ENG 2300 (7308): FILM ANALYSIS
Spring 2014, TUR 2334
Lecture and Discussion: MWF 6 (12:50 PM-U40 PM)
Screening: W E1-E3 (7:20 PM-10:10 PM)
*All screenings are mandatory for attendance

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Office hours: M 5 (11:45 AM-12:35 PM) and by appt.
tmrobi@ufl.edu

Course Description:
This course teaches students to view, reflect on, discuss, and write about films in a scholarly context. This course assumes that films (and our understanding of them) come in many forms contingent upon a range of conditions and critical perspectives: as formal constructs, aesthetic works of art, cultural productions, economic goods, traces of history, and technological enterprises, to name a few. Film analysis asks students to consider the formal principles governing how individual films work. Students will examine the structural and stylistic aspects of films in order to understand how various technicians manipulate images and sounds to register desired effects for audiences. The most pertinent formal elements covered in the course include narrative, mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing, sound, and genre. Students will be expected to identify and analyze these various aspects of a film in order to understand how the individual parts contribute to the complex work as a whole. This course introduces students to a working knowledge of film vocabulary and develops these analytic tools in the contexts of film history and film theory. Students will encounter a range of written and visual texts covering topics such as: silent cinema, national cinema, propagandist cinema, classic Hollywood, art cinema, documentary, avant-garde, studio filmmaking, independent financing and distribution, auteurism, realism, sound, female authorship, genre (film noir, musical, horror), post-WWII cinema, diasporic cinema, queer cinema, Dogme 95, and digital technology. Finally, this course traces critical scholarship on the cinema through the 19th-, 20th-, and 21st-centuries.

Course Goals:
The main goal of this course is to develop critical viewing, thinking, and writing skills by using film as the object of study. Students will develop these skills by writing various forms of film analyses, including a plot segmentation, a shot-by-shot annotation and analysis of short scene, blog responses online, and a final critical essay. Moreover, students will take an in-class mid-term exam—designed to assess the comprehension and utilization of terminology, major concepts, and historical context—as well as work on a group presentation on a single film not screened in class. Upon completion students should gain a sense of both film history’s general outline and some of film theory’s most important 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-education-requirement.aspx
Required Texts:
The primary texts for this class are the films, which you do not need to purchase. For close analysis—e.g., when you are writing about a film—you can find the films available on course reserve at Library West. You may use either the facilities at Library West (preferred) or alternative means for repeat viewings. The list of films can be found on the online course reserve website ARES; provide the catalogue call number for each item, the course number, and the instructor’s name in order for the circulation staff to retrieve your request behind the desk.


Coursepack, available at Target Copy locations on University Avenue and Archer Road ARES, on-line course reserves through Library West

Composition (C) or Humanities (H) Credit:
This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see:
http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggened.html

Writing Requirement (WR) Credit:
This course can satisfy the UF requirement for Writing. For more information, see:
http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggordon.html

Composition (C) and Writing Requirement (WR) Credit:
You must pass this course with a grade of “C” or better and complete all assignments in full to receive the composition and writing requirement credits. PLEASE NOTE: a grade of “C-“ will not satisfy either credit. Therefore, if you are taking this course to satisfy either of these requirements, be mindful of this expectation.

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 provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more information, see: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/gordon.aspx

Grading Scale and Rubric:
This course is worth 4 credits, and grading is rigorous. If an assignment illustrates complete disregard for spelling, grammar, citations, or particularly does not meet the word count, it will be failed.
Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade. Grades will be evaluated on a 1000-point scale:

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<th>Grade</th>
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A Demonstrates excellent and insightful analysis that offers a productive reading of a film; mastery of film terminology; may contain few to zero errors regarding film history or theory; shows a clear understanding of the film, its complexities (e.g. does not reduce the film to one “about” statement), and debates or tensions involving film structure, stylistic, and narrative elements; makes a strong and effective argument that takes a clear position, constructs a series of reasons supporting the thesis, and provides something new to better understand the film; very minor (if at all) stylistic and mechanical errors.

B Demonstrates above average critical analysis of a film that takes into account aesthetics, history, theory, or criticism; impressive use of terminology with some misnomers; discusses the film in an intelligent manner but ultimately lacks significance in answering the “so what?” question of a thesis; presents a clear argument but shows no evidence of a tension or complication that ultimately glosses over complexities in the film; could use minor re-structuring of ideas and either more support, more meaningful support, or stronger analysis to back up claims; limited amount of stylistic and mechanical errors.

