

Introduction to Film
HUM 141
Sec. 2207 AN
Tu/Wed/Th 10:30-11:30

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Brief Course Description:

This course is a basic introduction to how films communicate meaning and influence society. The course gives the students an understanding of film forms, techniques and styles. Students develop a critical viewpoint and be able to explain the many ways in which film communicates. The overall goal of the course is to produce perceptive and sensitive film viewers. Feature-length films are viewed in class.

Detailed Course Description:

This is a general course designed to acquaint the student with a basic exposure and appreciation of film as an art form. The students will learn three major areas of filmmaking: Pre-Production, Production, Post-Production. The course will help students acquire and develop an understanding of and a greater appreciation for the art and history of film through viewing specific films, critiquing aspects of filmmaking, and understanding the director's intent in making the film. The course will also cover important critical analysis techniques when studying film to enhance analysis skills and how to better understand film and filmmakers' intentions. Important historical works and genres will be discussed and the major works in each genre will also be discussed. The students will also learn various duties found in filmmaking and how they have developed over the years. The course work includes film craft projects, testing of terms and definitions and critically analyzing various aspects of film.

Required Text:

1. Nichols, Bill. *Engaging Cinema: An Introduction to Film Studies*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010.
2. The student is responsible for locating, purchasing and viewing the required movies.

Interesting Websites:

<http://www.imdb.com/>
www.rottentomatoes.com/
<http://movies.nytimes.com/pages/movies/index.html>
<http://www.kids-in-mind.com/>
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/> (for writing)

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. View and review films with a critical understanding of the material.
2. Recite the dramatic structures.
3. Identify the basic elements of film.
4. Identify the genres and styles of film and their purposes.
5. Define the differences between films and their purposes in society.
6. Define the various roles required in the filmmaking process.
7. Identify the basic elements of the various film jobs and duties.
8. Evaluate and critically analyze film and write a critique on the film.

9. Evaluate important story aspects such as character development, plot, scene, setting, and dramatic structure.
10. Identify important historical changes in film.
11. Recite areas of the basic history of film and know the major films which changed the history of filmmaking.

Learning Tasks and Activities:

In order to succeed in this course each student needs to:

1. Read each assigned chapter in the texts.
2. Read and critically analyze all handout selections the instructor may give.
3. Engage actively in class discussion (attendance, therefore, is assumed).
4. Keep accurate notes on lectures and discussions.
5. Write all assigned papers and complete all assignments on time.
6. Document all cited work when appropriate.

Assessment of Outcomes:

Student learning will be assessed and grades assigned in the following areas:

1. Responsibility: the ability to recognize, understand, and accept ownership for learning by self-assessing, demonstrating, and evaluating behaviors that support the learning situation.
2. Communications: the ability to create meaning between themselves and their audience: learn to listen, speak and write effectively using words, graphic, electronic media, computers, and quantified data.
3. Problem-solving: the ability to assess, evaluate, and apply information from a variety of sources in a variety of contexts.
4. Global Awareness: students will demonstrate an awareness and appraisal of the world: its scientific complexity, its social diversity, and its artistic variety.

Plagiarism:

The following rules and definitions concerning plagiarism:

Definition: Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas without giving proper credit to the person who devised them. It includes any of the following:

1. Not citing the source for words or ideas which are not your own
2. Incorrect documentation into the body and the Works Cited Page
3. Carelessness or sloppiness in the research which results in faulty documentation
4. Use of purchased or acquired papers

Penalties for Cheating or Plagiarizing (WAC 132Q-4-061)

If the instructor suspects or believes the student has cheated or plagiarized, he is authorized to fail the student unless that student can prove the authenticity of the paper. The burden of proof rests on the student. If the instructor is convinced that cheating or plagiarism has taken place, the student will be dropped with a failing grade in the course.

First Offense: Automatic failure of the paper or test and possible failure of the course.
Second Offense: Automatic failure of the course.

Statement About All Written Work:

All written work must be in MLA (Modern Language Association) format in Times New Roman or New Courier, twelve (12) point font and stapled. While this is not an English class, your writing must be clear and accurate before the instructor will read your work. If you need assistance with writing the reports concerning what content needs to be included please ask the instructor. If you need assistance with writing the report please visit the Tutoring Center for assistance. If there are too many structural or grammatical errors the instructor will not accept, read or grade the work. The words 'you', 'I', 'we' or any form of 'get' may not be found in any of the written work, otherwise the grade for the written work will be lowered for each time one of those word appear in the work.

