

ENGFLM 0400
Introduction to Film

Fall 2021

Course Information

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| Credit hours: 3 | Instructor: James McDougall |
| | Email: jmcdoug@scupi.cn |
| | Office: 322A |
| | Tel (Main Office): 28-6259-6919 |
| | Office hours: Tuesday 10:00am-6:00pm |
| Room: 4-212 | Prerequisites: ENGCOMP200 |

Required Text:

1. *Course Pack* prepared by instructor
2. Access to Blackboard

Course Description

Cinematic representation is thoroughly pervasive in our contemporary world not only as a mode of entertainment but also as a mode of communication, instruction, and aesthetic practice. For this reason, analytically situating films – both in their narrative and formal constructions – within aesthetic, social, and theoretical contexts can equip us with the critical questions necessary for examining and challenging the conditions that operate in the formation and circulation of many of our values, beliefs, and interests. The goals of the class are to equip each student with the ability to (1) analyze a variety of films as examples of audiovisual art and write critically about them from various thematic and cultural perspectives, (2) construct a critical position in evaluating films in relation to popular reviews, scholarly essays, and industry categories, and (3) demonstrate a critical understanding of the role film plays in society as an audiovisual art, an industry, and a complex set of ideological constructs.

Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to perform the following:

1. Understand and apply proper terminology, critical theories, and concepts to analyze film
2. Understand the history and a development of cinema as an art and an industry
3. Compose expository, analytical, and persuasive written work that analyzes text
4. Create an interactive digital project that demonstrates knowledge of film techniques and/or critical concepts and film history
5. Work collaboratively to create and deliver a WOVE presentation

Objectives

In this course students will complete the following:

| Assignment | Outcomes Addressed | Percentage of Final Grade |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Film Analysis Paper | Outcomes 1, 3 | 30% |
| Collaborative Presentation | Outcomes 1-3, 5 | 20% |

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| Final Production Project | Outcomes 4,5 | 40% |
| Routine Writing and In-Class Activities (Forum, Blog, Journaling, Short Responses, Social Media Posts) | Outcomes 1-3 | 10% |

Tentative Schedule (subject to change according to the instructor's discretion)

| Week | Topic | Readings and Screenings | Assignment Due |
|------|---|---|---|
| 1 | Introduction; Introduction Homework Screening 1: <i>Modern Times</i> Reading: Montage and Shot Terminology Journal: Shot analysis of a commercial | Screen parts of Vertov's: <i>Man with a Movie Camera</i> , <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> , <i>Three Songs of Lenin</i> ; Montage and Shot Terminology | In-class introductory email; using discussion boards Screen <i>Modern Times</i> |
| 2 | Discuss <i>Modern Times</i> Shots as Cuts; Eisenstein's theory of Montage | <i>The Night of the Hunter</i> ; Writing About Film | Discussion Forum 1; Shot analysis of a commercial |
| 3 | Discuss <i>Night of the Hunter</i> Takes and camera movement (clips from silent movie tradition) Analyzing Composition 1 Assign Analysis Paper | Readings: on Mise en Scene (Bazin) Screen: <i>Citizen Kane</i> Journal: Shot Analysis of <i>Citizen Kane</i> Read about composition analysis | Discussion Forum 2; Shot analysis of a scene in <i>The Night of the Hunter</i> |
| 4 | Analyzing Composition 2 Mise en Scene Discuss: Bazin Presentation on <i>Citizen Kane</i> | Screen: <i>The Bicycle Thief</i> Journal: Composition Analysis of a <i>The Bicycle Thief</i> still Read about composition analysis | Discussion Forum 3: Analyze scene for camera movement Analysis of <i>Citizen Kane</i> Assign Mid-term Essay |

