

ENG 2300, Section 5911 - Film Analysis

Class: MWF 5, Turlington 2322
Screening: T E1-E3, Turlington 2322

Instructor: Lauren Pilcher
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Office: Turlington 4325
Office Hours: MTW 6 and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

ENG 2300 will teach you how to view, think about, discuss, and write about films in a scholarly context. Films take many forms and are shaped by a wide range of cultural conditions and perspectives. In this course, you will learn how to analyze films and their forms by examining how moving images communicate to audiences in a variety of cinematic contexts.

Early in the course, you will learn the vocabulary needed to dissect the parts at work and techniques utilized in individual films. You will then practice applying these terms as you use them to describe and interpret particular shots and sequences in both class discussion and written assignments. Later in the semester, you will begin to think, research, and write about how the form of a particular film reflects larger cultural conditions and perspectives.

TEXTS

(required) Corrigan, Timothy, and Patricia White. *The Film Experience*, 3rd Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012.

(optional) Corrigan, Timothy. *Short Guide to Writing About Film*, 8th Edition. Boston: Pearson, 2012.

COURSE GOALS

This course will teach you . . .

- the vocabulary needed to understand how a film looks, moves, and sounds.
- to reflect on the techniques used in a particular film and what they might mean.
- to analyze how a particular film, and its form, reflects specific cultural situations, including but not limited to: production value and/or style; genre; representations of race, class,

gender, sexuality, etc.; representations of particular spaces (for ex: cities, homes/domestic spaces, natural landscapes, etc.); nationality; and historical period.

- to write analytically and argumentatively about film using the appropriate terms.

This is a General Education course providing learning outcomes listed in further detail in the Undergraduate Catalog. For more information, see:

<http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx#learning>

ASSIGNMENTS

Quizzes & Participation (100 pts)

Pop quizzes on readings will occur throughout the course. Each quiz will be worth 5-10 points. As far as participation goes, I expect you to be attentive and to contribute to class discussion throughout the course.

Formal Aspects Responses (500 words, 75 pts)

During weeks 2-5, you will write two 250-word responses to the two of the four films we screen in class. Your response MUST focus on the particular formal aspect discussed in relation to the film in class (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 MUST be written before class. For full credit, they should reflect ample time spent considering the film and developing your ideas.

Drafts for Projects 2 and 4

Drafts are considered part of your final grade for Projects 2 and 4. If you fail to submit a draft, I will deduct one-fourth of the total, possible points for the project from your final grade.

Project 1: Sequence Journal (500 words, 100 pts)

For this assignment, you will select a sequence from a course film or an outside film that I approve (email me or speak with me in class). Next, watch the sequence once per day for FIVE days. After each viewing reflect on the significance of the visual and aural aspects of the sequence in 1-2 paragraphs. As you journal your ideas, be sure to closely investigate not only the narrative events that occur in the sequence but which objects and characters be seen, how shots are framed, and which editing techniques are used. You should also consider how your experience of the sequence changes with each viewing.

Project 2: Sequence Analysis (1000 words, 175 pts)

To begin practicing your analytical skills, you will formally interpret the sequence you watched and wrote about for Project 1. To successfully complete this assignment, you will make a claim about what your chosen sequence means and provide close analysis of the sequence's editing, framing, mise-en-scène, sound, pace, and/or placement within the film to support that claim. (Note: It would be wise to select a sequence from the film that you hope to use for the final two projects, but you will not be penalized if you use differing films in later work).

Project 3: Source Review (1250 words, 250 pts)

For this assignment, you will research the film that you plan to analyze for Project 4. You must find and review 5-8 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 might not mention the film but instead provide information that will aid your particular analysis.

As you read sources, you should develop a research question about your film. [For example: Is the film's representation of race stereotypical?] You will then write a review of your research. The review should begin with 1 paragraph that explains your research question and overviews the information you found in sources. The rest of the assignment should summarize how each source answers/does not answer your research question.

Project 4: Film Analysis + Research (2,750 words, 300 pts)

In this final assignment, you will write an analysis of the film that you chose to research in Project 3 (you may also write on the film you worked with for Projects 1 and 2). Your paper should make an argument about what a particular aspect of the film's form means. You should incorporate your research from Project 3 to contextualize and justify your argument early in the paper. In the body of your paper, you should then 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.

