

ENG 2300: Film Analysis

Class: MWF, period 6 (12:50-1:40pm)
Screening: R, periods 9-11 (4:05-7:05pm)
Classroom: Rolfs 115

Section: 1794

Instructor: Todd Jurgess

Email: todd1726@ufl.edu

Office: Turlington 4413

Office Hours: Wednesdays, periods 4-5 (10:40am-12:35pm)
or by appointment (schedule via email)

Required Text

Course Pack (available at Xerographic Copy Center, 927 NW 13th St.)

Course Description/Objectives

ENG 2300: Film Analysis teaches students how to watch, analyze, and write about cinema in an academic context. Watching movies often seems passive and effortless, something we can do over dinner while talking with friends. This course asks you to take movies more seriously, to engage them in an *active* viewing attitude that moves beyond *what* happens in a film (the plot) to focus on *how* it happens through *specific* uses of the camera, staging, editing, and other cinematic techniques. By paying attention to these techniques, you will be able to see movies with more complexity, sensitivity, and nuance.

To help us focus on these specifics, we will look at a wide-range of films from a number of different periods and locales. We will also read historical and contemporary film theory and criticism to complement our viewings.

Students will then write several papers on these films before composing a final project based on a film of the student's choosing . Overall, by taking this course, students will master the vocabulary of film aesthetics and learn how to read films in their formal, political, and historical contexts. Additionally and most importantly, you will learn how to articulate these readings in well-written argumentative essays.

Assignments

Blog Posts (one 250-word post per week)	100 pts
After each screening, I will issue a short prompt relevant to our course goals. By Monday of the following week, you must compose a short, informal post on an	

online blog responding to the prompt. We will then use the queries you raise in the blogs to guide our discussions over the following week.

Vocabulary Quiz	50 pts
At the end of week three, we will have a short quiz on the vocabulary used to describe cinema. If you know the list of terms in the course pack, you should do well.	
Filmic Effects (600 words)	125 pts
For this assignment, you will be issued five clips. You will choose one and write an essay on how the clip uses form to have an emotional effect on the audience.	
Sequence Analysis (1,000 words)	150 pts
For this assignment, analyze the formal aspects of a single sequence from one of our course films and explain how those formal choices tell us something about the film's ideas.	
Reading Précis 1 (250 words)	50 pts
Learning how to read academic works is an essential step to learning to write in academic contexts. In order to help you with the complexity of academic texts, you will write a short summary of one of our course texts. To do so, you will have to closely read and consider the text and clearly articulate its argument.	
Pattern Analysis (1,500 words)	175 pts
One of the best ways to read films is to pay attention to formal motifs as they evolve over the course of an entire film. For this assignment, you will analyze a film's ideas in the context of a single formal pattern. Paying attention to specifics, you will show us how formal tropes build to more specific themes and ideas.	
Reading Précis 2 (250 words)	50 pts
Same deal as the Reading Précis 1, applied to a different set of texts.	
Comparative Analysis (1,200 words)	150 pts
An easy way to clarify what a film does specifically is to compare it to another, comparable example. For this paper, take	

one of the course films and compare its formal realization to another, comparable film (comparisons may be on the basis of genre, period, stars, directors, or subject matter). Show how the two films' form complement, contradict, or differ from each other and then explain what ramifications those changes have on the films' larger ideas.

Custom Analysis (1,200 words) 150 pts

For this final paper, you will take a film of your own choosing and employ any of the modes of analysis covered in class. Use this space to take a more critical, focused look at a film that's important to you.

TOTAL 1000 pts

Grading Criteria

While grading criteria change depending on the specific assignments (see assignment sheets on Sakai for more detail), your grade will generally depend on the quality of your analysis, the clarity of your argumentation, and how you revise the issues we identify in writing conferences.

An "A paper" will have a clear, concise, and original thesis supported by clearly articulated evidence (which kind of evidence depends on the assignment). The writing will be polished, taking into account the topics and issues raised during individual writing conferences as well as comments made in general about your style on returned papers.

A "B paper" may have any one of these elements in place, but suffers from sections of prose whose relation to the main argument is unclear. Maybe the thesis simply reiterates obvious arguments, or perhaps the writing just hasn't been finessed.

A "C paper" may have any one of these elements in place, but suffers more gravely from infelicities in any one area. For example, you may have great insights, but those insights may be hedged in poorly-revised prose with an unclear argument.

Papers receiving D's or E's will reflect a complete absence of the above elements.

Each assignment will be returned to you with comments within 10 days of its due date. My feedback will always be forward-looking and will help you as you identify and fix issues in your writing.

Final grades for the class will be assessed on a 1,000 point scale. Basically, take your total number of points, put a decimal point before the first number, and that's your percentage for the class (for example, 930 points is a .930 percentage, which is an A; 872 points is a .872 percentage, which is a B+; 723 points is a .723 percentage, a C-).

Course Schedule

Please note: Schedule subject to change.