| Week | Topic | Readings and Screenings | Assignment Due |
|------|--|--|--|
| 5 | Discuss <i>The Bicycle Thief</i> Presentation on <i>The Bicycle Thief</i> Introduce Diegesis and Narrative | Homework Screen: <i>The Wizard of Oz</i> Read about music in film | Forum 4: Analyze Composition of a still in <i>The Bicycle Thief</i> |
| 6 | Discuss <i>Wizard of Oz</i> Presentation on <i>Wizard of Oz</i> Diegesis and Narrative 2 Narrative Building Devices from inside the story: Character, Props, Acting Styles, Make Up | Screening: <i>Tokyo Story</i> Read about “method acting” | Forum 5: Describe the difference between diegetic and non-diegetic effects of music on viewership in <i>Wizard of Oz</i> |
| 7 | Discuss <i>Tokyo Story</i> Presentation <i>Tokyo Story</i> Formal Analysis Peer Review Narrative Building Devices from inside the story: Setting | Screening: <i>Aguirre: The Wrath of God</i> Read about the filming of Aguirre and the setting | Discussion Forum 6 Journal: how acting helps create the representation of everyday life in postwar Japan |
| 8 | Discuss <i>Aguirre: The Wrath of God</i> Presentation <i>Aguirre: The Wrath of God</i> Narrative Building Devices Outside the Story: Star System; title sequence; audience archive | Screening: <i>Casablanca</i> Reading on Star System | Mid-Term Formal Analysis Due Discussion Forum 7: how does the location of the film contribute to the film watching experience as well as the story and perhaps special meanings in the story? |
| 9 | Discuss <i>Casablanca</i> Presentation <i>Casablanca</i> Auteurism: Hitchcock | Screening: <i>Rope</i> Reading on Auteurism | Discussion Forum 8 Journal: How does your knowledge of history influence your understanding of the film? |

| Week | Topic | Readings and Screenings | Assignment Due |
|------|--|---|---|
| 10 | Discuss <i>Rope</i> Presentation on <i>Rope</i> Against Auteurism: Film as Collaboration or Systems | Screen: <i>Sunset Boulevard</i> Readings on Studio Systems and Film as Collaboration | Forum 9: How does a director shape the final product (storyboard; visual story telling) explain drawing from <i>Rope</i> . |
| 11 | Discuss <i>Sunset Boulevard</i> Presentation on <i>Sunset Boulevard</i> Genre Theory: How Does Genre Shape the Story | Screening: <i>Scarface</i> Reading on Genre Theory | Forum 10: How is the film industry represented as a system that has elements that extend beyond the director in <i>Sunset Boulevard</i> ? |
| 12 | Discuss <i>Scarface</i> Experimental Cinema: Stan Brackage, Maya Daren | Screening: <i>Cleo 5 a 7</i> New Wave and Independent film making | Discussion forum 11: How does <i>Scarface</i> conform to the “gangster” genre? |
| 13 | Discuss <i>Cleo 5 a 7</i> Presentation <i>Cleo 5 a 7</i> Introduce project; begin working on storyboards and film plan | Storyboarding and planning | Discussion forum 12 How does <i>Cleo 5 a 7</i> depart from conventional film narratives both in terms of form and content? |
| 14 | Storyboard and film plan presentation Discuss minimal edit shooting | Peer review/workshop materials | Due: Storyboard draft and planning |
| 15 | Rough Cut presentations and critique | Peer review/workshop materials | Due: Rough cut |
| 16 | Final Cut presentations | | Final Project Presentations and write ups |

Screening Policy and Content

As a course that centers on cinema as its primary object of study, I will provide time outside of class for film screenings. Attendance is required and note-taking is encouraged. Cell phone or laptop usage, along with disruptive behavior, is not allowed during screenings.

Note: This schedule may be subject to change based on the needs of the class at the instructor's discretion.

Attendance Policy

After two unexcused absences students will lose 3 points or half a letter grade from their final grade. Students with more than five absences will fail the course.

Student Use of Electronic Technology Policy:

Students must use electronic technology (including cell phones, laptops, tablets, and iPads) in appropriate ways during classes. Out of respect, cell phones should generally be turned off or on silent and stored out of sight. They should not be used during classroom activities unless the instructor has given permission. Electronic devices are forbidden during quizzes, tests or other in-class graded assignments, unless the instructor has given permission.

Technology use in this class is meant to improve the learning environment for all students. Please be respectful of your instructor and classmates and use the technology appropriately.

If you have questions about what this means, please talk to your individual instructor.