C Demonstrates average level of film analysis that mostly neglects disciplinary film terminology; shows little effort to contextualize film history, theory, or criticism; only takes into account narrative or plot elements without mention of filmic style and sound; certain moments make sense but assignment lacks overall point for a critical analysis; needs both more support and more meaningful support to back up claims; presents unclear argument with ideas needing to be re-structured; frequent mechanical errors.

D Demonstrates below average ability to analyze a film critically; ignores disciplinary terminology to write an effective film analysis as well as relevant information regarding history, theory, and criticism; plot details are wrong, cursory scene analysis that summarizes the plot; offers little to no textual support or significance, and often makes unfound or contradictory pronouncements; difficult to read due to constant stylistic, mechanical, and organizational errors; fails to make word count.

E Assignment fails to demonstrate an example of film analysis for many reasons: does not use correct terminology at all; lacks basic understanding of film history, theory, or criticism to contextualize the film; conveys idea that the writer has not seen the film or has only a general understanding of it from other sources; does not attempt to point out significance of formal elements in showing how the critical analysis is productive for understanding the film; illustrates extreme lack of critical viewing, thinking, and/or writing skills; stylistic, mechanical, and organizational features seriously inhibit a basic understanding of the assignment; does not meet word count and does not feature a title.
Your final grade will consist of the following:

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<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Plot segmentation</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shot-by-shot analysis</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blog Responses (3)</td>
<td>1500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Essay</td>
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<td>Group Presentation</td>
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<td>Mid-term exam</td>
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<td>Participation/Screening Notes</td>
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**Assignments:**

We will cover the essential elements of writing film analyses clearly and persuasively. First, students will focus on writing short pieces of film criticism and then build incrementally toward longer compositions.

**Assignment 1, Plot segmentation (100 points):**

This assignment asks students to construct a narrative outline of a film. In order to help them understand a film’s overall shape, they can divide a film’s narrative into individual scenes based on changes in time, space, or action, and each scene can be described briefly in a separate line. Breaking the film into major scenes and sequences gives them a convenient overview of the film’s structure, and their segmentation can often help them see patterns or transitions in the film that could be useful for future assignments. In addition to the plot outline, students will write at least 2 paragraphs that analyze the segmentation with respect to narrative concerns and principles detailed in *Film Art*. Constructing a plot segmentation is not only the best method for understanding a film’s narrative system, but also a fundamental preliminary skill for any film analysis.

**Assignment 2, Shot-by-shot analysis (150 points):**

This assignment seeks to train students’ eyes to see everything in the cinematic frame and to understand the interaction of various cinematic elements. The shot-by-shot analysis of a short scene from a film will take the form of a chart in which students can record a lot of information economically. The chart should consist of some or all of the following headings: location (significant aspects of mise-en-scène), framing (long, medium, close-up, etc.), action, composition, lighting, camera (static, moving, etc.), sound, and editing. After filling out the shot-by-shot chart, students will compose a close reading of the scene that analyzes how the individual cinematic elements function in relation to one another in order to produce an effect, intentional or unintentional. For example, rapid-paced manipulations of editing and sound in a scene from a modern musical may be used together to create a feeling of euphoria in the audience (as in *Moulin Rouge!*). While paying close attention to stylistic elements, your close reading should also contextualize the scene within the overall narrative structure. Success on this assignment will be determined by the effective use of disciplinary vocabulary and concepts acquired in the development of the course.
Assignment 3, Blog responses (75 points):

Students will write 3 blog responses throughout the semester. Blogs will be written as short critical response papers to individual films screened in class, but you may certainly include related discussion from the reading materials. Prompts for blog entries will be posted on the blog prior to the screening. Your responses should each be organized around one main topic that you find particularly interesting or engaging and can effectively develop within the amount of space. You should also take the time to proofread carefully; carelessness to proofreading errors severely discredits your ethos as a writer and will result in a lower grade. Moreover, be prepared to discuss your responses during class if prompted. Blog responses must contain 500 words each.

Students will be organized into 2 separate groups—Group 1 and Group 2. If your last name begins with A through L, you are in Group 1. If your last name begins with M through Z, you are in Group 2. Roughly each week you are responsible for writing a 500-word blog response OR 2 blog comments, in which you respond to your classmates’ conversation/analysis in a productive way. Each individual blog response will be worth 20 points (60 total). If it is not your week to write a blog response you will be expected to comment on two of your classmate’s posts, and each pair of comments will be worth 5 points (15 total). Students who write additional blog posts on course-related topics or complete additional comments will earn extra credit.

