

Introduction to Film
Oxford College
Film Studies 270-01J
Fall 2017

Professor: Dr. David Resha

Office: Humanities 205C

Email: dresha@emory.edu (the best way to reach me). Please do not use Canvas to email me.

Phone: x4692

Office Hours: T,TH 12:30-1:30pm, Wednesday 1:20-2:20pm. I am always happy to set up a time to meet outside of my office hours.

Occasionally, I will be pulled away during office hours for a meeting. If you plan on attending office hours, please let me know in advance so I can be sure to be present.

Some Film-related Links:

Oxford Film and Media Studies Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/OxfordFilmStudies

Emory College Film and Media Studies Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/EmoryFilm/

Kanopy Streaming (free for Emory students): <http://emory.kanopystreaming.com/>

Class Meetings:

This class meets on Tuesday and Thursday from 1:40pm-3:20pm in the Few Music Room. There will also be a weekly screening on Tuesdays from 5:30pm-7:30pm in 412 Seney Conference Room. Lecture and screening attendance are mandatory. A few of the screenings may last over two hours (see class schedule). Please plan accordingly.

Course Description:

FS 270 is an introductory-level course designed to familiarize you with the fundamental concepts and tools of film analysis. We will focus on stylistic elements of film, as well as film narrative and narration. We will conclude our semester with a unit on authorship in the cinema. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- identify the major stylistic elements in cinema, including mise-en-scene, cinematography, editing, and sound, using the correct terminology
- identify stylistic patterns across a single film and explain how these patterns have narrative, expressive, thematic, and/or aesthetic functions
- explain how a film uses film style and narration to communicate narrative information and elicit emotions

Required Books:

- Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith, *Film Art: An Introduction*, 11th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2017). You will find this at the bookstore. Get the right edition!
- PDF files of other readings on Canvas
- A digital copy of *The Prestige* (Christopher Nolan, USA, 2006, 130 min). You will need a copy of this film to complete your shot description and analysis assignments. I would strongly encourage you to either buy a DVD copy online or download a digital copy.

Grade Distribution:

Reading and Screening Quizzes	10%
Screening Reports	5%
Shot Breakdown Exercise	15%
Film Analysis Paper	25%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	20%
Informed Participation	10%

Written Work:

1) A shot breakdown exercise: For this assignment, I will ask you to use the vocabulary that we have developed over the first half of the semester to describe a series of shots from *The Prestige*. This assignment is designed to train your eye to the finer points of mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing, and lighting, and to prepare you for the second written assignment.

2) A 5-6 page analysis of *The Prestige*. You will be asked to identify a salient stylistic element used in the film, describe the patterned way in which it is employed, and propose functions for the stylistic pattern you have observed.

I am always available to help you with your written work. At some point, you may want the help of others. Please utilize the services of the Writing Center, an excellent resource for writing both papers and essay exams. If you go to seek help writing your papers, make sure you bring your paper assignment with you, as it will help the Writing Center staff tailor their advice to your particular project. The Writing Center is located on the second floor of the Oxford Library (website: <http://oxford.emory.edu/academics/centers-institutes-programs/writing-center/>).

Exams:

You will take a midterm and a final exam. They are designed to test your knowledge of material covered in readings, lectures, and discussion, as well as your familiarity with the films and extended clips we view in class. The exam will consist of combination of multiple-choice questions, identification questions, and essay questions. You must take the final exam at the assigned time.

Weekly Assignments:

You will take a quiz at the beginning of many, if not most, classes. The quizzes focus on the main ideas of the reading for that day or on the film screening to be discussed that day. You are allowed to drop the two lowest quiz scores.

You will also have weekly screening reports that are usually assigned at the end of lecture on Tuesday and are due at the beginning of class on Thursday. Unless otherwise instructed, these are one page, typed, double-spaced responses to the question(s) posed at the end of class on Tuesday. Your absence from class is not an adequate excuse for not handing in your screening report on time. I do not accept late screening reports.

Attendance:

Diligent attendance is absolutely required, both in lecture and for the screenings. I will take lecture attendance every day, and more than three absences will result in a letter grade reduction of your final grade. These three allowed absences are for medical and family emergencies. You do not get three “free” absences in addition to emergency circumstances.

Consistent tardiness is not tolerated. Three late arrivals to class constitutes one full absence. If you are more than ten minutes late to class, you will be marked absent.

Participation:

Simply being present in class is not sufficient to receive an excellent participation and attendance grade. In addition to being present, you must also make informed, meaningful, and consistent contributions to class discussion. Watching and discussing films are group activities and your conscientious participation in both activities will be factored into your final grade. You are also expected to be attentive throughout the course and not violate any of the classroom policies, such as looking at your phone during class or the screenings.

Readings:

It is imperative that you keep up with the reading in this class. I recommend that you take notes on your readings from *Film Art*. They will come in handy when studying for the quizzes and final exam. The readings are designed to help you watch the films more effectively, so please complete the reading listed for each day before coming to class (unless otherwise noted). You can expect to see material from the readings that we do not cover in class on the exams. Also, please bring readings to class so that you may reference them in discussion.

Classroom Policies:

Please do not use laptops, cell phones, iPads, etc. in lecture or during the class screenings. Please do not bring in food during the class screenings. There is no talking allowed during our screenings, and all laptops and cell phones must be off. Students enrolled in this class deserve the best screenings possible, so please be respectful.

PowerPoints:

I use PowerPoint presentations throughout this class. The PowerPoint slides are not the entirety of what you are expected to learn from class, or what will be represented on exams. I do not distribute the PowerPoint files. If you miss class, your best course of action is to get the notes from a classmate and come to me with any questions about the content for that day.