GRADING SCALE

Grades will be evaluated on a 1000-point scale:

A	930-1000	4.0
A-	900-929	3.67
B+	870-899	3.33
B	830-869	3.0
B-	800-829	2.67

C+	770-799	2.33
C	730-769	2.0
C-	700-729	1.67
D+	670-699	1.33
D	630-669	1.0
D-	600-629	0.67
E	0-599	0.00

Your final grade will consist of the following:

Participation & Quizzes	100 pts/10%
Formal Aspects Responses (500 words)	75 pts/7.5%
Sequence Journal (500 words)	100 pts/10%
Sequence Analysis (1,000 words)	175 pts/17.5%
Source Review (1,250 words)	250 pts/25%
Film Analysis + Research (2,750 words)	300 pts/30%
<u>Total</u>	<u>1000 pts/100%</u>

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.

LATE WORK POLICY

*** **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED.** I will consider requests for due date extensions, but they must be made at least 48 hours in advance of the assignment's original due date.

GRADING CRITERIA

- If any assignment illustrates complete disregard for spelling, grammar, citations, or **does not meet the word count requirement**, it will be failed.
- Grading criteria change depending on the specific assignment. Please consult assignment sheets, the syllabus, and class instructions for this information.
- Each assignment is designed to build on previous assignments as a way to move you toward a well-developed Film Analysis + Research at the conclusion of the semester. Investing in each assignment is crucial to both your grade and your progress throughout the course.
- Revision is a must. Ideas do not develop over night, and this is why each of the assignments builds upon one another. In order to make the most of each assignment, it is important to continually rework your writing as I advise you and as you see fit. This includes both your larger ideas (argument/analytical claim or point) and your sentence-

level constructions.

- This course is not about following a checklist or a formula for what I, the instructor, want. Students who show personal investment in the material and a dedication to their own growth will succeed.

ATTENDANCE

- If you miss more than 6 class periods, you will fail the course. This includes the screening periods.
- Each absence beyond 4 will lower your final grade by half a letter (this includes screenings).
- 3 times late to class equals 1 absence.
- Only absences involving religious holidays or university-sponsored events, such as athletics or band, are exempt. Absences for family emergencies or short-term illnesses will count toward your 5 allowed absences. Illnesses severe enough to require absences over 3 days will be excused with proper documentation.
- Absence does not excuse late material.
- When absent from class, it is your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates and to hand assignments in on time. In-class activities and quizzes may not be made-up unless the absence is exempt.

SCREENING POLICY

Insightful film analysis requires active viewing. You should be actively engaged during our screening periods. Talking is discouraged, and use of cell-phones is NOT PERMITTED. **Cell phone use will result in being marked absent for the period.**

You are expected to take notes during each screening. Your notes will be your launching point and guide for class discussion, response essays, and analyses.

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. Again, cell phone use will result in being marked absent for the period.

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR INSTRUCTOR

The best way to contact me is via email. Please allow at least 48 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.

ASSIGNMENT FORMAT AND SUBMISSION

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 via the "Assignments" page on the e-learning Canvas site by the assigned due date.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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>

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/>

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/>

ENG 2300-5911 COURSE SCHEDULE

*The schedule is subject to change at my discretion.

Week 1, August 24 - 28

M - Course Overview

T - [SCREENING] Silent Film Clips

Citizen Kane (1941, dir. Orson Welles)

W - Film Production and Cinematic Form

Due:

1) Corrigan & White, Introduction p. 5-17, and Ch.1

F - Film History and Study: Key Silents and *Citizen Kane*

Due:

1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 10 p. 355-397

2) Laura Mulvey (1992), excerpt from *Citizen Kane* BFI Film Guide
(available on e-learning)

UNIT 1 - FORMAL COMPONENTS

Week 2, August 31 - Sept 4

M - History, Conventions, and Significance of Cinematography

Due:

1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 3 p. 95-131

T - [SCREENING] *Vertigo* (1958, dir. Alfred Hitchcock)

W - Cinematography in *Vertigo*

Due:

- 1) If you choose to do so, write a Formal Response to *Vertigo* (250 words).
- 2) Charles Barr (2002), excerpt from *Vertigo* BFI Film Guide

F - Analyzing *Vertigo*: The Male Gaze

Due:

- 1) Laura Mulvey (1975), "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (available on e-learning)

Week 3, Sept 7 - 11

M - **NO CLASS** - Labor Day

T - [SCREENING] *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967, dir. Arthur Penn)

W - History, Conventions, and Significance of Editing

Due:

- 1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 4 p. 133-175
- 2) If you choose to do so, write a Formal Response to *Bonnie and Clyde* (250 words).