Assignment 4, Critical Essay (300 points):

This assignment provides an opportunity for students to compose an extended critical analysis of a single film screened in class. This assignment involves a multi-step process for submission: topic proposal, thesis statement, rough draft, and final draft. Students will receive feedback on and earn points for each submission. Because this assignment requires students to enter the critical discussion of a film and to write specifically for an academic audience, independent research is expected—at least 5 sources should be included in the final paper. Furthermore, at least one source should be from a scholarly journal, one from a book, and one from the Internet. This assignment will be submitted on the last day of class.

Assignment 5, Group Presentation (100 points):

For this assignment students will work in groups of 3 or 4 to present a “film analysis” to the class. I will provide students with an expansive list of films to choose from. The presentations will cover the last 2 or 3 class periods. I recommend preparing a Powerpoint or Prezi presentation and handout to distribute to the class. Each group will be expected to consult and integrate at least 3 scholarly sources of research, detailed on a “Works Cited” page submitted to me on the day of the presentation.

Assignment 6, Mid-term exam (200 points):

Students will complete an in-class mid-term examination consisting of definition questions, short-answer responses, and a 3-4 paragraph short scene analysis (miniature essay). These questions will concern terminology covered during the first half of the semester, as well as relevant topics discussed in class or from the readings concerning film history and film theory. Basically, this is an opportunity for students to show me
how much they have learned so far in the semester. I strongly recommend taking
descriptive notes in class, as these will be indispensable when preparing for this
assignment.

**Attendance and Participation (75 points):**

Attendance is mandatory, and I do not take absences lightly. Each lecture and screening period
counts as an individual class. Moreover, absences count from the first class meeting of the
semester. If you do not attend at least one of the first two class meetings yet are registered,
and you have not contacted the department to indicate your intent, you can be dropped from the
course. You must not assume that you will be dropped, however, if you fail to attend the first few
days of class.

You may miss a maximum of three classes/screenings without a penalty. Each additional
absence lowers your final grade by one degree (e.g., from a B+ to a B).

In general, acceptable reasons for absence from class include illness, serious family emergencies,
special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military
obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays and participation in official university
activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for
court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) are also excused. Other reasons
may be approved. If you anticipate being absent from class for one of these reasons, I strongly
advise you to notify me in advance so that you can minimize the risk of falling behind.

If you are absent from classes because of illness you should contact me. You should contact your
college by the deadline to drop a course for medical reasons. After the college petition
deadline, you can petition the University Committee on Student Petitions to drop a course for
medical reasons. The university’s policy regarding medical excuse from classes is maintained by
the Student Health Care Center.

According to the 12-day rule, 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.) 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 the *your* responsibility to maintain satisfactory academic
performance and attendance.

Participation in class discussion is essential. Since discussions will critically evaluate readings
and films, students are expected to finish the assigned texts before the day that discussion is
scheduled. On days that we are scheduled to discuss a particular reading, I expect students to
bring the text to class in order to best facilitate a cohesive, detailed, and scholarly discussion.
*Simply showing up to class without speaking or trying to engage in discussion in an active
manner will not yield a participation grade above a “C.”*

**Screening Notebooks:**

Part of your attendance and participation grade will include a screening notebook. Students must
take notes at the screenings in a notebook that I can collect periodically and without notice to
ensure their active engagement with the films. Learn to think visually and be able to rely on your own active reading of the films. During or immediately after each film, learn to note specific shots and sequences, perhaps by diagramming action or editing patterns, noting dialogue or narration, or sketching a shot composition. In the papers, work from notes to develop arguments carefully, supported by specific examples from individual films. Independent thinking will be the basis for evaluation. Evidence to support arguments must be cited from films seen in class, by noting a specific cinematic technique, its filmic or narrative context, and its significance as used in this case. When writing about films, videotapes or other visual/sound material, consider all written references, including the required books for the course, as secondary sources. No written description of any film, videotape or other cultural artifact can be assumed accurate unless confirmed by your own viewing. Notebooks will receive a grade of “+” “-” or “-“.

Communicating with Your Instructor:
The best way to contact me is via email. Please allow at least 24 hours for me to respond to all requests/questions/inquiries by email. If you would like to meet face-to-face, you can visit me during office hours or contact me to schedule an appointment time that works for best for both of us.

Classroom Decorum:
Because the class is discussion-based whenever possible, conflicting viewpoints may often arise. Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the films and texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions, sometimes representing powerful images or sounds of violence, hetero- and homosexuality, explicit language, and other adult themes like depression. If you anticipate that you may be uncomfortable watching, discussing, or writing about this material critically in a professional scholarly context, then you may reconsider taking this course. Diverse student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you be respectful toward others.