A Statement About Electronic Devices:

The student may not use cell phones, mp3 players, laptops or other communication or entertainment devices during class time. If the student is using such a device he/she will be asked to leave the class and will receive a failing grade for the day. If the student continues to use such devices he/she will be given a grade of 'F' for the class and will not be able to return to the class.

Eating In Class:

Please be sure to use the time before and/or after class for nourishment. While we do view films in this course and you may eat popcorn in the movie theatre or other food at home or at the movie you are not allowed to eat during the viewing of the films in this class. If the student is found eating or drinking (other than water) in class he/she will be asked to put it away or throw it away. If the student refuses, then he/she will be asked to leave and will receive a failing grade for the day. If the student continues to choose to eat or drink (other than water) during class then he/she will be given a grade of 'F' for the class and will not be able to return to the class.

Withdrawal Policy:

Please make sure to know the last day to withdraw from class. If the student does not withdraw by the deadline then he/she is given the grade of 'F'.

Disabilities Statement:

In accordance with the mandates of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973-Subpart E and the Americans with Disabilities Act, accommodations for otherwise qualified students with a disability(s) will be considered after receiving a student's request. The student will need to register with the Disability Support Services (DSS) office and provide appropriate documentation of the disability. Once the student has established a file and the disability(s) has been verified by DSS, then the facts of each situation will be thoroughly analyzed and reviewed to determine appropriate reasonable accommodations for classroom, laboratory or clinical settings. Accommodations that would compromise patient care, or fundamentally alter the essential nature of a program or activity are not considered to be reasonable.

A student who is denied an accommodation has the right to request a review of the determination through the defined grievance process available at each institution.

Procedures for student grievance are outlined in the SCC Student Handbook and in the SCC Center for Students with Disabilities Student Handbook.

Assessments:

Movie Reviews (5 Reviews = 20pts. each (100pts. Total)

The student will write reviews about the six films that the student is responsible to watch on his/her own. The student will respond to the questions within this syllabus for each film given by the instructor. The due dates may only be adjusted if needed. Each response should be no more than a page and a half and must be typed in MLA format. **The Movie Reviews are due the Thursday after the film has been screened (unless the day is a holiday, then the review will be due the next class meeting).**

Attendance and Participation (30pts.)

Each student will need to attend class, participate in discussions, and participate in group work and complete required work for the full duration of each class meeting. I do not distribute the PowerPoint presentations. If the student is absent, then he/she must schedule a time to meet with me outside of class and/or learn what was discussed in class from another student in the class. If the student is five minutes or more late he/she will not be allowed in class unless he/she has made arrangements with the instructor prior to the specific day of class. If the student misses more than three class meetings he/she will lose five points. **More than five absences are grounds for failure.** If the student believes that any absence is an excused absence please speak to the instructor as soon as possible to deduce if the absence is excusable.

Mid-term (20pts.)

The mid-term exam will be on the material we discussed in class. This in-class exam will be about various elements of film that we have discussed as well as readings from the written and electronic material required for the course. **You must take the Mid-term in order to pass the class.**

Final (40pts)

The final will consist of two parts. The first part includes a Scantron test and the second will be an evaluation of a scene that will be shown in class. The material will include all that has been discussed in class and in the text. You must take the Final in order to pass the class. **The student must also be present on the Final day of class in order to pass the class.**

Responses (4 Total 15 pts each = 60pts.)

The student will complete four (4) responses to a type of film or moviemaking material. These materials will include written documents, screenplay excerpts, examples, criticism, or other aspects of film. Each response should be no more than a page and a half and must be typed in MLA format. **The Responses are due on Thursdays unless the day is a holiday, then the review will be due the next class meeting).**

AFI Independent Review (10pts.)

Each student must write a critique one of American Film Institute's (AFI) 100 American Greatest Movies, which is not being screened in class. The report must include a thorough critique based on the material discussed in class. The review should be no more than a page and a half. It is due before the final presentations for the course begin. **May be turned in at any time but must be turned at least one week before finals.**

Totals:

Movie Reviews = 100pts.

Attendance & Participation =30pts.

Mid-term =20pts.

Final = 40

Responses =60pts.

AFI Independent Review = 10pts

Total = 260 pts.

