

BUTTE COLLEGE

COURSE OUTLINE

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

ENGL 15 - Film as Literature

3 Unit(s)

Prerequisite(s): NONE

Recommended Prep: Reading Level IV

Transfer Status: CSU/UC

51 hours Lecture

This course will examine the nature and meaning of the narrative structure of film, placing particular emphasis on literary themes and elements. Through the use of fictional, historical and technical readings, and an examination of a multi-genre range of classic and contemporary films' textual contexts, students will improve their analytical skills, as well as gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics of the written word as the literary foundation of the cinema. Graded only.

II. OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Analyze themes within course films and texts and compare them to the ways these themes are treated in other course films and texts.
- B. Synthesize analyses of specific details in particular films and works of literature in support of a clear, overall point or thesis.
- C. Identify, employ and evaluate different frameworks for analyzing and interpreting literature. These frameworks may include political, socioeconomic, geographical, ethnic, cultural, ecological, psychoanalytical, historical, gender, sexuality, and genre development.
- D. Analyze the intellectual, historical, and aesthetic significance of written and cinematic literature in our culture.
- E. Analyze and discuss the expectations and conventions used in literature - novels, short stories, dramas and poems - and how those expectations and conventions are affected when translated into film.
- F. Evaluate and analyze the complex interplay of the written word and audiovisual imagery, as well as the relationship between the audience and the literature of film.
- G. Demonstrate comprehension of the above through class discussion, oral and written responses, and written exams and essays.

III. COURSE CONTENT

A. Unit Titles/Suggested Time Schedule

Lecture	
<u>Topics</u>	<u>Hours</u>
1. Introduction to Course and Literary Study	6.00
Topics of Discussion:	
a. Literary terms	
b. Cinematic terms	
c. Literary themes and context	

2. Roots and Origins 9.00

Topics of Discussion:

- a. Pre-19th century influences
- b. Technological pioneers
- c. Innovative European and American artists
- d. Historical overview: from silent to sound

3. Historical Periods, Movements and Genres 9.00

Topics of Discussion:

- a. The Silent era
- b. The Sound era
- c. Victorians and flappers, proletarian heroes of the Great Depression, censorship and the screwball comedy, Classic and neo film noir, the hero's western journey war and remembrance.

4. Narrative Structure 9.00

Topics of Discussion:

- a. Arc of the story
- b. Classical Hollywood narrative
- c. Narrative editing styles
- d. The reader the viewer's sensibilities

Influential writers: William Shakespeare, Rudyard Kipling, Charles Dickens, Emily Bronte

5. Point of View 9.00

Topics of Discussion:

- a. Literary character development and perspectives
- b. The audience's view through the camera's eye
- c. Cultural aesthetics and expectations

Influential writers: William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald James M. Cain, Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, Ernest Hemingway

6. Artistic Visions 9.00

Topics of Discussion:

- a. The writer's words on screen
- b. The director as "auteur"
- c. Bringing characters to life: actors and actresses

IV. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

- A. Lecture
- B. Group Discussions
- C. Collaborative Group Work
- D. Class Activities
- E. Homework: Students are required to complete two hours of outside-of-class homework for each hour of lecture
- F. Reading Assignments
- G. Film viewing inside and outside of class.
- H. Post-viewing class discussion
- I. Individual film and literary work analytical research project
- J. Students are expected to write a minimum of 4000 words for this course.
- K. Methods may include one or more of the following: 1. Student oral presentations 2. Interactive journals 3. Internet/online research
- L. Students will read from and evaluate a range of course-related writing: novels, plays and essays.
- M. Students will write a series of analytical essays in response to course films and readings. Length: 3-4 pages each.

V. METHODS OF EVALUATION

- A. Papers
- B. Homework
- C. Class participation
- D. Final Examination
- E. Essays and research papers
- F. Class Discussion
- G. Film and literary analytical research project
- H. Methods may also include one or more of the following: 1. Interactive journals 2. Oral presentations 3. Smaller analytical papers

VI. EXAMPLES OF ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Reading Assignments
 - 1. Evaluate one classmate's literary analysis and offer suggestions for deepening it. Think about the ways your own interpretation of the work differs from your classmate's and offer these different perspectives. Select additional quotes from the literary selection to question, debate, or add to your classmate's analysis.
 - 2. Read the literary work assigned by the instructor, choose the meanings of the identified quotes and explain how you think they connect to the theme of the work as a whole.
- B. Writing Assignments
 - 1. Respond to one of the course films to articulate a specific question that has emerged from your viewing and analysis of it. Use that question to help you formulate a thesis that you can support and develop in a formal essay. Be sure to consistently synthesize specific details from your chosen literary work and outside research, and come to a logical conclusion that develops the implications of your thesis for the audience.
 - 2. Articulate a specific question that has emerged for two of the course's assigned film and literary works, and formulate a thesis about that question. Compose a formal essay, supporting and developing your thesis. Consistently synthesizing specific details from your chosen film and literary works, and from outside research, come to a logical conclusion that develops for your audience the implications of your thesis.
- C. Out-of-Class Assignments

1. Select two or more of the assigned cinematic or literary works from a particular period, and research their historical and cultural contexts, using this new information to deepen your analyses of those works.
2. Choose one or two of the assigned directors or authors, and research specific circumstances of their lives and times that might have influenced their work. Select the most relevant information to further inform and develop your analysis of the artists and their films or texts.

VII. **RECOMMENDED MATERIALS OF INSTRUCTION**

Textbooks:

- A. Giannetti, Louis. Understanding movies. 12th Edition. Pearson, 2010.

Materials Other Than Textbooks:

- A. Specific texts, authors and films to be determined by the instructor.

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