F - Editing in *Bonnie and Clyde*: New Hollywood

Due:

- 1) Lester D. Friedman (2000), excerpt from *Bonnie and Clyde* BFI Film Guide (available on e-learning).

Week 4, Sept 14 - 18

M - History, Conventions, and Significance of Mise-en-scène

(*Project #1 will be assigned)

Due:

- 1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 2 p. 60-94

T - [SCREENING] *Do The Right Thing* (1989, dir. Spike Lee)

W - Mise-en-scène in *Do The Right Thing*

Due:

- 1) If you choose to do so, write a Formal Response to *Do The Right Thing* (250 words).
- 2) Ed Guerrero (2008), excerpt from *Do The Right Thing* BFI Film Guide (available on e-learning).

F – Analyzing *Do The Right Thing*: Race, Hollywood, and Auteur Theory
(*Assign Project 2)

Due:

- 1) **Project 1 – Sequence Journal** (submit to e-learning by the beginning of class)
- 2) Andrew Sarris (1962), "Notes on Auteur Theory in 1962" (available on e-learning).

Week 5, Sept 21 – 25

M – Writing in the Humanities and Guidelines for Project 2

Due:

- 1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 12 p. 435-467

T – [SCREENING] *M* (1931, dir. Fritz Lang)

W – History, Conventions, and Significance of Sound

Due:

- 1) If you choose to do so, write a Formal Response to *M* (250 words).
- 2) Corrigan & White, Ch.5 p. 177-211

F – Early Sound in *M*

Due:

- 1) **Bring 2 potential thesis statements for Project 2 to class.**
- 2) Michael P. Ryan (2013), "Fritz Lang's Radio Aesthetic: *M Eine Stadt sucht einen Mörder*" (available on e-learning)

UNIT II – FORMAL ORGANIZATION

Week 6, Sept 28 – Oct 2

M – Narrative Films

Due:

1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 6 p. 212-253

T - [SCREENING] *Cleo from 5 to 7* (1962, dir. Agnes Varda)

W - Narrative in *Cleo from 5 to 7*

Due:

1) Sandy Flitterman-Lewis (1990), "From Deesse to Idee: Cleo from 5 to 7" excerpted from *To Desire Differently: Feminism and the French Cinema* (available on e-learning).

F - **Peer Review Session for Project 2**

Due:

1) Bring a hard copy of draft to class, AND submit an electronic copy on Canvas.

Week 7, Oct 5 - 9

M - [CLASS] Genre Films

Due:

1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 6 p. 212-253

T - [SCREENING] *Calamity Jane* (1953, dir. David Butler)

W - Genre Conventions and Performativity in *Calamity Jane*

Due:

1) Eric Savoy (1999), "'That Ain't All She Ain't': Doris Day and Queer Performativity," excerpted from *Out Takes* (1999, edited by Ellis Hanson)

F - Where and How to Begin Project 3 & Finish *Calamity Jane* Analysis

(*Assign Project 3)

Due:

1) **Project 2 - Sequence Analysis** (submit to e-learning by the beginning of class)

Week 8, Oct 12 - 16

M - Experimental Films

Due:

1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 8 p. 285-313

T - [SCREENING] selection of short films

W - Experimentation in selected films

Due:

1) TBA

F - Research Tutorial for Project 3

***MEET IN ROOM 212 @ Library West (212 is to the right of the circulation desk on second floor)**

WEEK 9, Oct 19 - 23

M - Documentary Filmmaking

Due:

1) Corrigan and White, Ch. 7 p. 255-283

2) Bill Nichols (2001), excerpt from *Introduction to Documentary* (available on e-learning).

