



Course Syllabus: Appreciation of Film
College of Fine Arts
MCOM 2213 Section 101
Fall 2021

Contact Information

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Course Description

This class will introduce students to the study of film and its relationship to society, culture, and technology. Understanding film requires reading it from a number of perspectives: as a technology, as a business, as entertainment, as art, and perhaps most importantly, as a socio-cultural artifact which, to some extent, reflects the cultural conditions under which it is produced and received. Towards that end, the class will introduce and explore a wide variety of issues related to the study of film: production, distribution, reception, aspects of film form and style, genre, auteur theory, realism, and formalism. The class will also introduce broader concepts of ideology and representation as theorized within cultural studies and provide an overview of film history in relation to issues of human diversity. Students will begin to develop the necessary skills for analyzing film form and meaning in relation to the larger spheres of culture and ideology. Students who are unwilling to explore issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality within an educational framework should consider enrolling in another class.

Textbook

Giannetti. *Understanding Movies*: 14th Ed. **ISBN**: 9780134492087.

Note: The textbook is your responsibility. You are to keep up with the readings in the textbook as we progress through the course.

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individuals to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

Clear cases of academic dishonesty will result in an F for the course. Plagiarism is (1) the use of source material of other persons (either published, including the Internet) without following the accepted techniques of giving credit or (2) the submission for credit of work not the individuals to whom credit is given. If a student in the class is caught plagiarizing, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. The Student Creed developed and adopted by the MSU Student Government reinforces the discouragement of plagiarism and other unethical behaviors. The first statement of the Creed reads, "As an MSU student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else to do so." Plagiarism is lying cheating and stealing.

Grading

| Assignments | Points |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Paper #1 | 20 |
| Paper #2 | 20 |
| Discussion Board Postings | 60 |
| Total Points | 100 |

Grades will be determined on as follows: A, B, C, D, and F.

Requirements All Submitted Work

All work submitted in this course should be prepared according to the following guidelines and submitted on D2L. 1) Papers must be typed, double-spaced in 12-point font in Times New Roman, with 1-inch margins. 2) Pages must be numbered in the top, right-hand corner of each page. 3) Papers should have a cover page with a title, your name, course identifier, and date. 4) Papers must include accurate and complete in text citations and a complete reference list. You should follow the guidelines of the MLA or APA style manual.

Message Board Posts

Utilizing our D2L message boards, you will be posting weekly online for a total of 12 graded posts at 5 points per postings totaling 60 points total in the course. Each entry is worth 5 points. To ensure the maximum number of points, be sure

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to back up your thoughts and conclusions with reputable sources and make sure to give credit where credit is due. Half of your overall points for this assignment is your initial message board posting which contains reputable research and the other half are your two reply posts with your thoughts and conclusions on your classmates posts again backed up with a source. Be sure to cite in the message board postings.

They will be graded as follows:

- 0- Lack of effort, content and thought—no research & coherency
- 3- Shows potential and some effort--- grammar/spelling issues/ research issues, reply postings lacking or missing one
- 5- Critically analyzes the entry, backs up thoughts and claims with research and two thoughtful and through reply to postings
- The professor assigns grades in increments of .5pts.

It is your responsibility to make an initial post every Friday by 5:00PM CST responding to my question/prompt. Then to keep our conversations going, you will respond to two (2) other classmates' initial posts by Sunday at 12:00PM CST (noon). It is not about whether you agree or disagree about an idea or statement, rather you should take a critical look and respond accordingly. You should have a lively debate, discussion and/or pose follow-up queries. You are not to comment on the same classmate(s) more than once. This will ensure that the reaction posts are inclusive and not exclusionary. Your textbook is not a primary source for these postings.

Revision Policy

I believe all work is in a constant process of revision. Therefore, I invite and encourage you to rework your assignments. A revision, however, means more than just changing some grammar errors and typos. It requires you to rethink, recognize and rewrite your work. As a rule of thumb, I never drop your grade based upon a revision. The lowest grade you will receive is the original grade. There is only a one (1) week window of opportunity for you to revise and resubmit (Example- If I hand back a paper on Thursday, then the revision is due the following Thursday.)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into D2L through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

COVID-19 and Face Coverings

Scientific data shows that being fully vaccinated is the most effective way to prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19 and has the greatest probability of avoiding serious illness if infected in all age groups. Although MSU Texas is not mandating vaccinations in compliance with Governor Abbott's executive orders, we highly encourage eligible members of our community to get a vaccination. If you have questions or concerns about the vaccine, please contact your primary care physician or health care professional. Given the recent rise in cases, individuals are also strongly encouraged to wear facial coverings when indoors among groups of people, regardless of vaccination status. Although MSU Texas is not currently requiring facial coverings, they have been an effective strategy in slowing the spread

Campus Carry

Campus Carry Statement –Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage at [Campus Carry Rules/Policies](#).

Missed Assignments Policy

If you miss any assignments without being excused, you will fail the course. I reserve the right to determine whether an absence will be excused. In-class assignments may be excused at my discretion; however, all outside assignments must be completed within a reasonable time frame after your absence — no exceptions. In addition, I reserve the right to determine what, exactly, is a "reasonable time frame." In sum: This is a zero-tolerance policy. I have no time or patience for those who are not going to take this class seriously; thus, "three strikes and you're out" does not apply. "ONE strike and you're out" is more applicable. Some past students have flunked the course for this reason. In any case, I tend to be cynical about making up missed assignments, but if you have a legitimate problem, alternate arrangements can be made at my discretion. If you cannot make it a priority to complete every assignment, on time, please drop now so another student, who is more serious, can have your spot. By accepting this syllabus and remaining enrolled in this course, you are indicating that you understand the Missed Assignments Policy.

