Terra Nova or of low-rated critical darling Fringe. In addition, Fox has five hourlong drama projects already ordered to pilot this season.

"While it's with much regret, and a lump in our throats, we respect the decision Hugh, David and Katie have made," Fox Entertainment president Kevin Reilly said in a statement. "A true original, on the page and amazingly brought to life by Hugh Laurie, there is only one Dr. House. For eight seasons, the entire House team has given us — and fans around the world — some of the most compelling characters and affecting stories ever seen on television."

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