Grades:

A

4.0 = 260-254

3.9 = 253-249

3.8 = 248-244

A-

3.7 = 243-239

3.6 = 238-236

3.5 = 235-231

B+

3.4 = 230-226

3.3 = 225-221

3.2 = 220-215

B

3.1 = 214-210

3.0 = 209-208

2.9 = 207-205

B-

2.8 = 204-202

2.7 = 201-200

2.6 = 199-197

C+

2.5 = 196-195

2.4 = 194-192

2.3 = 191-189

C

2.2 = 188-187

2.1 = 186-184

2.0 = 183-182

C-

1.9 = 181-179

1.8 = 178-176

1.7 = 175-174

D+

1.6 = 173-171

1.5 = 170-169

1.4 = 168-166

D

1.3 = 165-163

1.2 = 162-161

D-

1.1 = 160-158

1.0 = 157-156

.9 = 155-153

F

.8 = 152-150

.7 = 149-147

Missed Work and No Make-Up Work:

There is no make-up work. The student must make arrangements to turn any work in before the due date if he/she is unable to turn it in at the assigned day and time. If the student cannot attend the class day in which the document is due then he/she must submit the work through e-mail. **(This can only be done with one work only.)** Then, when the student returns he/she must turn in a hard copy of the work. The instructor will not print the work and it is the student's responsibility to hand in a completed and printed MLA formatted document. All work is counted in the overall grading.

Extra Credit

There are two possibilities for extra credit. One: The student can volunteer to help with the current play at Spokane Community College. Make sure to ask the instructor for more details. Two: The student can discover the mystery score for the day to earn one (1) point for each score by discovering the movie; the year the movie was made a three-sentence evaluation of the music. This is limited to a total of five mystery scores (totaling five (5) points). *All extra credit must be turned in one week before finals.*

Expectations:

For each class each student needs to...

1. Be punctual and attend every class, except in extreme emergencies.
2. Have the appropriate supplies (paper, text books, writing tools, and other supplies).
3. Have read the assigned material and be prepared to discuss the readings.
4. Listen attentively and participate through class discussions and group lessons.
5. Respect everyone's point of views and ideas.
6. Choose to learn as much as possible and show a positive attitude about the material while in class.
7. Develop positive learning habits throughout the class.

The Instructor will...

1. Attend every class on time and be prepared.
2. Grade each essay and all other work fairly and objectively.
3. Inform each student about the course content and grading policies.
4. Try to answer each question to the best of his ability.
5. Make the lessons and materials as interesting as possible.

Introduction to Film
HUM 141
Assignment Schedule

Week One:

Why Study Films? Basic

Area of Study: Directing: Seeing the Big Picture

Genre of Study: Drama: What is a drama?

How does it illustrate the human condition on the screen? The change from plays to films. The difference of film and plays. The challenges of filmmaking. Three Phases of Filmmaking: Pre-production, Production, Post-production. ***Engaging Cinema Read: Introduction***

Response One Due Thursday: Directing

Response 1: Directing Question for an example of a show you have seen at home.

1. Does the media that you chose for this assignment (ex: sitcom, movie, short film, documentary) keep your interest? Why?
 2. What is the main audience group (target audience) for the media?
 3. What about the material could hold the interest of an audience of various age groups?
 4. Does the media help to create any emotional response?
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Week Two:

Area of Study: Editing: Making the Cut. ***Engaging Cinema Read: Chapter One***

Drama Screening: *American Beauty* (Movie Review Due Thursday)

Week Three:

Area of Study: Screenplays: From Word to Screen

Genre of Study: Romance/Comedy/Romantic Comedy/Dramedy

What sense of humor? Pacing, timing, character exaggeration. Changing humor through history. Creating the perfect comedy. ***Engaging Cinema Read: Chapter Four***

Response Two Due Thursday: Screenplay

Response 2: Screenwriting Questions for one of the examples in class.

1. Do the characters talk like real people talk?
 2. Summarize what happens in the scene.
 3. How is the format of the script different than the format of a novel?
 4. Is this script easy to read? Why or why not?
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Week Four:

Area of Study: Setting/Location/Backdrops: Creating Reality. ***Engaging Cinema Read: Chapter Eight***

Comedy Screening: *Court Jester* (Movie Review Due Thursday)

Week Five:

Area of Study: Music & Sound Effects: Enhancing the Scene

Genre of Study: Thriller/Suspense/Action

How suspense and thriller films are different. Threats and release of tension. Raising the bar—

change from suspense to thriller to horror. Discuss the elements of action and adventure films. What makes them tick? ***Engaging Cinema Read: Chapter Ten and Eleven***

Mid-term

Week Six:

Area of Study: Trailers and Promotion: The Expansive PR. ***Engaging Cinema Read: Chapter Nine***

Suspense Screening: *North By Northwest* (**Movie Review Due Thursday**)

Week Seven:

Area of Study: Special Effects, Visual Effects & Stunts: Extraordinary Feats

Genre of Study: Fantasy/Horror/Science Fiction

What makes genre films such as Science Fiction and Horror so popular? How have they changed? Visual Effects maturity.

