

FS 270 – Introduction to Film Fall 2002

Instructor

Matt Miller
Language 102-A
Office Hours: T 1-2:45
Phone: 4-4609 (Office)
Email: cinemattthew@hotmail.com

Class

Hoke O'Kelley Library
Videoconferencing Center
T-Th 11:30-12:45

Screening

Tarbutton, Green Room
T 3:00-6:00

Course Objectives

In this course, you will become familiar with the various techniques and practices involved in the art of film with the goal of being able to analyze films critically. The first half of the course will cover the basic visual, aural and narrative components of filmmaking utilized by filmmakers to create meaning. Using those concepts, we will then consider broader issues in film: what constitutes film authorship, genres, international filmmaking, how audiences approach films and alternatives to narrative filmmaking. In addition, it is my hope that this course will introduce you to some films and filmmakers that you might not otherwise see.

Text

- Understanding Movies, Louis Giannetti – 9th Edition, Prentice Hall
- Additional Readings on Electronic Reserve

Grading

The following breakdown will be used to determine your grade for the course. Grades will be assigned according to Oxford College's plus/minus grading scale (page 83 of the Catalog of Oxford College).

Midterm Exam	15%
Screening Response Papers	20%
Final Paper	40%
Final Exam	15%
Participation	10%

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes and screenings. Missing class sessions and/or films could seriously hamper your performance in this class. That said, you may miss up to 3 class meetings (including absences from both lectures and screenings) with no penalty. Each subsequent absence will deduct a third of a letter grade from your final average (i.e., a B+ will drop to a B, a B- will drop to a C+, etc).

Writing Assignments

Screening Response Papers: For each of the first 5 films screened, you will write a 1.5- to 2-page response paper, examining that film in terms of the material covered that week in the readings and in lectures. Do not spend any of the paper recounting the film's plot—we've all seen the movie. Instead, I want to see that you have thought about the film in context of the week's topic. Each response paper is due in class on the Tuesday following the screening of the film in question.

Final Paper: Each of you will write an 8-10 page paper to be turned in on December 10, the last day of class. Using the skills and concepts learned in the course, you will compare a film and a remake of that film. You may choose any films from the attached list, or another pair of films approved by me. October 22nd's class will be devoted to explaining the paper assignment in more depth, and a rough draft will be due on November 19.

Extra Credit

There will be an extra credit film each week that you may watch on your own. I will try to have each of these films available for screening in the library. After watching the film, you may write an additional response paper, following the guidelines for the regular screening papers. Each extra credit paper judged acceptable will be worth half a point added to your final grade, for a total possible 6 points added to your average.

Honor Code

I assume that each of you is familiar with the Oxford College Honor Code. The Code will be strictly enforced in this course, both in exams and in terms of your writing assignments. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form. If in doubt, ask me or consult the Code (pages 94-97 in the Catalog).

8/29 Introduction

Read: Giannetti: Ch.1, Ch.3 (pp 112-122)
Screening: The Third Man (Reed, 1949)
EC: The Graduate (Nichols, 1967)

Read: Giannetti: Ch.2, Ch.7 (pp. 311-332)
Screening: The Royal Tenenbaums (Anderson, 2001)
EC: Brazil (Gilliam, 1985)

Read: Giannetti: Ch.4, Bordwell & Thompson: Reserve
Screening: North by Northwest (Hitchcock, 1959)
EC: Breathless (Godard, 1959)

Read: Giannetti: Ch.5
Screening: 2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick, 1968)
EC: Nashville (Altman, 1975)

Read: Giannetti: Ch.8, Ch.9 (pp. 393-410)
Screening: Rashomon (Kurosawa, 1951)
The General (Keaton, 1926)
EC: Annie Hall (Allen, 1977)

Read: Giannetti: Ch.12
Screening: Citizen Kane (Welles, 1941)

10/17 Midterm

10/22 The Final Paper

Screening: 8 ½ (Fellini, 1963)
EC: Sullivan's Travels (Sturges, 1941)

10/24 The Auteur Theory

10/29—10/31 Auteur Study: David Lynch

Screening: Eraserhead (Lynch, 1978)
 Blue Velvet (Lynch, 1986)
EC: Mulholland Drive (Lynch, 2001)

11/5—11/7 Genre Study: Film Noir

Screening: The Maltese Falcon (Huston, 1941)
EC: Double Indemnity (Wilder, 1944)

11/12—11/14 International Cinema: Hong Kong

Screening: Peking Opera Blues (Hark, 1986)
EC: Hard Boiled (Woo, 1992)

11/19—11/21 Film Audiences: The Cult Film

Screening: Evil Dead 2: Dead by Dawn (Raimi, 1987)
EC: The Rocky Horror Picture Show (Sharman, 1975)
 *Note: To obtain extra credit on this film, you must go to a
 midnight screening of this film, and write on the
 experience.

**11/19—Final paper rough draft at the beginning of class

11/26 Experimental & Documentary Films

Screening: Meshes of the Afternoon (Deren, 1943)
 Un Chien Andalou (Bunuel & Dali, 1928)
 Roger & Me (Moore, 1989)
 Assorted films by Stan Brakhage
EC: Gates of Heaven (Morris, 1978)

11/28 Thanksgiving

12/3—12/5

Other Voices: Minority Cinema

Read: Giannetti: Ch.10

Screening: Daughters of the Dust (Dash, 1991)

EC: Mississippi Masala (Nair, 1992)

12/10

Conclusion/Last Day of Class

Screening: Class Choice

**Final paper due at the beginning of class

12/16

Final Exam—9:00-12:00