

= Friends with Benefits ( film ) =

Friends with Benefits is a 2011 American romantic comedy film directed by Will Gluck , and starring Justin Timberlake and Mila Kunis in the lead roles . The film features Patricia Clarkson , Jenna Elfman , Bryan Greenberg , Nolan Gould , Richard Jenkins , and Woody Harrelson in supporting roles . The plot revolves around Dylan Harper ( Timberlake ) and Jamie Rellis ( Kunis ) , who meet in New York City , and naively believe adding sex to their friendship will not lead to complications . Over time , they begin to develop deep mutual feelings for each other , only to deny it each time they are together .

Principal casting for Friends with Benefits took place over a three @-@ month period from April to July 2010 . Gluck reworked the original script and plot shortly after casting Timberlake and Kunis . Filming began in New York City on July 20 , 2010 , and concluded in Los Angeles in September 2010 . The film was distributed by Screen Gems and was released in North America on July 22 , 2011 . Friends with Benefits was generally well received by film critics , most of whom praised the chemistry between the lead actors . The film became a commercial success at the box office , grossing over \$ 149 @. @ 5 million worldwide , against a budget of \$ 35 million . It was nominated for two People 's Choice Awards ? Favorite Comedy Movie , and Favorite Comedic Movie Actress ( Kunis ) ? and two Teen Choice Awards for Timberlake and Kunis .

= = Plot = =

Jamie Rellis ( Mila Kunis ) is an executive recruiter for a leading job agency in New York City , and Dylan Harper ( Justin Timberlake ) works as an art director for a small internet company in Los Angeles . Jamie has the task of trying to recruit Dylan to interview for a job with GQ and begin working in New York City . Dylan comes to New York and after interviewing for the position learns from Jamie that he has been given an offer to work for GQ . At first Dylan is hesitant to accept the job and move from Los Angeles to New York . But after a fun night exploring the city with Jamie , Dylan agrees to accept the position .

The following day , Jamie presents Dylan with the contract to sign so she can land her commission for recruiting him . Not knowing anyone else in the city , he and Jamie quickly develop a strong platonic friendship . One night , they get on the topic of sex and relationships . They come to the conclusion that sex should not come with so many emotional attachments . As they both feel the need for a physical connection , they agree to have sex without emotion or commitment . After several trysts together , Jamie comes to the realization that this is not really what she wants and she would like to start dating again . She tells Dylan that they need to stop .

Jamie meets Parker ( Bryan Greenberg ) , an oncologist , and they begin dating . After five dates , they consummate their relationship , only to break up the next morning . Trying to be sympathetic and to console her , Dylan suggests she travels with him to California over the Fourth of July weekend , while he visits his family . Initially hesitant , Jamie agrees after much persistence from Dylan . They fly to Los Angeles , where Jamie meets his sister Annie ( Jenna Elfman ) , nephew Sammy ( Nolan Gould ) , and father ( Richard Jenkins ) , who suffers from the early stages of Alzheimer 's disease . While in California , they begin to develop strong emotional romantic feelings for each other , and share a passionate kiss , which leads to a night of close intimacy unlike any other they had shared before . However , the next day , Jamie overhears a conversation between Annie and Dylan , where Dylan admits to having no real feelings for Jamie . Hurt , she flies back to New York . A few days later , Dylan returns to New York , trying to reconcile his friendship with Jamie and find out why she has been ignoring him . He finally finds Jamie , and she informs him she overheard everything he said and has no interest in maintaining any kind of a friendship with him .

Soon after this , Jamie discovers that Dylan may be leaving the GQ position for another job before the year elapses on his contract , which would affect her commission . She confronts Dylan about this , which leads to another argument . Both begin to do some soul searching trying to come to terms with their feelings about their relationship . Jamie spends time with her mother , Lorna ( Patricia Clarkson ) , while Dylan discusses it with Annie over the phone . His sister informs him that

their father will be flying to Newark and he needs to be picked up at the airport . While at the airport , his father , in a moment of Alzheimer 's @-@ induced confusion , incorrectly recognizes a passer @-@ by as a woman from his past . Dylan asks him about the woman , and his father , upon regaining his lucidity , says that she was a woman he met in the Navy , that she was the love of his life , and he regrets decisions he made in his youth to let her go . He tells Dylan not to do the same thing , and to go after the woman he loves , if there is any chance of saving the relationship .

