

ENG 2300 (Class #13922) - Film Analysis Spring 2019

Instructor Name: Michelle Neuffer

Course meeting times & locations: Turlington 2334. T 11:45-1:40, Screening 7:20 -10:10; R 12:50-1:40

Office Location and Hours: Turlington 4801, Office Hours R 2:00-4:00

Course website: Canvas

Instructor Email: mneuffer@ufl.edu

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to thinking and writing about the cinema by means of film theory and history. As an introduction to film analysis, ENG 2300 provides students with a working knowledge of film vocabulary (e.g., the distinction between a “long take” and a “long shot”) and the tools to analyze film techniques such as editing, sound, and cinematography. Having completed this course, students will have a sense of both film history’s general outline and some of film theory’s most important issues. The main purpose of the class is to develop a more engaged analysis of a given film’s style and structure, as well as developing the skills to express that analysis in elegant writing. With that goal in mind, reading about the films is just as vital as watching them, as course readings will provide models for good writing as well as effective critical analysis.

General Education Objectives:

- This course confers General Education credit for either Composition (C) *or* Humanities (H). This course also fulfills 6,000 of the university’s 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).
- Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.
- The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

General Education Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication and critical thinking:

- **Content:** Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
- **Communication:** Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

Required Texts:

David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction*. McGraw-Hill.

Assignments (see below for Grading Rubric):

Participation

This class is discussion based, so participation is required (thankfully, movies are incredibly fun to discuss). This means you must arrive to class on time, having done the assigned reading and viewing. As you listen and share your perspective in class, please also be respectful of the diverse backgrounds of your peers. During the discussion, I also expect you to practice using the film terminology that we will learn throughout the semester.

Reading Quizzes

Pop quizzes will occur periodically. Questions will be straightforward, but they will be based on the reading, so be sure to arrive prepared!

Formal Response (2 at 500 words each)

During weeks 2-6, you will write two 500-word responses to two different films screened in class, focusing on a particular formal aspect discussed in relation to the film (editing, mise-en-scène, cinematography, or sound). Describe and interpret the meaning of the formal aspect by focusing on a *single scene*. These short responses should be written before class and reflect ample time spent considering the film and developing your ideas.

Sequence Journal (1000 words)

For this assignment, you will select a sequence from a course film or an outside film that I approve in advance. You will then watch the sequence once per day for 5 days. After each viewing, journal about what you notice in the sequence in 1-2 paragraphs. These journals can (and should!) be informal and primarily observation-based. Please note that journals should not be summaries of plot, but rather close investigations of visible objects and characters, the framing of each shot, and the editing techniques used. You should also reflect on how your experience of the sequence changes with each viewing, including the different things you notice each time.

Sequence Analysis (1000 words)

To begin practicing your analytical skills, you will formally interpret the sequence you watched and wrote about in your Sequence Journal. Sequence Analyses should be grounded in an argument, making a strong claim about the meaning of the chosen sequence and providing close analysis of the sequence's editing, framing, mise-en-scène, sound, pace, and/or placement within the film to support that claim.

Literature Review (1000 words)

For this assignment, you will research the film that you plan to analyze for your Film Analysis. You must find and review 3-5 scholarly sources that provide information on your film that will help you to make an argument that interests you. Some sources may be primarily about the film, while others provide relevant contextual information but not discuss the film directly. As you read sources, you should develop a research question about your film (we will discuss some potential ideas for this in class). You will then write a review of your research. The review should begin with 1 paragraph that explains your research question and synthesizes the information you found in sources. The rest of the assignment should summarize how each source is relevant to your research question.

Film Analysis (2000 words)

For the final assignment, you will write an analysis of the film that you chose to research for your Literature Review. Your paper should make an argument about the meaning of the film's form. You should incorporate your research from your Literature Review to contextualize and justify your argument early in the paper. Then, in the body of your paper, explain and support your argument by providing close analysis of several key scenes or sequences, with attention to editing, mise-en-scène, cinematography, and/or sound. Your paper **MUST** cite at least 3 sources, (though these sources may vary from those in your Literature Review).

