

## **Film Analysis (ENG 2300 - 1794)**

MWF 6, Turlington 2322  
Screening: T 9-11, Turlington 2322

Instructor: Lauren Pilcher  
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Office: Turlington 4216  
Office Hours: T 7-8 and by appointment

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### **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 that are shaped by a wide range of cultural situations, including but not limited to: production value; aesthetic style; ideologies of nationality, race, class, gender, and sexuality; and historical period. In this course, you will learn how to analyze the form of a variety of Western and American films.

Early in the course, you will learn the vocabulary needed to understand how a film looks, moves, and sounds. You will practice describing and interpreting films in both class discussion and written assignments. Later in the semester, you will consider, research, and write analytically about how the form of a particular film reflects larger cultural conditions and perspectives.

### **Required Texts**

Corrigan, Timothy, and Patricia White. *The Film Experience*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2018.

### **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.

## **Assignments**

### Quizzes

Pop quizzes on readings will occur throughout the course. Each quiz is worth 5-10 points.

### Participation

I expect you to participate actively in our discussion and activities during each class period, which means you need to arrive prepared and on time. This class is discussion based, so please keep in mind that students come from diverse backgrounds. Be mindful of your own perspective as you listen and share in class and articulate your point of view respectfully. As you express your ideas, I also expect to engage and use the film terminology that we learn throughout the course.

### Formal Response (500 words)

During weeks 3-6, you will write one 500-word response to the one of the four films that 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.

### Sequence Journal (1000 words)

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 5 days. After each viewing, journal about what you noticed in the sequence in 1-2 paragraphs. As you write your response, 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.

### 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. 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).

Note: A draft is part of your final grade for the Sequence Analysis. If you fail to submit a draft, I will deduct one-fourth of the total, possible points for the project.

### Literature Review (1500 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 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.

### Film Analysis (2,000 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, you should 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, and these sources may vary from your Literature Review.

Note: A draft is part of your final grade for the Film Analysis. If you fail to submit a draft, I will deduct one-fourth of the total, possible points for the project.

### Course Policies

- Attendance is REQUIRED for class and screening periods. Each unexcused absence beyond 4 will lower your final letter grade by half a letter. 6 unexcused absences will result in failure of the course. You are considered tardy if you are more than 15 minutes late to class. 3 tardies = one absence.
- Written proof is required to excuse absences or tardies due to sickness, death, extreme illness among family members, and natural and physical catastrophes.
- When absent from class, it is your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates and to submit assignments on time.
- Submit all written assignments to Canvas as a Microsoft Word document (.doc, .docx). Other file types will not be accepted.
- Follow MLA format for all assignments, guidelines available here: [MLA General Format](#)
- Assignments that do not meet the word requirement will fail.
- Late work is not accepted (including quizzes). I will consider extensions for assignments (not quizzes) if the request is made at least 48 hours before the due date.
- Silence cell phones and put them in your bag during each class and screening. If I see you on your phone, you will be marked absent for the class period.
- Laptops are allowed in class, but NOT during screenings. Inappropriate use of a laptop or any other device will affect your participation grade and may result in dismissal from class.
- *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities.* Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
- *Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism.* I will report instances of plagiarism, and you will receive an automatic zero for the assignment. 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/>.

- Students with *disabilities* who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor.
- For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
- *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.
- *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>
- 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>
- *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/>

## **Course Schedule**

### **Week 1 [January 8-12]**

**M** – Course Overview

**T** – [SCREENING] *Dottie Gets Spanked* (1993, dir. Todd Haynes)

**W** – Overview Film Production, Culture, and Studies

Due:

- 1) Corrigan & White, Introduction and Ch.1

**F** – Film Form & Key Terms

Due:

- 1) Read Key Terms handout linked on the Canvas home page & use online resources to familiarize yourself with the terms

## **Unit I – Form in Context**

### **Week 2 [January 15–19]**

**M** – NO CLASS (Holiday)

**T** – [SCREENING] Scenes from *Birth of a Nation* (1915, dir. D.W. Griffith),  
*Within Our Gates* (1920, dir. Oscar Micheaux)

**W** – Overview Early Film History & Form

Due:

- 1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 2

**F** – Analyzing *Birth of a Nation* & *Within Our Gates*

(Sequence Journal will be assigned)

Due:

- 1) Ana Siomopoulos, “The Birth of a Black Cinema: Race, Reception, and Oscar Micheaux’ *Within Our Gates*” *The Moving Image* 6.2 (2006): 111-118.
- 2) Michele Faith Wallace, “The Good Lynching and The Birth of a Nation: Discourses and Aesthetics of Jim Crow” *Cinema Journal* 43.1 (2003): 85-104.