Week 1 (1/5 - 1/9)

W Introductions

R Screening 1: *Inception* (USA, 2010, Christopher Nolan)
drop/add ends at midnight

F Formal Observations

Week 2 (1/12 - 1/16)

M Vocabulary Introduction

W Applying the Vocabulary
Read: Bordwell, "Nolan vs. Nolan" ([http://www.davidbordwell.net/
blog/2012/08/19/nolan-vs-nolan/](http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog/2012/08/19/nolan-vs-nolan/))

R Screening 2: *Beau Travail* (France, 1999, Claire Denis)

F Reading the Image

Week 3 (1/19 - 1/23)

M Martin Luther King Day - No Class

W From Details to Readings

R Screening 3: *Casablanca* (USA, 1942, Michael Curtiz)

F Vocab Test

Week 4 (1/26 - 1/30)

M Cont'd discussion of *Casablanca*, rounded readings
Read: Ray, "The Culmination of Classic Hollywood" (CP)

W Early Cinema

R Screening 4: "The Sealed Room" & "A Corner in Wheat" (USA, 1909,
D.W. Griffith); *The Birth of a Nation* (excerpt)
(USA, 1915, D.W. Griffith); "Easy Street" & "The
Cure" (USA, 1917, Charles Chaplin)

F Technique and Style

Due: Filmic Effects Paper, turn in via Sakai

Week 5 (2/2 - 2/6)

- M The Classical Style
- W Reading for Moments, Details
- R Screening 5: *Rear Window* (USA, 1954, Alfred Hitchcock)
- F Expressiveness in the Classical Style
Read: Orpen, "Continuity Editing in Hollywood" (CP)

Week 6 (2/9 - 2/13)

- M Formal Readings
- W Rejoinders to the System: Florey, Anger, Deren
- R Screening 6: *Crime Wave* (USA, 1954, André De Toth) & *Outrage* (USA, 1950, Ida Lupino)
- F B-Movies

Week 7 (2/16 - 2/20)

- M On the Margins of the Studio System
Due: Shot Analysis, turn in via Sakai
- W Dada and Surrealism: Man Ray, Léger, Buñuel & Dalí
- R Screening 7: *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Germany, 1920, Robert Wiene) & *Battleship Potemkin* (USSR, 1925, Sergei Eisenstein)
- F Expressionism as an Alternative to Realism

Week 8 (2/23 - 2/27)

- M Montage as Grammar
Read: Eisenstein, "The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram" (CP)
- W Realist Rejoinders
Read: Bazin, "The Evolution of the Language of Film" (CP)
- R Screening 8: *Rome Open City* (Italy, 1945, Roberto Rossellini)
- F Neorealism
Due: Reading Précis 1, turn in via Sakai

Week 9 (3/2 - 3/6) - Spring Break

Week 10 (3/9 - 3/13)

- M Photography
Read: Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image" (CP)
- W Documentary and Representation
Read: Nichols, "Why Are Ethical Issues Central to Documentary Filmmaking?" (CP)
- R Screening 9: *Chief!* (Senegal, 1999, Jean-Marie Téno) & *Disorder* (China, 2009, Huang Weiwei)
- F Documentary History
Due: Pattern Analysis, turn in via Sakai

Week 11 (3/16 - 3/20)

- M Reading Architecture
- W The Place of the "Natural" in Cinema
- R Screening 10: *Late Spring* (Japan, 1949, Yasujirô Ozu)
- F Tradition and Modernity

Week 12 (3/23 - 3/27)

- M Ozu and World Cinema
- W Ideological Critique
Read: Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (CP)
- R Screening 11: *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (USA, 1953, Howard Hawks)
- F Ideological Critique, Cont'd
Read: Turim, "Gentlemen Consume Blondes" (CP)

Week 13 (3/30 - 4/3)

- M Industrial and Artisanal Approaches to Cinema
Due: Reading Précis 2, turn in via Sakai
- W The New Wave Re-Reads Hollywood
Read: Rivette, "The Genius of Howard Hawks" (CP)
- R Screening 12: *Breathless* (France, 1960, Jean-Luc Godard)
- F Auteurism, Revisited

Week 14 (4/6 - 4/10)

- M Re-appropriating Classical Hollywood
View: Segment from *The Celluloid Closet*

W Merging Documentary and Fiction

R Screening 13: *Under the Skin* (Scotland, 2014, Jonathan Glazer)

F The New Wave

Due: Comparative Analysis, turn in via Sakai

Week 15 (4/13 - 4/17)

M Documentary Moments

W Digital Cinema and Formal Embellishment

R Screening 14: *City Lights* (USA, 1931, Charles Chaplin)

F Discussion

Week 16 (4/20 - 4/24)

M Postmodernism, High/Low Art

W Conclusions, Futures

F **Due: Custom Analysis, turn in via Sakai**

Course Policies

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. **If you miss more than six class sessions (comprised of all class meetings and screenings), you fail the course automatically.** 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 events, religious holidays, and court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena).

Students who participate in athletic or extracurricular activities are permitted to be absent 12 scholastic days per semester without penalty (A scholastic day is any day on which regular class work is scheduled). The 12- day rule applies to individual students participating on athletic or scholastic teams. Consequently, a group's schedule that requires absence of more than 12 days should be adjusted so that no student is absent from campus more than 12 scholastic days. If you previously have been warned about absences or unsatisfactory work you should not incur additional absences, even if you have not been absent 12 scholastic days. It is your responsibility to maintain satisfactory academic performance and attendance.

So, please, if you are absent, do not send me an email asking what we did in class. Instead, I encourage you all to make arrangements with each other for the sharing of notes in case an unexpected encumbrance keeps you from attending class. Please note that if you show up to class after attendance has been called, you will be marked absent for the day. Also, please note that I reserve the right to mark you absent should you fail to bring your required course materials to class.

Final Grade Appeals:

Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Clara Blount, Program Assistant.

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.

Classroom Behavior:

Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss, write about, and engage with contain controversial topics and opinions. Basically, be human beings to each other and never let discussion descend into personal insults or anything like that. The entire premise of this course depends on you all being able to maturely, eloquently, and rationally discuss pressing political problems.

University Policy/Information:

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-education-requirement.aspx>

This course can prove 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more information, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/writing--and--math--requirement.aspx>

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points may be found at: <http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

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

Students requiring counseling should contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class

Finally, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations 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/results/>