All cell phones and other hand-held devices must be set to silent ring during class. This is a basic courtesy that I expect of you, consistent with most professional environments. I understand that you might forget to turn off your ringer from time to time. However, if your cell phone use, including texting, becomes disruptive to class I will give you a verbal warning either in class or immediately following class. My policy states that if you continue to use handheld devices after an initial warning, then the entire class will take a quiz at the beginning of the next class period. Laptops are not necessary for class participation, so they will not be allowed in class.

Assignment Format, Submission, and Record Keeping:
Unless stated otherwise, all assignments should be submitted in accordance with MLA format, typed in Times New Roman 12-point font, double-spaced, 1” margins on all sides, name/instructor’s name/course/date in upper left corner of first page, last name and page number located in top right of every page. Electronic copies of papers must be submitted under the “Assignments” tab of our Sakai course page by midnight of the due date (hard-copies should be handed in at the beginning of class). You must be present in class in order to receive full credit for the assignment. Late papers will not be accepted, except in case of emergency.
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/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)

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/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/)

Academic Honesty:
Plagiarism is a violation of the Student Honor Code. All acts of plagiarism will result in a score of zero for the assignment, a formal report to the Dean of Students, and likely failure of the course. In order to avoid the potential for plagiarism, cite all sources that you use for an assignment; paraphrasing without proper citation constitutes plagiarism. You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without also giving a proper citation for that material. Ultimately, the consequences do not outweigh the benefits.

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](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php)

Tentative Course Schedule (subject to change):

WEEK 1 JANUARY 6-10 Introduction to Film Form and Classical Narrative

Monday
  - Introduction
  - Discuss syllabus and course expectations

Wednesday
  - **FA**: Ch. 1 “Film as Art: Creativity, Technology, and Business”
  - Corrigan: Ch. 1 “Writing about Movies”
  - **Screening**: *Mildred Pierce* (dir, Michael Curtiz, US, 1945, 111min.)

Friday
  - **FA**: Ch. 2 “Film Form”
  - Corrigan: Ch. 2 “Beginning to Think, Preparing to Watch, and Starting to Write”
  - *ADD/DROP PERIOD ENDS AT MIDNIGHT*

WEEK 2 JANUARY 13-17 German Expressionism and Mise-en-scène

Monday
  - **FA**: Ch. 3 “Narrative as a Formal System”

Wednesday
  - Coursepack: David Bordwell, “Cognition and Comprehension”
  - **Screening**: *Metropolis* (dir, Fritz Lang, Germany, 1927,148 min.)

Friday
  - **FA**: Ch. 4 “Mise-en-scène”
  - *Blog: Group 1*
WEEK 3 JANUARY 20 - 24 Soviet Montage and Avant-garde Shorts

Monday
*MLK JR. HOLIDAY (NO CLASS)

Wednesday
*FA: Ch. 12 “Film History: Early Cinema, German Expressionism”
Coursepack: Julie Wosk, “Update on the Film Metropolis”
Screening: Man with the Movie Camera (Dziga Vertov, Soviet Union, 1929, 68 min.)
Un Chien Andalou (dirs. Luis Bunuel and Salvador Dali, France, 1929, 16 min.)
Meshes of the Afternoon (dirs. Alexander Hammid and Maya Deren, US, 1943, 18 min.)

Friday
*FA: Ch. 6 “Editing”
*Blog: Group 2

WEEK 4 JANUARY 27 - 31 Cinematography, Sound, and Genre

Monday
FA: Ch. 12 “Film History: Soviet Montage”
Coursepack: Annette Michelson, ed., selections, Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov

Wednesday
FA: Ch. 5 “Cinematography”
FA: Ch. 12 “Film History: French Impressionism and Surrealism”
ARES: Roger Ebert, “Un Chien Andalou”
Screening: Singin’ in the Rain (Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly, US, 1952, 103 min.)

Friday
FA: Ch. 7 “Sound”
*Plot segmentation due

WEEK 5 FEBRUARY 3-7 Classic Hollywood and Cinematic Realism

Monday
FA: Ch. 9 “Film Genre: Musical” (328-337; 342-46)
FA: Ch. 12 “The Development of the Classical Hollywood Cinema” and “The Classical Hollywood Cinema After the Coming of Sound”

Wednesday
Coursepack: Jane Feuer, “Winking at the Audience”
Screening: Citizen Kane (dir. Orson Welles, US, 1941, 119 min.)

Friday
Mulvey: Citizen Kane BFI Film Classics (1-52)
*Blog: Group 1

WEEK 6 FEBRUARY 10 - 14 Hollywood Escapism and Star Performance

Monday
Mulvey: *Citizen Kane* BFI Film Classics (52-104)

**Wednesday**
Corrigan: Ch. 5 “Style and Structure in Writing”
**Screening:** *North by Northwest* (dir, Alfred Hitchcock, US, 136 min.)