**Week 3 [January 22-26]**

**M** – History, Conventions, and Significance Cinematography

Due:

- 1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 4

**T** – [SCREENING] *Pandora's Box* (1929, dir. G.W. Pabst)

**W** – Cinematography in *Pandora's Box*

Due:

- 1) Andrew Burkett, "The Image Beyond the Image: G.W. Pabst's *Pandora's Box* (1929) and the Aesthetics of the Cinematic Image-Object" *Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 24.3 (2007): 233-247.

**F** – Envisioning the Female Star in *Pandora's Box*

Due:

- 1) If you choose to do so, write a Formal Response to *Pandora's Box*
- 2) Amelie Hastie, "Louise Brooks, Star Witness" *Cinema Journal* 36.3 (1997): 3-24.

**Week 4 [January 29–February 2]**

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

Due:

- 1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 3

**T** – [SCREENING] *Stagecoach* (1939, dir. John Ford)

**W** – Mise-en-scène in *Stagecoach*

Due:

- 1) Leonard Engel, "Mythic Space and Monument Valley: Another Look at John Ford's *Stagecoach*" *Literature Film Quarterly* 22.3 (1994): 174-180.

**F** –The Male Auteur: John Ford and *Stagecoach*

Due:

- 1) If you choose to do so, write a Formal Response to *Stagecoach*
- 2) Andrew Sarris (1962), "Notes on Auteur Theory in 1962"

**Week 5 [February 5–9]**

**M** – History, Conventions, and Significance of Sound

(\*Sequence Analysis will be assigned)

Due:

- 1) **Sequence Journal**
- 2) Corrigan & White, Ch. 6

**T** – [SCREENING] *Blackboard Jungle* (1955, dir. Richard Brooks)

**W** – Sound in *Blackboard Jungle*

Due:

- 1) Jennifer Stoeber-Ackerman, "Reproducing U.S. Citizenship in *Blackboard Jungle*: Race, Cold War Liberalism, and the Tape Recorder" *American Quarterly* 63.3 (2011): 781-806.

**F** – Sound in *Blackboard Jungle* continued & Project 2 prep

Due:

- 1) If you choose to do so, write a Formal Response to *Blackboard Jungle*
- 2) Bring **2 potential thesis statements for Sequence Analysis** to class for peer review

**Week 6 [February 12–16]**

**M** – History, Conventions, and Significance of Editing

Due:

- 1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 5

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

**W** – Narrative Editing in *Cleo from 5 to 7*

Due:

- 1) Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” *Sight and Sound* 16.3 (1975): 6-18.

**F** – Female as Subject in *Cleo from 5 to 7*

- 1) If you choose to do so, write a Formal Response to *Cleo from 5 to 7*.
- 2) Sandy Flitterman-Lewis (1990), “From Deesse to Idee: Cleo from 5 to 7” excerpted from *To Desire Differently: Feminism and the French Cinema*

## **Unit II – Mode**

### **Week 7 [February 19–23]**

**M** – Narrative Film

Due:

- 1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 7

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

**W** – Narrative & Revision in *Do the Right Thing*

Due:

- 2) Ed Guerrero (2008), excerpt from *Do the Right Thing* BFI Film Guide

**F** – *Do the Right Thing...* & Writing a Sequence Analysis

Due:

- 1) Sample Sequence Analysis on *Do the Right Thing*

### **WEEK 8 [February 26–March 2]**

**M** – [CLASS] Genre Film

Due:

- 1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 10

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

**W** – Genre Conventions in *Bound* & Peer Review

Due:

- 1) Bring a hard copy of your **Sequence Analysis draft** to class, AND submit an electronic copy on Canvas.

**F** – Queering Genre in *Bound*

Due:

- 1) Ellis Hanson (1999), “Introduction,” excerpt from *Out Takes: Essays on Queer Theory and Film*

### **Week 9 [March 5 – 9]**

**NO CLASS** (Spring Break)

### **Week 10 [March 12-16]**

**M** – Documentary Film

Due:

- 1) Corrigan and White, Ch. 8

**T** – [SCREENING] *Gates of Heaven* (1978, dir. Errol Morris)

**W** – The Documentary Mode of Errol Morris

Due:

- 1) Roy Grundmann (2000), “Truth is Not Subjective: An Interview With Errol Morris”

**F** – Finish Documentary

(\*Literature Review and Film Analysis will be assigned)

Due:

1) **Sequence Analysis**

**Week 11 [March 19-23]**

**M** – Experimental Film

Due:

- 1) Corrigan & White, Ch. 9

**T** – [SCREENING] *Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* (1975, dir. Chantal Ackerman)

**W** – Experimentation in *Jeanne Dielman*

Due:

- 1) Laura Mulvey, “A Neon Sign, A Soup Tureen: The Jeanne Dielman Universe” *Film Quarterly* 70.1 (2016): 25-31.
- 2) R. Patrick Kinsman, “She’s Come Undone: Chantal Ackerman’s *Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* (1975) and Counter cinema” *Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 24.3 (2007): 217-224.