Course Policies:

1. You must complete all assignments to receive credit for this course.
2. Attendance: You are allowed one absence without explanation. Please note that screenings count as class meeting times. Each additional unexcused absence will lower your final grade by half a letter grade. Only those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, religious holidays, and documented major illnesses are exempted from this policy. University-sponsored events should be brought to my attention before the date of the absence. Should you miss a class or screening for any reason, you are responsible for informing yourself as to what was covered in class and for completing the missed assignments or viewing. The university attendance policy can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>
3. Late Arrival: Arriving more than 15 minutes late to class will count as half an absence. Please note that pop quizzes will happen at the beginning of class. Arriving after the quiz has begun will result in a zero on the quiz.

4. Paper Format & Submission: Each assignment must be submitted in double-spaced, 12-point, Times New Roman typeface. Pages must be numbered. Include the relevant information (name, date, assignment, title) at the top. All assignments should be submitted electronically on Canvas.
5. Late Papers/Assignments: Late work will not be accepted, but extensions due to extenuating circumstances are possible with approval and 48 hours notice.
6. Paper Maintenance Responsibilities. Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
7. Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism. Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.
8. Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor early in the semester.
9. For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
10. Grade Appeals. In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 TUR). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
11. Course Evaluations. Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>
12. Students who face difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352) 392-1575, or contact them online: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>
13. Classroom behavior must be appropriate and respectful, or you will be asked to leave and marked as absent. **Cell phones are not allowed in class.** Laptops, iPads, etc. are allowed in class if they are being used to refer to readings or other class materials.
14. UF's policy on Harassment: UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty: <http://hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/recruitment-staffing/institutional-equity-diversity/resources/harassment>

SYLLABUS

UNIT 1: FILM FORM

Week 1

T 1/8 Introduce Course/Syllabus

Screening *Singin' in the Rain* (Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen, 1952)

R 1/10 Introduction to Film Vocabulary

Read Yale Film Analysis Website, sections “Mise-en-Scene,” “Editing,” and “Cinematography” (<http://filmanalysis.yctl.org/>)

Week 2 Narrative Form

T 1/15 Read: *Film Art* Ch. 2 “The Significance of Film Form”

Screening *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, 1941)

R 1/17 Read: *Film Art* Ch. 3 “Narrative Form”

DUE: FORMAL RESPONSE

Week 3 Mise-en-Scene

T 1/22 Read: *Film Art* Chapter 4, “The Shot: Mise-en-Scene”

Screening *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920)

R 1/24 Read: “Suggestion, Hypnosis, and Crime: Robert Wiene’s *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*,” Stefan Andriopoulos (Canvas)

DUE: FORMAL RESPONSE (IF CHOSEN)

Week 4 Editing

T 1/29 Continuity Editing

Read: *Film Art* Chapter 6, “Relation of Shot to Shot: Editing”

Screening *The Maltese Falcon* (John Huston, 1941)

R 1/31 Editing in *The Maltese Falcon*

DUE: FORMAL RESPONSE (IF CHOSEN)

Week 5 Editing, continued

T 2/5 Read: Leo Kuleshov, “Montage as the Foundation of Cinematography” and Sergei Eisenstein, “A Dialectic Approach to Film Form” (Canvas)
Clips from *October* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1928)

Screening *Sherlock Jr.* (Buster Keaton, 1924)

R 2/7 Read: Andre Bazin from *What Is Cinema?: “The Virtues and Limitations of Montage”* (Canvas)

DUE: FORMAL RESPONSE (IF CHOSEN)

Week 6 Cinematography

T 2/12 Read: *Film Art* Ch. 5 “The Shot: Cinematography”

Screening *The Rules of the Game* (Jean Renoir, 1939)

R 2/14 Read: François Truffaut, “A Certain Tendency of the French Cinema” (Canvas)

DUE: FORMAL RESPONSE (IF CHOSEN)

