

ENG 2300: Film Analysis; Spring 2016 (section 1794)

Class: MWF 6 (12:50-1:40pm)

Screening: R 9-11 (4:05-7:05pm)

Classroom: ROL 115

Instructor: Peter Gitto

Email: peter.gitto@ufl.edu

Office: Turlington 4325

Office Hours: W 7 and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The goal of ENG 2300 is to provide students with a working knowledge of film vocabulary within the context of film history and film theory. This course will allow you to begin your exploration of the field by watching, discussing, and writing about films, and by engaging in critical reading of texts in film theory and criticism. By the end of this course, students will not only have a greater knowledge of how to talk about films, but also how to read, analyze, and think about films.

The course will emphasize narrative film. The course has a strong writing component and we will devote time to research and writing strategies; we will use a short guide “Writing about Movies” to address these issues.

This is a General Education course providing student learning outcomes listed in the Undergraduate Catalog. For more information, see:
<http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-educationrequirement.aspx#learning>.

TEXTS

Required:

Barsam, Richard and Dave Monahan. *Looking at Movies: An Introduction to Film*. 4th Ed. New York: Norton, 2012.

(Pack will include DVD tutorials (2 DVDs) and “Writing about Movies” guide)

Additional readings will be provided as PDF files, via Canvas

*A Netflix DVD account is *recommended* for the course (one DVD out at a time, circulating); this makes writing about films a lot easier—you can schedule when you want to work on your papers and know you will have the DVD available. But most films will also be available at Library West.

*The films under discussion feature some intense issues, such as death. Please note that while none of the films are *primarily* “about” suicide, a few feature a suicide as an element of the plot. Our great literature, such as *Hamlet* and *The Sound and the Fury*, also has this element.

*We will be watching a significant number of foreign films, which require subtitle reading.

UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS

Statement of Composition (C) and Humanities (H) credit:

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-educationrequirement.aspx>

Statement of Writing requirement (WR):

This course can provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/gordon.aspx>

Statement of student disability services:

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Final Grade Appeals:

Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant in the Department of English. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

Statement on harassment:

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/>

Statement on academic honesty:

All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

Classroom Behavior:

Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diverse student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own.

Students who text during class will face attendance-related penalties.

Graded Materials:

Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a re-submission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the student's responsibility to have and to make available this material.

Phone/ technology policy: Phones should remain in your bag or pocket during class. It's ok to use your phone during breaks, but they should be promptly stowed away when class resumes. If I see you using your phone during class I will mark you absent and I will not notify you of this. Laptops and Tablets should be used for classroom related purposes only (note-taking, viewing class readings). If you distract the instructor or a fellow student due to inappropriate use of laptop or tablet, you will be marked absent.

****During film screenings, all devices should be stowed away.** A lit monitor is highly distracting in a theater environment.

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. Missing class will not only put you behind in terms of course material, but will also deprive the class of your contributions to discussion. You may miss up to *three class meetings and one film screening* (all together, a week of class) before your grade is affected. Illnesses and emergencies count as part of the excused 4 meetings. If you miss more classes, your final grade will be lowered one-third of a letter grade (from A- to B+, for example) for each additional absence. If you miss more than six class sessions regardless of circumstances, you fail the course automatically. Two tardies (arriving after class has started)=one absence. If you are more than 10 mins late to class, that is an absence. During a double or single period, if you leave early you will be marked absent. Attendance sign in sheet will circulate the first minute of class. If you miss this circulation, it is your responsibility to sign in as tardy after class has finished. Scheduled exams during a screening period count towards your 4 excused absences.

If you are absent, please ask a fellow student, rather than the instructor, for info on what was missed. Make arrangements with two fellow students and get their contact info.

Use these absences wisely in case of extenuating circumstances. Illness or family difficulties do not excuse you from this policy. The only exemptions are for university-sponsored activities such as musical performances and athletic competition, court-imposed obligations such as jury duty of subpoena, and religious holidays. Absences of students who participate in athletic or extracurricular activities fall under the University's "Twelve-Day Rule," and may be permitted in those conditions to make up missed work without penalty. Please note, however, that you must, whenever this is reasonably possible, discuss these absences with me in advance in order to avoid being marked absent.

Online Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback of the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

WRITING REQUIREMENTS and OTHER ASSIGNMENTS

For this course, the University requires 6,000 words written formally (ie, in-class writing does not count). (300 words double spaced = about 1 page)

A hard copy of the paper is due at the beginning of class. You need to also upload your paper to Canvas BEFORE the beginning of class the day it is due.

Papers are to be typed; 12 pt. font; 1 inch margins; double spaced, pages numbered in upper right hand corner. STAPLED. Papers should have a title that indicates the film(s) to be discussed with an indication of your thesis. Papers should not be generically titled such as, "Formal Analysis Paper." Works Cited lists should be in MLA form, properly cited on a separate page. You should not take up excessive space on the first page; your name and the date in the heading is sufficient.