Recording:

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may NOT record classroom lectures, discussions, and/or activities without the advance permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly recorded in advance can be used solely for the student's own private study.

Make-up Policy for Missed Assignments and Tests:

Students are responsible for the assignments in their classes. Assignments include in-class activities, quizzes, tests, homework, and any other work related to classes.

- If you are absent from class, you should try to contact one of the students in your class to find out what work was missed.
- If you cannot find out from another student about what work you have missed, when you return to class you must talk to your instructors about the missed work and if/when you can make up the work. You are responsible for talking to your teacher; your teacher is not responsible for reminding you about missed work.
- If you are absent from class on the due date of an assignment, you must hand in the assignment and be prepared to make up tests the day that you return to class or on a date decided with your teacher.
- If you know you will be absent, talk to your teacher before you leave or email your teacher to find out about the work that you will miss while you are away.
- If you have not been absent from class and you want to hand in an assignment late, you must first discuss the reason with your teacher before or on the due date. Do not assume that your teacher will accept late assignments. Also, you may lose points for late work based on teacher discretion.
- If you and your teacher arrange to meet so that you can make up an assignment and you miss that meeting, you may receive a "o" for that assignment.

Use of Machine Translation and Other Online Writing and Language Tools

While students are encouraged to use dictionaries and other language resources, they should not rely on machine translators for large sections of text. Papers must be written in English. Any paper that is written in Chinese and then processed through an online translator will be considered unacceptable.

If an instructor believes that a paper was written using machine translation, the instructor reserves the right to ask the student to re-write (potentially with a different topic), or give an alternative assignment, which may include a timed-writing essay assignment. Until the re-write is submitted the student will have an F for the assignment.

Use of non-English sources

All non-English sources must be cited. The translation of non-English sources is equivalent to quoting. When using Chinese sources, use quotation marks to directly quote the sources and include the original source in brackets. For example,

Wang Chao in describing nanocarriers says, “Interaction between nanomaterials and organisms, especially Interaction between the Immunological Effect of Nanomaterials and the Immune System in vivo further clarification is needed to optimize the shape, physicochemical properties, size and surface of nanocarriers” [纳米材料与生物机体内的相互作用，特别是纳米材料本身的免疫学效应与体内免疫系统的相互作用需要进一步阐明，优化纳米载体的形状、大小、表面、理化性质等。] (Wang 96).

Policy on Graduating Seniors Course Requirements During the Spring Semester of Their Senior Year

Seniors taking HSS courses during the spring semester will have to complete course assignments by week 14. The instructor will provide an alternative final project/exam for graduating seniors that will be due by week 14. If a senior does not submit all work, fails assignments, or does not attend class regularly, the student may not graduate, and will have to retake the course in its entirety in a later semester in order to graduate.

SCUPI Honor Code:

Students in this course must follow the SCUPI Honor Code. This includes:

- must not get help from anyone to do his/her work without the teacher’s permission.
- must not get help from any outside sources to do his/her work without the teacher’s permission.
- must not copy the words of another and present those words as his/her own work.

Participating in these activities can result in an F. Turning in work that is not your own can result in an F.

Writing Center Policy: first instance will result in failure in assignment with option of re-write; second instance will result in failure of assignment and meeting with Writing Center director; third instance will result in failure in the course and referral to university officials for Honor Code violation.

Participation:

Active participation is crucial for language learning. Participating in class makes you an engaged learner of English. In this class, participation means:

- arriving to class on time
- staying on task (including appropriate use of technology)
- actively listening to your classmates and teacher when they speak in class
- asking questions
- bringing all class materials
- attending class regularly
- completing all homework on time
- actively and constructively participating in class activities
- being prepared to answer questions
- using only English in class

Student Responsibility:

This syllabus is a contract between you and the instructor. It is the first place you should look for answers to your questions about course requirements, expectations, and policies. By enrolling in this course, you are agreeing to adhere to the requirements, expectations and policies outlined in this syllabus, including sections on the SCUPI Honor Code. Students who fail to submit their work on time or miss more than 5 classes could receive a failing grade and may not graduate.

Note: Scheduled assignments, lectures, materials, and activities may be subject to change based on the needs of the class at the instructor's discretion.