Writing Center

Begin drafting papers as early as possible and take advantage of the MSU Writing Center, located off the 2nd floor atrium of Prothro-Yeager! Tutoring is available Monday through Thursday from 9am to 4pm; you can also find a tutor at the satellite location in Moffett Library Honors Lounge, Sunday and Thursday from 6pm to 9pm. Writing tutors will not edit your papers for you, but they will provide support and feedback at every stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to drafting, revising to proofreading.

Privacy

Federal privacy law prohibits me from releasing information about students to certain parties outside of the university without the signed consent of the student. Thus, in almost all cases I will not discuss your academic progress or other matters with your parents. Please do not have them call me. Regardless of these important legal considerations, it is my general policy to communicate with the students, not their parents, even when a student has signed a consent form. College students are adults and are expected to behave accordingly.

Senior Portfolio Requirement

Please note that all mass communication majors are required to submit a portfolio as part of their Internship course (Internship is a prerequisite to Senior Production). This requirement is a part of MSU's reaccreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and is non negotiable. Through the portfolio, students are required to demonstrate communication competence through the written word and visual communication; two examples of each competency are required. As you go through this and other classes, you are responsible for saving course work that could be included in your senior portfolio. Please see me, your adviser, the department chair or any mass communication faculty member for handouts with more information ("Mass Communication Portfolio Competencies" and "Mass Communication Portfolio FAQ"). These handouts are also available on our department web page: <http://finearts.msutexas.edu/masscomm/>.

Services for Students With Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to <http://www.msutexas.edu/student-life/disability>.

Conduct Statement

Behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to benefit from the instruction will result in the instructor's removing the disruptive student(s) from the class, either temporarily or permanently (instructor drop), and receive a final lower grade, up to an F. In addition, and depending on the nature of the behavior or conduct, the student(s) may be subject to further disciplinary actions as per MSU policies.

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule

| Week | Activities/Assignments/Exams | Due Date |
|--|--|--|
| August 23 rd - 29 th | What is this course about? Expectations? – Netflix – <i>Black Mirror</i> Season 3 Episode – Shut up and Dance Assignment: Initial Post and Reaction Posts Read: Chapters 1 & 12 | Initial Post Friday by 5pm and 2 Reaction Posts by Sunday Noon |
| August 30 th – September 12 th | Compare/Contrast Paper Assigned Narrative and Cinematography <i>Screen: Citizen Kane (1941)</i> Assignment: Work on Compare and Contrast Paper Initial Post and Reaction Posts Read: Chapter 6 | Initial Post Friday by 5pm and 2 Reaction Posts by Sunday Noon Compare and Contrast Paper #1, Due September 12 th by 11:59PM |
| September 13 th – 19 th | Chapter 6: Acting and Star Audiences <i>Screening: His Girl Friday (1940)</i> Assignment: Initial Post and Reaction Posts Read: Chapter 5 | Initial Post Friday by 5pm and 2 Reaction Posts by Sunday Noon |
| September 20 th – 26 th | Chapter 5: Sound <i>Screen: 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968)</i> Assignment: Initial Post and Reaction Posts Read: Chapter 4: Editing | Initial Post Friday by 5pm and 2 Reaction Posts by Sunday Noon |
| September 27 th – October 3 rd | Chapter 4: Editing <i>Screening: City of God (2002)</i> Assignment: Initial Post and Reaction Posts Read: Chapter 8: Story | Initial Post Friday by 5pm and 2 Reaction Posts by Sunday Noon |

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| Week | Activities/Assignments/Exams | Due Date |
|--|---|--|
| October 4 th – 10 th | Chapter 8: Story <i>Screen: Moonlight (2016)</i> Assignment: Initial Post and Reaction Posts Read: Chapter 9: Writing | Initial Post Friday by 5pm and 2 Reaction Posts by Sunday Noon |
| October 11 th – 17 th | Chapter 9: Writing <i>Screen: Rear Window (1954)</i> Work on Genre Paper Assignment: Initial Post and Reaction Posts Read: Chapter 10 | Initial Post Friday by 5pm and 2 Reaction Posts by Sunday Noon Genre Paper Assigned |
| October 18 th – 24 th | Chapter 10: Ideology Representation of Gender and Sexuality <i>Screen: Norma Rae (1979)</i> Assignment: Initial Post and Reaction Posts Work on Genre Paper | Initial Post Friday by 5pm and 2 Reaction Posts by Sunday Noon |
| October 25 th – October 31 st | Representation of Race and Social Contexts <i>Screen: Dear White People (2014)</i> Assignment: Initial Post and Reaction Posts Read: Work on Genre Paper | Initial Post Friday by 5pm and 2 Reaction Posts by Sunday Noon October 25 th last day to “W” from any class |
| November 1 st – 7 th | Representation of Class <i>Screening: Rich Hill (2014)</i> Assignment: Initial Post and Reaction Posts | Initial Post Friday by 5pm and 2 Reaction Posts by Sunday Noon |
| November 8 th – 14 th | Chapter 2: Mise en Scene & Authorship <i>Screen: The Graduate (1967)</i> Assignment: Initial Post and Reaction Posts | Genre Paper Due Nov 8 th 11:59PM Initial Post Friday by 5pm and 2 Reaction Posts by Sunday Noon |

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| Week | Activities/Assignments/Exams | Due Date |
|---|--|--|
| November 15 th - 21 st | Documentary <i>Screen: Titicut Follies (1967)</i> Assignment: Initial Post and Reaction Posts | Initial Post Friday by 5pm and 2 Reaction Posts by Sunday Noon |
| November 22 nd - December 3 rd | <i>Screen: Won't You Be My Neighbor? (2018)</i> | Initial Post Friday by 5pm and 2 Reaction Posts by Sunday Noon |