**F** – Research Tutorial for Literature Review and Film Analysis (**Meet in Library West**)

**Unit III – Film Analysis**

**Week 12 [March 26-30]**

**M** – Introduce Unit: Women in Contemporary American Indie

Due:

- 1) Corrigan and White, Ch. 11
- 2) Michael Newman, excerpt from *Indie: An American Film Culture* (2011)

**T** – [SCREENING] *Wendy and Lucy* (2008, dir. Kelly Reichardt)

[Clips] *Certain Women* (2016, dir. Kelly Reichardt)

**W** – Neorealism and Gender in *Wendy and Lucy*

Due:

- 1) A.O. Scott’s review of *Wendy and Lucy*, available here: [http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/10/movies/10wend.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/10/movies/10wend.html?_r=0)
- 2) Richard Brody’s review of *Wendy and Lucy*, available here: <http://www.newyorker.com/culture/goings-on/against-wendy-and-lucy>
- 3) Judith Butler “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay on Phenomenology and Feminist Theory” *Theatre Journal* 40.4 (1988):519-531.

**F** – Neo-Neo Realism and Gender [Clips from select films]

Due:

- 4) *The New York Times*, “Neo-Neo Realism” by A.O. Scott, available here: [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/22/magazine/22neorealism-t.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/22/magazine/22neorealism-t.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)
- 5) *The New Yorker*, piece “About Neo-Neo Realism” by Richard Brody, available here: <http://www.newyorker.com/culture/richard-brody/about-neo-neo-realism>

**Week 13 [April 2-6]**

**M** – Black Women and Indie Film [Clips in class]

Due:

- 1) Michael Newman, excerpt from *Indie: An American Film Culture* (2011)
- 2) bell hooks, “The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectatorship”
- 3) selected articles from *Crunk Feminist Collection* (2017)

**T** – [SCREENING] *Pariah* (2011, dir. Dee Rees)

[clips] *Bessie* (2015), *Mudbound* (2017), dir. Dee Rees

**W** – Sexuality, Identity, and Community in *Pariah*

Due:

1) Stephen Holden's review of *Pariah* in *The New York Times* (2011) and watch the brief interview with Dee Rees, available here:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/28/movies/pariah-with-adepero-oduye-as-a-young-lesbian-review.html>

2) Ina Diane Archer's review of *Pariah* in *Film Comment* (2011), available here:

<http://www.filmcomment.com/article/pariah-review/>

**F** – Dee Rees, Black Feminism, & Contemporary Hollywood

Due:

1) Select popular articles on Rees films

2) Audre Lorde, "Age, Race, and Class: Women Redefining Difference" *Sister Outsider* (1984)

### **Week 14 [April 9–13]**

**M** – Writing a Film Analysis

Due:

1) **Literature Review**

2) Corrigan and White, Ch. 12

**T** – [SCREENING] *Mosquita y Mari* (2012, dir. Aurora Guerrero)

**W** – Indie Form in *Mosquito y Mari*

Due:

1) Stephen Holden's review of *Mosquito y Mari* in the NY Times here:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/03/movies/mosquita-y-mari-by-aurora-guerrero.html>

2) Calvin Heneley's review *Mosquito y Mari* in *Slant* magazine here:

<http://www.slantmagazine.com/film/review/mosquita-y-mari>

**F** – Chicana Feminism in *Mosquito y Mari*

Due:

1) Gloria Andaluza and Cherrie Moraga, excerpt from *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings from Radical Women of Color* (1981)

### **Week 15 [April 16 – 20]**

**M** – Final Thoughts on Women in Contemporary Indie + Thesis Statements

**1) Bring a draft of your thesis statement for your Film Analysis to class**

**T** – [SCREENING] Class-selected film

**W** – Discuss Class-selected Film

Due:

1) Post-Screening Response on Canvas

**F** – Assess Sample Film Analysis

Due:

1) Sample Student Paper

### **Week 16 [April 23–27]**

**M-W** – **NO CLASS** [Individual Conferences]

Due (on your own, submitted electronically by Wednesday @ 5pm):

1) **Partner Peer Review** – exchange **full drafts** of your Film Analysis

**\*Final Paper due Tuesday, May 1 @ 5pm\***

## **Grading Scale**

Course 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:

Quizzes		100 pts/10%
Formal Response	(500 words)	75 pts/7.5%
Sequence Journal	(1000 words)	100 pts/10%
Sequence Analysis	(1,000 words)	175 pts/17.5%
Literature Review	(1,500 words)	200 pts/25%
Film Analysis	(2,000 words)	250 pts/30%
Participation		100 pts/10%
<b>Total</b>		<b>1000 pts/100%</b>