Late Assignments:

All assignments must be turned in when specified. All exams must be taken only at the time offered. There are no opportunities for makeup exams or alternative exam times. There will be no extra credit assignments. Do not send me assignments as attachments via email. If you are not present when an assignment is due, you are still required to hand

in the assignment before class begins. Feel free to slip it under my door or put it in my mailbox.

E-mail:

I will occasionally send out email announcements or lecture supplements via email. Plan on checking your emory.edu email account frequently during the semester.

Academic Accommodations:

Access, Disability Services and Resources (ADSR) works with students who have disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, students must contact ADSR and complete the registration process. Faculty may not provide disability accommodations until an accommodation letter has been processed; accommodations are not retroactive. Students registered with ADSR who receive a letter outlining specific academic accommodations are strongly encouraged to coordinate a meeting time with their professor to discuss a protocol to implement the accommodations as needed throughout the semester. This meeting should occur as early in the semester as possible. Contact Access, Disability Services and Resources for more information (770) 784-4690 or adsroxford@emory.edu. Additional information is available at the ADSR website at <http://equityandinclusion.emory.edu/access/students/index.html>.

Religious Holidays:

Professors are encouraged, not required, to accommodate students' academic needs related to religious holidays. Please make every effort to negotiate your religious holiday needs within the first two weeks of the semester; waiting longer may compromise your professor's ability to extend satisfactory arrangements. If you need guidance negotiating your needs related to a religious holiday, the College Chaplain, Rev. Lyn Pace, ppace@emory.edu, Candler Hall 202, is willing and available to help. Please be aware that Rev. Pace is not tasked with excusing students from classes or writing excuses for students to take to their professors. Emory's official list of religious holidays may be found at http://www.religiouslife.emory.edu/faith_traditions/holidays.html.

Academic Misconduct:

I do not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic misconduct, which includes conferring with classmates on graded assignments or exam answers. Unless explicitly stated by the professor and the assignment, you are not to collaborate in any way with anyone on your coursework. The penalty for any academic misconduct is a final grade of "F" for the semester. Ignorance of the rules is not an excuse. For more information on academic misconduct, see the Oxford College Student Honor code website at <http://oxford.emory.edu/academics/divisions-degrees/policies/code-of-conduct/student-honor-code/>.

Course Schedule

Week One: Introduction (8/24)

Reading: N/A

Screening: N/A

Week Two: On Studying Film Art (8/29 & 8/31)

Reading: *Film Art*: Chapters 1 & 2

Screening: *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, USA, 1941, 1hr 59min)

Week Three: Film Style-- Mise-en-scène (9/5 & 9/7)

Reading: *Film Art*: Chapter 4

Screening: *Out of Sight* (Steven Soderbergh, USA, 1998, 2 hrs 3min)

Week Four: Film Style-- Cinematography (9/12 & 9/14)

Reading: *Film Art*: Chapter 5

Screening: *Do the Right Thing* (Spike Lee, USA, 1989, 2hrs)

Week Five: Film Style-- Editing (9/19 & 9/21)

Reading: *Film Art*: Chapter 6

Screening: *His Girl Friday* (Howard Hawks, USA, 1940, 1hr 32min)

Week Six: Film Style-- Sound (9/26 & 9/28)

Reading: *Film Art*: Chapter 7

Screening: *Raging Bull* (Martin Scorsese, USA, 1980, 2hrs 9min)

Week Seven: Midterm (10/3 & 10/5)

Reading: Midterm Review for 10/3

Screening: No Screening. Study!!!

** MIDTERM EXAM 10/5 **

Week Eight: Storytelling (10/13)

NOTICE: No class on 10/10 (Fall Break)

Reading: TBA

Week Nine: Film Narration (10/17 & 10/19)

Reading: *Film Art*: Chapter 3 & Chapter 8

Screening: *Vertigo* (Alfred Hitchcock, USA, 1958, 2hrs 9min)

Week Ten: Narrative Structure (10/24 & 10/26)

☆☆ *Shot Breakdown Exercise* due 10/24 at the beginning of lecture ☆ ☆

Reading: None

Screening: *Back to the Future* (Robert Zemeckis, USA, 1985, 1hr 57min)

Week Eleven: European Art Cinema (10/31 & 11/2)

Reading: Bordwell, "Art Cinema as a Mode of Film Practice"
Film Art: Chapter 12

Screening: *Breathless* (Jean-Luc Godard, France, 1959, 1hr 30min)

Week Twelve: Writing a Film Analysis Paper (11/7 & 11/9)

Reading: *Film Art*: Chapter 11

Screening: None

Week Thirteen: Auteur Criticism I (11/14 & 11/16)

Reading: Sarris, "Towards a Theory of Film History"

Screening: *Rear Window* (Alfred Hitchcock, USA, 1955, 1hr 52min)

Week Fourteen: Auteur Criticism II (11/21)

NOTICE: There will be no class on 11/23-- Thanksgiving

Reading: None

Screening: *Psycho* (Alfred Hitchcock, USA, 1960, 1 hr 49min)

Week Fifteen: Auteur Criticism III (11/28 & 11/30)

☆☆ *Film Analysis paper* due 11/28 at the beginning of lecture ☆☆

Reading: TBA

Screening: TBA

Week Sixteen: Final Exam Review (12/5)

Reading: Study!

Screening: None

****Final Exam—Monday, December 11th, 9am-12pm****