Dylan realizes how he really feels about Jamie after talking with his father , and decides to go after her . He calls Jamie 's mother to set up an excuse to get Jamie to go to Grand Central Station thinking she will be picking up her mother . He arranges to have a flash mob dance to " Closing Time " set up to surprise Jamie at the station . When the moment comes , he catches up with Jamie and tells her how he really feels . Surprised and happy by this turn of events , Jamie tells him to kiss her . After sharing a passionate kiss , Dylan suggests it is time they go on their first real date . They go across the street to the Pershing Square café and although they attempt to keep the date casual and relaxed , the film ends with them in a sensual embrace and passionate kiss .

= = Cast = =

Credits adapted from AllMovie and The Guardian .

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

In April 2010 , Justin Timberlake became the first to sign on to the project . He was soon followed by Mila Kunis when she landed the female lead opposite him . Approximately two months later , Variety magazine announced that an ensemble cast consisting of Emma Stone , Patricia Clarkson , Richard Jenkins , Woody Harrelson , Andy Samberg and Jenna Elfman were set to join them in the film . Three days after principal filming began , Bryan Greenberg completed the cast . The film features cameo appearances from Shaun White , Jason Segel , and Rashida Jones . Production locations were set up as early as July 13 , and principal filmography commenced on July 20 , 2010 in the Midtown Manhattan section of New York City . Filming continued in Central Park and other sections of New York City from July to early August before the production relocated to Los Angeles , California .

Paramount Pictures dropped its original protest against the film after their director Ivan Reitman , re @-@ titled his film No Strings Attached . Screen Gems then moved forward with the title Friends with Benefits . At the same time , NBC was developing a sitcom with the same title , but the movie production company stated that due to its production schedule , they didn 't expect an issue to arise . Screen Gems chose to accelerate production fearing that they would lose their title to the competing Paramount project . Director Will Gluck spoke about the frustration of comparing the two films , stating : " I wish there was more space between them . The thing that 's irking me now is people are saying we 're remaking No Strings Attached . We 're not remaking it . The two movies were being made at the same time . " Gluck , in an interview with The New Zealand Herald , said that both films are different . Similar sentiments were expressed by Kunis , stating , " It 's just two different movies . There 's only [ ... ] so many stories you can tell in the world . This is just one of the many . "

The first theatrical trailer was released on March 16 , 2011 . The trailer had a subsequent release on YouTube and attracted over a million views in 48 hours , becoming the second most watched video of the day and the most viewed video in the film category . Promotion for Friends with Benefits subsequently grew , including promotional videos from Facebook and Twitter . Timberlake and Kunis also landed on the cover of Elle in support of the film .

= = = Writing = = =

Will Gluck stated that the concept of the story began with the idea that he wanted to work with Kunis and Timberlake , explaining that he rewrote the script for the two actors . Following those changes , Gluck expressed that he wanted to attract a more adult audience and that he " wanted to do more of an adult movie about sex , too , and about relationships " . He went on to compare the storyline of Friends with Benefits to the relationship in films between Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy .

In an interview with Movieline , Gluck further discussed the film 's plot saying that Friends with Benefits would relate largely with a younger generation . He added : " They comment about these romantic comedies throughout the movie , and as they go through their storyline , they realize that they ? re in a romantic comedy story ? as two regular people who aren ? t in a movie would comment on . They ? re very cognizant that they ? re in this story [ ... ] but they end up embracing the fact that they ? re going through a romantic comedy moment . " In an interview with the Los Angeles Times , Timberlake explained that he and Gluck held authorship of humor and tone in regards to Friends with Benefits . Timberlake and Kunis workshoped the script for more than a month before the movie went into production . Gluck would meet with the actors with 20 pages of script in front of him and the three would beat it up , changing lines , and defending each character 's perspective .

= = = Music = = =

In June 2011 , it was announced that Madison Gate Records would be distributing the album which featured fifteen songs . The album for Friends with Benefits was released on July 19 , 2011 .

= = Release and reception = =

The film was released on DVD and Blu @-@ ray Disc in the United States on December 2 , 2011 and in the United Kingdom on February 6 , 2012 .

= = = Critical response = = =

Friends with Benefits received generally positive reviews from critics . On Rotten Tomatoes the film has a rating of 70 % , based on 168 reviews , with an average rating of 6 @. @ 2 / 10 . The site 's critical consensus reads , " Friends with Benefits adds nothing new to its well @-@ worn rom @-@ com formula , but the chemistry between Justin Timberlake and Mila Kunis is almost enough to carry the movie by itself . " Metacritic , which assigns a weighted average score , gave the film a 63 out of 100 , based on 37 critics , indicating " generally favorable reviews " .