Response Three Due Thursday: Promotional Material

Response 3: Find a Promotional Material in class.

1. Describe the material you have chosen.
 2. What makes the material effective in influencing an audience?
 3. Is the material geared towards a particular age group (target audience)? What about the material would interest the particular age group?
 4. Overall, is the particular form of promotional material effective in increasing audience interest?
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Week Eight:

Area of Study: Ratings System ***Engaging Cinema Read: Chapter Six***

Genre of Study: Foreign Films/Animation/ Western /War /Epic /Historical/Musical

Science Fiction Screening: *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (**Movie Review Due Thursday**)

The non-USA filmmaking. How foreign films each are cultural specific identities. Cross-cultural films. When do foreign films work in the US? Academy vs. Golden Globe.

Week Nine:

Area of Study: Make-up & Costumes: Transforming Reality

Genre of Study: Experimental Films

The changing face of make-up. Visual effects can enhance any scene. The progression of filmmaking maturing storytelling elements through visual effects. ***Engaging Cinema Read: Chapter Two***

Response Four Due Thursday: Make-up and Visual Effects

Response 4: Choose a scene from a movie with make-up:

1. Do visual effects look real?
 2. Is the make-up different from what a person would wear every day? How?
 3. Discuss the actor's ability to act with the make-up. Can he/she easily act through the make-up or does it limit his/her performance?
 4. Does the make-up make the scene more enjoyable? How?
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Week Ten:

Genre of Study: Documentary/Short Film/Independent Films

Independent Film Screening: *Pieces of April* (**Movie Review Due Thursday**)

Short films: more difficult than you think. Short films are changing the face of film. "I will make my own film then," says the no money, independent filmmaker.

Week Eleven:

Short Film Screening: Various

Documentary Screening: *The Polygram Story or Short Films*

Final:

Movie Review Questions

The movie reviews are due the Monday after the film has been screened.

1. Summarize the story and discuss the genre of the film (ex: drama, comedy, romance.)
 2. Choose one character and his or her journey and change from beginning to the end of the movie.
 3. Discuss one scene, which you liked and why you feel it was a good scene.
 4. What was the point of the movie? (ex: a political statement, a moral idea, reflections on society)
 5. Does the film stand the test of time? Why or why not?
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Extra Credit Performance Report Questions for the Play

The review must be turned in one week before finals.

1. Discuss the basics about the performance (Author, Director, Performers, Company, and Date of the show and other important information.)
2. Discuss the design of the show. (ex: set, costume, lighting, sound, music)
3. Discuss the story and purpose of the show. (Ex: morals, ethics questions, themes found in the production.)
4. What genre (comedy, drama, science fiction, fantasy, political theatre, or a combination of various genres) is the production and what reveals the genre?
5. What does the production reveal about the human condition, what it means to be human?

Ian Celluloid

Professor Sharp

HUM 141

12 January 2009

The Genius of Cutthroat Island

The fantastical history of pirates and cinema has always been balanced with some successes and many failures. The critical and box office success list of pirate films is short and includes very few films. One film which reveals the fanciful nature which is romanticized throughout pirate mythology and still is faithful to the true nature and practices of pirates is *Cutthroat Island* (1995).

Before *Cutthroat Island* there was Errol Flynn who created the wonderful “swashbuckling” characters such as Peter Blood in *Captain Blood* (1935), and Geoffrey Thorpe in *The Sea Hawk* (1940), which both met with critical and financial success. But, some films which were produced after *Cutthroat Island* such as the recent *Pirates of the Caribbean* trilogy (*Curse of the Black Pearl* (2003), *Dead Man’s Chest* (2006) and *At World’s End* (2007), lead to great financial success, but met with negative criticism from many critics. Anthony Lane describes *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man’s Chest* (2006) as having a “ new plot [which] has all the appeal of a seaweed sandwich, being dark, salty, and indigestible” (“Men at Sea” www.newyorker.com). Another film which garnered negative criticism includes Roman Polanski’s *Pirates* (1986). *Cutthroat Island* was both a critical and financial failure, but much of the failure included the time which the movie was produced, the audience’s stereotypes and the studio’s financial difficulties.

Independent AFI Review Questions

The review must be turned in one week before finals.