T - [SCREENING] *The Thin Blue Line* (1988, dir. Errol Morris)

W - The Documentary Mode of Errol Morris

Due:

1) Roy Grundmann (2000), "Truth is Not Subjective: An Interview With Errol Morris" (available on e-learning).

2) Linda Williams (1993), "Mirrors Without Memories: Truth, History, and The Thin Blue Line"

F - Extending the Boundaries of Film Studies

(*screen selection of educational films)

Due:

1) Wasson and Acland, "Introduction: Utility and Cinema," excerpt from *Useful Cinema* (available on e-learning).

UNIT III - FORMAL ANALYSIS: REPRESENTING FEMALE DESIRE

Week 10, Oct 26 - 30

M - Introduce Unit: Representing Female Sexuality In Contemporary Cinema

Due:

1) TBA

T - [SCREENING] *Mosquito y Mari* (2012, dir. Aurora Guerrero)

W - Indie Realism and Young Women of Color in *Mosquito y Mari*

Due:

1) Michael Z. Newman (2011), excerpt from *Indie: An American Film Culture* (available on e-learning)

F - CONFERENCES (meet with me at assigned time in my office)

Week 11, Nov 2 - 6

M - Female Sexuality: Gender as Performance

Due:

1) TBA

T - [SCREENING] *Bound* (1996, dir. Andy Wachowski, Lana Wachowski)

W - Genre and Gender in *Bound*

Due:

1) Ellis Hanson (1999), "Lesbians Who Bite," excerpted from *Out Takes* (1999, edited by Ellis Hanson) (available on e-learning)

F - **NO CLASS** - Homecoming

Week 12, Nov 9 - 13

M - Female Sexuality: The Female Body

(*Project 4 will be assigned)

Due:

- 1) **Project 3 - Source Analysis** (submit to e-learning by the beginning of class.)
- 2) TBA reading

T - [SCREENING] *Spring Breakers* (2012, Harmony Korine)

W - **NO CLASS** - Veterans Day

F - Aesthetic Play and Female Sexuality in *Spring Breakers*

(*Project 4 will be assigned)

Due:

- 3) Amy Taubin, "Cultural Mash-Up" (an interview with Harmony Korine; available on e-learning)

Week 13, Nov 16 - 20

M - Project 4 Prep: Six Approaches to Writing About Film

Due:

- 1) Corrigan and White, Ch. 11

T - [SCREENING] *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* (2014, dir. Ana Lily Amirpour)

W - Approaching Transnational Female Sexuality in *A Girl*

Due:

- 1) Tim Bergfelder (2005), "National, Transnational, or Supranational Cinema: Rethinking European Film Studies" (available on e-learning).

F - Developing a Film Analysis: Research, Thesis, and Pre-writing

Due:

- 2) Bring with you to class 2 potential arguments for Project 4

UNIT IV - FORMAL APPLICATION: WRITING YOUR FILM ANALYSIS

Week 14, Nov 23 - 27

M - Assessing a Sample Student Paper

(*We will begin the film in class then finish and discuss it along

with the reading during Tuesday's screening period).

Due:

1) Sample Student Film Analysis (available on e-learning).

T - [SCREENING] *Black Swan* (2010, dir. Darren Aronofsky)

[*FILM IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE]

W - **NO CLASS** - Thanksgiving

F - **NO CLASS** - Thanksgiving

WEEK 15, Nov 30 - Dec 4

M - Begin class-selected film

Due:

1) Read about the context of the film on your own and prepare thoughts and questions about the film. Be prepared to lead discussion.

T - [SCREENING] Finish and discuss class-selected film

W - **Peer Review Session for Project 4**

Due:

1) Bring a hard copy of draft to class, AND submit an electronic copy on Canvas.

F - Presentation Example, Presentation Prep, and Project 4 Checklist

WEEK 16, Dec 7 - 11

M - [CLASS] Project 4 Presentations

[SCREENING] Project 4 Presentations

W - Project 4 Presentations

F - READING DAYS (Dec 10-11)

**** WEDNESDAY 12/16**

DUE:

1) **Project 4 - Film Analysis + Research** (submit by 5 p.m.)