Manohla Dargis of The New York Times praised Friends with Benefits for its " breezy , speedy and funny comedy " and complimented the chemistry between the lead actors . Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun @-@ Times gave the film three stars , and remarked about the film , " What not every rom @-@ com has , however , is good dialogue , well @-@ delivered at a fast clip . " He added , " Kunis fast @-@ talks her way through the opening scenes as if she 's channeling Juno , and Timberlake easily keeps up . At some fundamental level , I simply enjoyed watching them . " Peter Debruge of Variety found the plot to be predictable and benign ; however , he complimented the cast , calling Kunis " a natural with comedy " , while Timberlake " exudes the kind of star wattage that put Will Smith on top . " Likewise , Salon 's Andrew O 'Hehir asserted that despite a disappointing conclusion to the film , it was nonetheless a " rewarding summer diversion . " The Guardian writer Peter Bradshaw reacted negatively to the film , expressing that there " was no benefit to watching it . " Bradshaw gave the film a one @-@ out @-@ of @-@ five @-@ star rating .

The Daily Telegraph 's Sukhdev Sandhu felt that Timberlake held his own when working with Mila Kunis . Concluding his review , Sandhu presented Friends with Benefits a three out of five stars . Betsey Sharkey of the Los Angeles Times praised the acting in the film , opining that " it [ brought ] a

lot of natural life to the party . " Michael Rechtshaffen of The Hollywood Reporter gave the film a positive review , stating that there was " palpable chemistry " between Timberlake and Kunis . Entertainment Weekly writer Owen Gleiberman gave Friends with Benefits a ' B- ' grade , exclaiming that while he enjoyed much of the film , he felt that it was inconsistent .

Mary Pols of Time applauded the film , and wrote that despite the plot being predictable , the film was " elevated by energetic dialogue , the sexual chemistry between the leads and the fact that the miscommunication that keeps bliss at bay [ ... ] is plausible . " Giving Friends with Benefits a three @-@ star rating , The Boston Globe journalist Ty Burr opined that the film " works like a charm . " He added that it mostly keeps its manic energy in check , and that it plays to chick @-@ flick formulas without ever groveling ? which is due almost entirely to the leads . " Similar sentiments were expressed by Peter Paras of E ! . Giving it a ' B ' grade , Paras asserted that the film was the best romantic comedy film in a long time . Melissa Leong of the National Post wrote , " While the film takes jabs at the Hollywood fairy tale , [ ... ] Gluck adheres to the formula . "

= = = Themes = = =

According to The New York Times , Friends with Benefits , a film " about love and sex in the age of social networking , gets some of its juice and tang partly by trash @-@ talking its own genre . The setup is familiar , as are the essential elements : a single man and a single woman , two battered hearts yet a pair of resilient , eager , pretty bodies [ ... ] Friends with Benefits starts from the premise that its characters , and you , are sick of the romantic comedy clichés they may secretly , or not so secretly , adore . " Drew Pinsky , an addiction medicine specialist felt that the film 's central characters , both of whom were raised by a single parent in the film , " start looking for ways to solve that problem because they were never given the opportunity to grow an emotional landscape from a nurturing , available parent . They were just quickly parentalized and became a caretaker . And the caretaking is all part of the ' going for a broken person ' and trying to fix them . " He further added that " love addiction ending in ' happily ever after ' is not a great message . "

Timberlake added that Friends with Benefits is a film for " our generation ; people that are between 25 and 30 years of age that are moving into a different part of their life . They are not sure what type of commitment they are comfortable with or what they 're gonna do for the rest of their life " .

= = = Box office = = =

Friends with Benefits was released in North America on July 22 , 2011 , in 2 @,@ 926 theaters . It collected \$ 6 @,@ 801 @,@ 594 on its opening day and then grossed a total of \$ 18 @,@ 622 @,@ 150 in its opening weekend , finishing third at the box office , behind Captain America : The First Avenger and Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows ? Part 2 . The film grossed \$ 55 @.@ 8 million in the United States and Canada .

The film had similar success internationally . In Australia , it premiered on August 18 , 2011 and earned \$ 2 @.@ 4 million during its opening weekend , charting above Green Lantern to finish first at the box office . The film expanded into Europe in September 2011 . It grossed \$ 10 @.@ 6 million from over 20 territories in its first weekend . Friends with Benefits topped first place in France , where it opened with \$ 1 @.@ 8 million . The film performed highest in the United Kingdom and Germany , where it grossed \$ 3 @.@ 1 million and \$ 2 @.@ 6 million in its first weekend upon release , respectively . By mid @-@ September , the film had grossed over \$ 29 @.@ 6 million overseas . It went on to gross over \$ 149 @.@ 5 million worldwide , with international grosses standing at \$ 93 @.@ 7 million .

= = = Accolades = = =