1. Who wrote the screenplay? Who directed the film? When was the film produced?
2. Summarize the plot of the film.
3. Who are the main characters? How do the characters change and grow throughout the movie?
4. Why do you think the movie earned a respected place on the AFI list?
5. Based on the elements of filmmaking we have discussed, evaluate the film.

This is the American Film Institute's list of the 100 Greatest Movies

- 1.CITIZEN KANE (1941)
- 2.CASABLANCA (1942)
- 3.GODFATHER, THE (1972)
- 4.GONE WITH THE WIND (1939)
- 5.LAWRENCE OF ARABIA (1962)
- 6.WIZARD OF OZ, THE (1939)
- 7.GRADUATE, THE (1967)
- 8.ON THE WATERFRONT (1954)
- 9.SCHINDLER'S LIST (1993)
- 10.SINGIN' IN THE RAIN (1952)
- 11.IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE (1946)
- 12.SUNSET BOULEVARD (1950)
- 13.BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI, THE (1957)
- 14.SOME LIKE IT HOT (1959)
- 15.STAR WARS (1977)
- 16.ALL ABOUT EVE (1950)
- 17.AFRICAN QUEEN, THE (1951)
- 18.PSYCHO (1960)
- 19.CHINATOWN (1974)
- 20.ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST (1975)
- 21.GRAPES OF WRATH, THE (1940)
- 22.2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY (1968)
- 23.MALTESE FALCON, THE (1941)
- 24.RAGING BULL (1980)
- 25.E.T. THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL (1982)
- 26.DR. STRANGELOVE (1964)
- 27.BONNIE & CLYDE (1967)
- 28.APOCALYPSE NOW (1979)
- 29.MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON (1939)
- 30.TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE (1948)
- 31.ANNIE HALL (1977)
- 32.GODFATHER PART II, THE (1974)
- 33.HIGH NOON (1952)

34. TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD (1962)
35. IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT (1934)
36. MIDNIGHT COWBOY (1969)
37. BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES, THE (1946)
38. DOUBLE INDEMNITY (1944)
39. DOCTOR ZHIVAGO (1965)
40. NORTH BY NORTHWEST (1959)
41. WEST SIDE STORY (1961)
42. REARWINDOW (1954)
43. KING KONG (1933)
44. BIRTH OF A NATION, THE (1915)
45. STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE, A (1951)
46. CLOCKWORK ORANGE, A (1971)
47. TAXI DRIVER (1976)
48. JAWS (1975)
49. SNOW WHITE & THE SEVEN DWARFS (1937)
50. BUTCH CASSIDY & THE SUNDANCE KID (1969)
51. PHILADELPHIA STORY, THE (1940)
52. FROM HERE TO ETERNITY (1953)
53. AMADEUS (1984)
54. ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT (1930)
55. SOUND OF MUSIC, THE (1965)
56. M*A*S*H (1970)
57. THIRD MAN, THE (1949)
58. FANTASIA (1940)
59. REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE (1955)
60. RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK (1981)
61. VERTIGO (1958)
62. TOOTSIE (1982)
63. STAGECOACH (1939)
64. CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND (1977)
65. SILENCE OF THE LAMBS, THE (1991)
66. NETWORK (1976)
67. MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE, THE (1962)
68. AMERICAN IN PARIS, AN (1951)
69. SHANE (1953)
70. FRENCH CONNECTION, THE (1971)
71. FORREST GUMP (1994)
72. BEN-HUR (1959)
73. WUTHERING HEIGHTS (1939)
74. GOLD RUSH, THE (1925)
75. DANCES WITH WOLVES (1990)
76. CITY LIGHTS (1931)
77. AMERICAN GRAFFITI (1973)
78. ROCKY (1976)
79. DEER HUNTER, THE (1978)
80. WILD BUNCH, THE (1969)
81. MODERN TIMES (1936)
82. GIANT (1956)
83. PLATOON (1986)
84. FARGO (1996)

85. DUCK SOUP (1933)
86. MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY (1935)
87. FRANKENSTEIN (1931)
88. EASY RIDER (1969)
89. PATTON (1970)
90. JAZZ SINGER, THE (1927)
91. MY FAIR LADY (1964)
92. PLACE IN THE SUN, A (1951)
93. APARTMENT, THE (1960)
94. GOODFELLAS (1990)
95. PULP FICTION (1994)
96. SEARCHERS, THE (1956)
97. BRINGING UP BABY (1938)
98. UNFORGIVEN (1992)
99. GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER (1967)
100. YANKEE DOODLE DANDY (1942)