Intro letter and photo (1 page)

Midterm Paper: (4 pages) Students will construct an argument, engaging with films discussed or referenced in the first half of the syllabus.

Three 2-page papers (6 pages total) on an aspect of the week's film (this will accompany your in-class presentations)

A final paper will be completed in stages.

1. Prospectus (1 page): You will write 1 page telling me the films (1-3) you will be working on for the final paper. They may be ones viewed or discussed in class or may be of your own choosing, or a combination of the two, ie, perhaps investigating more works of a certain director of who's films we have viewed. They should be available on DVD, not currently in the theaters. You will write about possible arguments you could make about the film(s) you have chosen, or the particular argument that you foresee you will make in your final paper.
2. Annotated Bibliography (3 pages): You will write an annotated bibliography consisting of 4 well-chosen scholarly sources that you can include as reference in your final paper. These should be about, or compliment, the films you have chosen (in some instances, you will not find anything written on your selected films, and you must refer to criticism about the genre or film theory). I encourage you to use film theory! (see the book available at Lib West, *Film theory and criticism : introductory readings*, edited by Leo Braudy, and Marshall Cohen, 7th ed.) Each annotation should be ½ page, and should include a summary of the work, which would be an outline of the argument and main points. You should also indicate how it could fit into your argument.
3. Final Paper (5 pages): The final paper will be a well written, organized, and edited 5 pages. I will be looking for a clear, interesting, specific, and well-thought-out *argument* which incorporates the film(s) you have selected. You should incorporate the 4 sources you researched in the annotated bibliography within your writing. Also think about formal analysis and cultural criticism in planning and writing the final paper. Will be due the last day of class. You may illustrate your paper with specific film stills, but these will not count within the 5 pages of text. The final paper should include a works cited (page 6).

Presentations: The course will be highly participatory. Students will give in-depth group presentations on the weeks' films. Short papers by each student will accompany the presentations.

Exam: There will be one exam covering film terms.

Quizzes: There may be reading pop-quizzes. You must do the required reading thoroughly by the date it is due. The quizzes are to encourage regular, attentive reading. Quizzes may also cover something that was discussed previously in class. This is to encourage daily attentiveness and investment in the course.

Graded Materials: Please keep all graded materials if you would like to estimate your grade during the semester.

GRADING

Grade breakdown (total 100%)

Verbal Participation, attentiveness, and attendance and quizzes: 15%

Presentations average: 20%

Exam: 15%

Writing total: 50%

Writing breakdown:

Midterm paper: 15%

Three 2-page papers (5% each): 15%

Annotated Bibliography: 5%

Final Paper: 15%

*Participation includes attendance, doing the assigned readings thoroughly and on time, watching the films attentively and critically, and contributing participation that enhances the quality of the class in discussions or otherwise. Verbal participation is graded on quality as well as quantity. Students should come to class prepared with valuable comments about the films, readings, and concepts.

Grade Meanings for Papers and shorter essays (such as on exams):

Your grade will depend on the quality of your analysis and the clarity and organization of your argumentation. Your grade will take into consideration the quality of the content of your paper, its organization and coherence, its argument and support, and its style and proper use of writing grammar and mechanics. Here is the meaning behind the grades I assign to your papers; you can use these statements to determine how you might work toward a higher grade:

A--You did what the assignment asked for at a high quality level, and your work shows originality and creativity. Please note that "originality and creativity" do not mean the bizarre, or the use of shortcuts or gimmicks that might suggest, but do not replace, hard work.

Originality and creativity come through hard work, close analysis of films, rigor of thought, and augmentation and refinement of ideas. Since careful editing and proofreading are essential in writing, papers in the A range must be free of typos and grammatical or mechanical errors. An A paper will have a clear, concise, and original thesis supported by clearly articulated evidence from the film(s) and/or secondary sources.

B--You did what the assignment asked of you at a high quality level. Work in this range needs revision; however, it is complete in content, is organized well, and shows special attention to style.

C--You did what the assignment asked of you. Work in this range needs significant revision, but it is complete in content and the organization is logical. The style is straightforward but unremarkable.

D--You did what the assignment asked of you at a poor quality level. Work in this range needs significant revision. The content is often incomplete and/or the organization is hard to discern. Attention to style is often nonexistent or uneven.

E--An E is usually reserved for people who don't do the work or don't come to class. However, if your work shows little understanding of the needs of the assignment or demonstrates that you put little effort in completing it, you will receive a failing grade.

Checklist for Papers

Quality of Content (What you're writing and why you're writing it)

Unique and Interesting Ideas (but not bizarre or gimmicky)

Strength of Overall Argument

Ideas show the ***product*** of your effort and rigor of your thinking

Organization of Argument (How you're writing it at the meta-level)

Elements of selected formal qualities in film(s) support argument

Selected formal qualities in films are linked to a larger meaning or reasoning

Good selection of and use of supporting evidence from film(s) and/or secondary sources

Clarity of thesis (or main argument)

Writing (How you're writing it at the micro-level)

Fluidity of Style (Is it relatively easy to read and understand your ideas?)