Week 7 Sound

T 2/19 Read: *Film Art* Ch. 7 “Sound in the Cinema”

Screening *Playtime* (Jacques Tati, 1967)

R 2/21 Discussion of Sound and Form in *Playtime*

DUE: SEQUENCE JOURNAL

UNIT 2: FILM MODES

Week 8 Narrative Film

T 2/26 Read: *Film Art* Ch. 8 “Summary: Style and Film Form”

Screening *Do the Right Thing* (Spike Lee, 1989)

R 2/28 Read: Ed Guerrero, excerpt from *Do the Right Thing* BFI Film Guide (Canvas)

Week 9 NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK

Week 10 Documentary Film

T 3/12 Read: *Film Art* Ch. 10 “Documentary, Experimental, and Animated Films” section on Documentary

Screening *Nanook of the North* (Robert Flaherty, 1922)

R 3/14 Read: Fatimah Tobing Rony, “Robert Flaherty’s *Nanook of the North* and the Politics of Taxidermy and Romantic Ethnography” (Canvas)

DUE: SEQUENCE ANALYSIS

Week 11 Experimental Film

T 3/19 Read: *Film Art* Ch. 10 “Documentary, Experimental, and Animated Films” section on Experimental Film

Cornelia Klecker, “Chronology, Causality... Confusion: When Avant-Garde Goes Classic.” (Canvas)

Screening *Mulholland Drive* (David Lynch, 2001)

R 3/21 Read: Jennifer A. Hudson, “‘No Hay Banda, and Yet We Hear a Band’: David Lynch’s Reversal of Coherence in *Mulholland Drive*.” (Canvas)

UNIT 3 GENRES

Week 12 Horror

T 3/26 Read: *Film Art* Ch. 9 “Film Genres” section on Horror

Clips: Hitchcock/Truffaut, *The Birds*, *Scream*, *Nosferatu*

Screening *Psycho* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960)

R 3/28 Read: Linda Williams, “Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess”

Fernando Canet, “Schizophrenic Twins: A Comparative Study of Hitchcock’s *Psycho* (1960) and Van Sant’s 1998 Remake” (Canvas)

Week 13 Film Noir

T 4/2 Read: Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” (Canvas)

Clips: *The Big Sleep*, *In a Lonely Place*, *Double Indemnity*

Screening *Gilda* (Charles Vidor, 1946)

R 4/4 Read: Mary Ann Doane, “*Gilda*: Epistemology as Striptease” (Canvas)

DUE: LITERATURE REVIEW

Week 14 The Musical

T 4/9 Read: *Film Art* Ch. 9 “Film Genres” section on the Musical
Clips: *Meet Me in St. Louis*, *Top Hat*, *Stormy Weather*

Screening *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (John Cameron Mitchell, 2001)

R 4/11 Read: Matthew Henry, “A One-Inch Mound of Flesh: Troubling Queer Identity in *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*” (Canvas)
Jane Feuer “The Self-Reflexive Musical and the Myth of Entertainment” (Canvas)

Week 15 The Western

T 4/16 Read: *Film Art* Ch. 9 “Film Genres” section on the Western
Clips: *Stagecoach*, *The Searchers*

Screening *No Country for Old Men* (Joel and Ethan Coen, 2007)

R 4/18 Peer review: Draft Film Analysis

Week 16

T 4/23 Last class: Read: Leger Grindon “Cycles and Clusters: The Shape of Film Genre History” (Canvas)
Clips: *Spider-Man*, *The Dark Knight*, *Watchmen*, *The Avengers*

FILM ANALYSIS DUE APRIL 29 BY 11:59PM

Grading Scale:

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

Note: A grade of C– is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF's Grading Policy, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Your final grade will consist of the following:

Quizzes 100 pts/10%
Formal Responses (1000 words) 75 pts
Sequence Journal (1000 words) 100 pts
Sequence Analysis (1,000 words) 175 pts
Literature Review (1,000 words) 200 pts
Film Analysis (2,000 words) 250 pts
Participation 100 pts

Total 1000 pts