

SCIF1004 – Summer Term 2024

Free-Form Piece Information

The Free-Form Piece is worth 50% of the course. The assessment item must be submitted via Moodle and all work will be sent through Turnitin. Failure to submit by the deadline will carry a 5-mark a day penalty (assignment is out of 100 marks) up to 5 days where the penalty will be 100-marks (this is the UNSW policy).

OK, so onto the task, the Free-Form Piece is your chance to not only showcase your creativity but allows you to amalgamate all that you have learnt during your time studying on this course. Students in the past have commented (or complained) that this task is too open-ended and they did not know what to do, unfortunately allowing for creativity and creating a structured task do not tend to go together. Note I have given suggestions (*vide infra*), examples of previous work (on Moodle) and I am available to discuss your work. In this assignment you have to submit '*a body of work*' that comes under the general headline '*Science and the Cinema*'. It is up to you to use the knowledge that you have gained on this course with your own unique skill set to create a submission that addresses the topic.

Now there are a great many of ways to address this rather general headline of '*Science and the Cinema*', below are a list of some suggestions. If you have an alternative idea, please consult the course coordinator to check the suitability of your idea(s) as all pieces will be assessed using the same rubric.

Potential ideas/formats

A newspaper article/magazine piece/editorial – You could write about "*Whether it is positive or negative that 'Science' is used artistically in Hollywood films – should this be regulated?*" or any other topic that you feel is suitable.

A comic/storyboard for a film – You could have ideas about how you might depict 'a science/scientific theme' in a new blockbuster/B-movie?

Make your own short film – Why not create your own short film depicting the latest 'science' and how it might impact our lives for the better/worse?

Create your own mockumentary/news report – Be a reporter outside an institute that has had some amazing breakthrough, what are the benefits, what are the pitfalls?

Create your own lecture on a topic – Interview an academic (or be the academic) and give a lecture on a scientific concept then link it to a series of films?

...the decision is up to you...

I am often asked, '*how long should the piece be...?*' and this can be slightly difficult to give a precise answer to, remember that this is a 6 UoC course so think about how long you should spend on an assignment that is worth 50% in other 6 UoC courses. For written reports/assignments I would be looking at around 2500 words (although this can be shorter) and for films around 5-15 minutes, but these are a **rough guide**. Try to keep in mind the

examiners, they would not want to watch a 1 hr film that might be difficult to follow, and a 2 minute submission could seem 'lazy'. If you are writing an article, it should look like an article (images, captions etc.) not just an essay. All work should have some information regarding the target audience and aim of the piece too *vide infra*. If supporting information is not given, then your work will score very poorly as without context we do not know what you are creating or if you have the correct level of science for the audience.

Submissions and Supporting Information

All submissions must be made via Moodle however I recognise the limitations of this platform in allowing submission of films so my suggestion in these cases would be to provide a link to your film (can host on YouTube etc. or share the file via a link). All additional material that is needed should also be submitted (all in the one document). Some additional information that might be useful/needed; references are very important for all formats, for an article you should state which publication you are targeting and the associated demographic, you might also include a short blurb about the science in you film/article (if you feel that it is not completely explained in huge depth – after all, I never said the science had to be 'real', but I do not want a science used as a mere plot device/McGuffin) maybe a transcript/script of the news report that you worked off might help...? A note on film submissions using YouTube etc. the timestamp of the link **will** be checked, **do not** make any alteration (no matter how small) after the deadline has expired, if you do it will be taken as late i.e. a mark deduction will be enforced.

Free-Form Piece Key Dates:

Submission deadline: **Thursday 25th January**

FAQs:

Can I use the same films in assignment 3 as I did in assignment 2?

Yes

Can I work in a group?

No, I'm sorry all submissions must be individual. You can create a film with another person in it but it must be clear what it is that you did for the submission, the other actor must be referenced and acknowledged, you will be assessed on what it is that you did

Can I use film X?

Consult the FAQ film list, if in doubt, send the coordinator an email

Can I base my work on the tv series X?

I'm afraid not, you can only use films in this course, I have to be able to comment or assist the assessors in the marking, this means I need to be able to watch the film(s) in the piece and I simply cannot guarantee I can watch an entire series in the timeframe of the assessment (a new film or two a week is not an issue – assuming it is not really obscure and difficult to get a copy of)

Can you check my work before I submit?

I'm sorry, there are far too many students for us to pre-grade or check before submission in an equitable manner so no, however we can discuss your idea to see if it is suitable

Can I create a discussion piece about film X?

That was assignment 2, you cannot submit the same work for both assignments, and you cannot just create a simple discussion piece

How long does my work have to be?

That depends entirely upon what you are creating, there is no "hard and fast rule" to this, hence my rough guide. Do not use the 2500 word comment to mean you have to write 2500 words. Also remember that the limits I provided are for the entire body of work, not just the potential article, you have supporting information too

What is supporting information, what should I include?