Grammar (Is it correct? Is writing free of typos/ spelling errors?)

Clarity of thought (at sentence level and at paragraph level)

SCHEDULE: *Dates are due dates for papers, assignments, and readings. Also view the DVD tutorial along with the textbook chapters.

Week One:

Jan. 6 – Course Introduction

Screening: *Rules of the Game*, dir. Jean Renoir 1939

Jan. 8 – Discuss film; Bazin vs. Eisenstein

Week Two:

Jan. 11 – Chapter 5, Mise-en-scène; form and content

Jan. 13 – context for *Caché*; **letter of introduction due**

Screening: *Caché*, dir. Michael Haneke 2005

Jan. 15 – discuss film; sign up for presentations

Week Three:

Jan. 18 – Holiday, no class

Jan. 20 – Introduce film; allusions to Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*

Screening: *The Great Beauty*, dir. Paolo Sorrentino 2013

Jan. 22 – discuss film; Reading: "Virginia Woolf's Moments of Being"

Week Four:

Jan. 25 – Con't Chapter 5, Mise-en-scène; Read "Weimar Cinema" (Ch. 10)

Jan. 27 – Presentation on Hitchcock's *The Birds* (1963), *Rear Window* (1954)

Screening: *Psycho*, dir. Alfred Hitchcock 1960

Jan. 29 – discuss film

Week Five:

Feb. 1 – Chapter 6, Cinematography

Feb. 3 – Presentation on Antonioni's *L'Eclisse* (1962), *Blow Up* (1966)

Screening: *L'Avventura*, dir. Michelangelo Antonioni 1960

Feb. 5 – discuss film

Week Six:

Feb. 8 – con't Chapter 6, Cinematography

Feb. 10 – Presentations on *24 City* (Jia, 2008), *Still Life* (Jia, 2006)

Screening: *A Touch of Sin*, dir. Jia Zhangke 2013

Feb. 12 – discuss film. Reading: Wang, "Violence, wuxia, migrants: Jia Zhangke's cinematic discontent in *A Touch of Sin*"

Week Seven:

Feb. 15 – *Taxidermia*, dir. Gyorgy Palfi 2006 (third segment)

Feb. 17 – Presentation on reading: De Baecque, "Demodern Aesthetics"

Screening: *Werckmeister Harmonies*, dir. Bela Tarr 2000

Feb. 19 – discuss film

Week Eight:

Feb. 22 – Early Cinema, Ch. 10

Feb. 24 – Early Cinema

Screening: No Screening, work on papers

Feb. 26 – **paper due**; brief presentations on papers

Week Nine: Spring Break

Week Ten:

Mar. 7 – Chapter 8, Editing

Mar. 9 – Presentations: *Frances Ha* (Noah Baumbach 2015), *Welcome to Me* (Shira Piven 2015)

Screening: *Mistress America*, dir. Noah Baumbach 2015

Mar. 11 – discuss film

Week Eleven:

Mar. 14 – Con't Chapter 8, Editing

Mar. 16 – the evolution of the film score: from mickey mousing to minimalism

Screening: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Dir. Mike Nichols, 1966

Mar. 18 – discuss film

Week Twelve:

Mar. 21 – The Romantic Hollywood score

Mar. 23 – Reading presentation: "Melancholy as an Aesthetic Emotion" (5 sections)

<http://www.contempaesthetics.org/newvolume/pages/article.php?articleID=214>

Screening: *Out of Africa*, dir. Sydney Pollack 1985

Mar. 25 – Discuss film

Week Thirteen:

Mar. 28 – **exam** on film terms

Mar. 30 – Presentations: Kubrick's *2001 A Space Odyssey* (1968), *The Shining* (1980)

Screening: *A Clockwork Orange* dir. Stanley Kubrick 1971

Apr. 1 – Discuss film; **Proposals due**

Week Fourteen:

Apr. 4 – historiography, revisionist histories, the biopic

Apr. 6 – Presentation on *Marie Antoinette*, dir. Sophia Coppola 2006

Screening: *Amadeus*, dir. Milos Forman 1984

Apr. 8 – Discuss film, Readings by Keefe and Marshall on Amadeus

Week Fifteen:

Apr. 11 – "Philip Glass and the Minimalist Score"; **Annotated Bibliography due**

Apr. 13 – introduce *The Hours* and its context; article: "How Composers Shape our Emotions"

Screening: *The Hours*, dir. Stephen Daldry 2002

Apr. 15 – discuss film

Week Sixteen:

Apr. 18 – **Paper due**, Brief presentations on papers

Apr. 20 – Brief presentations on papers