**Friday**
*FA’: Ch. 11 “Criticism: North by Northwest”
*Shot-by-shot Analysis due*

**WEEK 7 FEBRUARY 17 - 21 Issues in Auteurism: Alfred Hitchcock**

**Monday**
*FA’: Ch. 8 “Style as a Formal System*

**Wednesday**
ARES: Andrew Sarris, “Notes on the Auteur Theory in 1962”
**Screening:** *Psycho* (dir, Alfred Hitchcock, US, 1960, 109 min.)

**Friday**
Coursepack: Maurice Yacowar, “Hitchcock’s Imagery and Art”
*BBlog: Group 2*

**WEEK 8 FEBRUARY 24 - 28 Mid-term Examination and Research Skills**

**Monday**
Coursepack: Laura Mulvey: “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema”

**Wednesday**
Review for mid-term exam
**Screening:** *Mid-term exam (in-class)*

**Friday**
*FA: Ch. 11 “Appendix: Writing a Critical Analysis of a Film”

**WEEK 9 MARCH 3-7 Spring Break**
*SPRING BREAK HOLIDAY (NO CLASSES)*

**WEEK 10 MARCH 10 - 14 The French New Wave and Counter-cinema**

**Monday**
Corrigan: Ch. 6 “Researching the Movies”

**Wednesday**
*FA: Ch. 12 “The French New Wave”
**Screening:** *Week End* (Jean-Luc Godard, France, 1967, 105 min.)

**Friday**
Coursepack: Richard Brody, “La Chinoise, Weekend”
*BBlog: Group 1*

**WEEK 11 MARCH 17 - 21 Gender Representation and Feminist Film Theory**

**Monday**
Coursepack: Brian Henderson, “Toward a Non-bourgeois Camera Style”
Wednesday
ARES: Stacy L. Smith, Marc Choueiti, Elizabeth Scofield, & Dr. Katherine Pieper,
“Gender Inequality in 500 Popular Films”
Coursepack: Laura Linney, Speech at the Women in Film gala in 2013
Screening:  *The Piano* (dir, Jane Campion, Australia/New Zealand/France, 1993, 121 min.)

Friday
Coursepack: Barbara Klinger, “The Art Film, Affect, and the Female Viewer: The Piano revisited”
*Blog: Group 2*

**WEEK 12 MARCH 24 - 28 Hong Kong Cinema and Queer Cinema**

**Monday**
Coursepack: Klinger (continued)

**Wednesday**
*FA: Ch. 12 “Film History: Hong Kong Cinema”*
Screening:  *Happy Together* (dir, Wong Kar-wai, Hong Kong, 1997, 96 min.)

**Friday**
Coursepack: Jeremy Tambling, “Happy Together, Hong Kong, and Melancholy”

**WEEK 13 MARCH 31 - APR TE 4 Modern Hollywood and the Dream Factory**

**Monday**
Coursepack: Jeremy Tambling (continued)

**Wednesday**
Coursepack: Susan Sontag, “The Decay of Cinema”
Screening:  *Mulholland Drive* (David Lynch, US/France, 2001, 147 min.)

**Friday**
Coursepack: Todd McGowan, “Lost on Mulholland Drive”

**WEEK 14 APR TE 7 - 11 Contemporary Art Cinema and the Apocalypse**

**Monday**
Coursepack: Todd McGowan (continued)

**Wednesday**
Coursepack: Dogme 95 Manifesto: “Vow of Chastity”
Screening:  *Melancholia* (dir, Lars von Trier, 2011, 136 min.)

**Friday**
Coursepack: Richard Barsam and Dave Monahan, “Film, Video, and Digital Technologies: An Overview”
*Complete rough draft of Critical Essay due*

**WEEK 15 APRIL 14-18 Digital Aesthetics in 21st-century Cinema**

**Monday**
Coursepack: David Thomson, “The Numbers and the Numbness”

**Wednesday**
ARES: Steven Soderbergh, “State of Cinema” address at the 2013 San Francisco Film Festival
Coursepack: David S. Cohen, “George Lucas and Steven Spielberg: Studios will Implode; VOD is the Future”

*NO SCREENING

Friday

*NO CLASS: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES FOR FINAL PAPERS

WEEK 16 APRIL 21 - 23 Group Presentations and Research Paper

Monday

*Group Presentations

Wednesday

■'Group Presentations

Last day of class
Course wrap-up

*Revised Critical Essay due (hard copy in class and e-copy on Sakai)