That depends upon the piece; if you are creating a film for example, a script might be a good idea along with some explanation of any shots or intended artistic scope (as we might not have realised why you did what you did in a scene). Ultimately I would say to add in any and all parts of the planning of your work including any research you did (providing it is in a reasonable state), you will need references no matter what you submit and you will need some supporting statements to contextualise your piece (we need to know what you intended to create so we can accurately assess you)

Common Pitfalls:

Before you start your work, please remember the following:

- This piece is more a "body of work" than a single entity (even if you submit one file)
- You must have mention of a target audience and supporting information
- You are **not** to just go through the plot of the film(s)
- You are **not** to point out issues with plots
- You are **not** to point out inaccuracies in film(s), film(s) have artistic licence

Free-Form Piece Assessment Rubric:

A general note on how a rubric works, in order to be awarded a level you must complete all of the criteria in an 'area of the grid', each area builds on from the last i.e. you cannot be awarded a higher level if you have not fully satisfied all of the criteria in every area that precedes it (unless it is a null statement in the previous area). Also, each level of the rubric will have a weighting so you can see how you will be graded, the rubric is also there to help my markers assess your work and also to give you feedback.

Please consult the assessment document for more information of the assessment process. The rubric on Moodle has the mark allocations for each area so you can see which areas are worth more marks.

Assessment Area	Level				
	0	1	2	3	4
Scientific Content [14]	No scientific content / science is only used as a plot device or a McGuffin [0]	There is some evidence of a scientific theme, but this is included as a token amount (more substantial than a McGuffin) [2]	A science / scientific theme is the central element in the piece; however it is not the main focus [6]	The science / scientific theme makes up the majority of the piece with only minor parts being focussed on other material [10]	The science / scientific theme is integral to the body of work [14]
Headline Addressed [20]	Piece did not address the headline "Science in the Cinema" in any way (Student sets the actual headline, but must be in line with the general task) [0]	The piece went some way towards addressing the headline, however there was a lack of focus on "Science in the Cinema" (i.e. the student's headline is not related to "Science in the Cinema") [6]	The piece went some way towards addressing the headline, there was a lack of focus in parts [12]	The piece addressed the headline for most of the piece, only minor parts were off topic [16]	The piece clearly addressed the headline throughout the piece [20]
Communication towards 'target audience' [10]	No information about 'target audience' provided (mark as targeted towards the course coordinator) [0]	The piece was inaccessible to 'target audience' or very limited information about 'target audience' provided [2]	The piece would be accessible to the 'target audience' although irrelevant data or information is given that significantly detracts from the piece (potentially the target audience is not quite correct) [5]	Piece is well targeted towards the 'target audience' with minor irrelevant data or information that detracts from the piece [7]	Piece is well targeted towards the 'target audience' with little to no irrelevant data or information that detracts from the piece [10]
Construction of Piece (Narrative) [10]	Structure of the piece is not suitable or is very difficult to follow [0]	There is evidence of a narrative in the piece [2]	There is a clear narrative in the piece [5]	There are arguments or thought-provoking comments/statements in the narrative [7]	Agreements or statements are well woven into the narrative [10]
Construction of Piece (Messaging) [10]	Structure of the piece is not suitable or is very difficult to follow [0]	There is some evidence that the piece has a message for the audience [2]	There is clear evidence of a message for the audience [5]	The message is appropriate to the target audience [7]	The piece shows innovation in how the message is delivered (not a simple statement) [10]
Referencing [12]	No references [0]	A reference is provided [2]	References given in accepted format (multiple errors or irrelevant references) [6]	References given in accepted format (only minor errors or the odd irrelevant references) [9]	Each reference is relevant and lends weight to the piece [12]

Supporting Information (Considering Format) [10]	No supporting information [0]	Only basic supporting information provided [2]	Adequate supporting information provided [5]	Supporting information shows insights into the piece (construction or delivery) [7]	Supporting information shows sufficient aspects of the planning and deliver of the piece, resulting in a true portfolio [10]
Lexicon (ignore any 'errors' if clearly stated the need for 'artistic flare') [8]	Poor use of English language, as such it is difficult to comprehend [0]	Reasonable use of the English language, with multiple spelling and/or or grammatical errors [2]	Acceptable use of the English language, minor spelling or grammatical errors [4]	Good use of English language, with only a minor spelling or grammatical error [6]	A clear and well-articulated piece is presented with no spelling or grammatical errors [8]
Format & Length [6]	Piece was in an unacceptable format [0]	Piece was in an acceptable format [1]	Piece is not of an appropriate length given the format (much too long or short) [2]	Piece is either a little bit shorter or longer than it should be for the given format [4]	Piece is of an appropriate length given the format [6]