

Course Syllabus: Appreciation of Film
Fain College of Fine Arts, Room C111
MCOM 2213 Section 201
Spring 2026, Mondays 2:00-4:50 pm

Contact Information

Instructor: Thomas Martin
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Course Description

The history, theory, and aesthetics of film as artistic expression. Cinematography, editing, script, and genres will be emphasized.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

No textbook is required for this course. Be prepared to take notes each class meeting. If for any reason a student misses a class meeting, it is that student's responsibility to get notes from another student. (Some material covered in class may later be posted in D2L, but again, checking with a classmate can provide context.)

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Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work, not the individual to whom credit is given).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

Moffett Library

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student's studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information.

Grading

Course Grade - Course grade will be based on three critical analysis essays completed outside of class, one ethical reasoning essay completed outside of class, and two group analyses of films completed in class.

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Critical analysis essays (3 at 200 points each)	600 points
Ethical reasoning essay	200 points
In-class group analyses (2 at 100 points each)	200 points
TOTAL	1000 points

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

A	900 to 1,000 points
B	800 to 899 points
C	700 to 799 points
D	600 to 699 points
F	0 to 599 points

Projects Required

Students will generate a total of four short essays in response to films watched outside of class. Three essays will be critical analyses of various elements of filmmaking discussed in class. The fourth essay will be an examination of the filmmaker's ethical responsibilities as well as the viewer's response to the ethical framework of the film. Check course schedule for due dates. Additionally, there will be three group analyses of films watched in class. (The lowest grade of the group work will be dropped, and the two higher grades will be used to determine the student's course grade.)

Extra Credit

No extra credit assignments will be given or accepted.

Late Work

Late work will not be accepted except in the case of emergency. Students who know of conflicts with due dates in advance will have the option of submitting work early. Please consult with the instructor.

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: January 23

Spring Break. No classes: March 9-14

Deadline for May graduates to file for graduation: February 16

Last day to drop with a grade of "W": April 29

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all meetings of the classes in which they are enrolled. While there is no specific grade for attendance in this course, please be mindful that the course meets only once a week and that the information exchanged in each class meeting is essential to be able to complete the course's assignments. If for any reason a student is unable to attend a particular class meeting, it is the student's responsibility to consult with a classmate to get notes.

Instructor Class Policies

Please be courteous to others by arriving on time at each class meeting. Participation in class is appreciated, but disruptive or discourteous behavior will not be tolerated. Please do not bring food into the classroom. Please be sure that drink containers are well sealed. Please be courteous to the students who will use the classroom next by cleaning your area before leaving the room. ALL PHONES, LAPTOPS, AND OTHER DEVICES MUST BE TURNED OFF DURING IN-CLASS SCREENINGS.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees, and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. However, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans, and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. Check online for details.

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 an 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.

College Policies

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated smoking areas.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state, and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License-to-carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses.

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by the MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "*Run. Hide. Fight.*" which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage.

Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University catalog.

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

Course Schedule

1/26 – First Class Meeting / Course Introduction / In-class Screening

2/2 – Narrative Structure (Critical Analysis Essay 1 assigned)

2/9 – A Brief History of Film

2/16 – Animation (CRITICAL ANALYSIS ESSAY 1 DUE by 2:00 p.m.)

2/23 – Documentary & Ethics (Ethics Essay assigned)

3/2 – SPRING BREAK / NO CLASS

3/9 – Film Aesthetics

3/16 – Film Aesthetics (ETHICS ESSAY DUE by 2:00 p.m. / Critical Analysis Essay 2 assigned)

3/23 – Film Aesthetics

3/30 – Film Aesthetics (CRITICAL ANALYSIS ESSAY 2 DUE by 2:00 p.m. / Critical Analysis Essay 3 assigned)

4/6 – Film Aesthetics

4/13 – Film Genre (CRITICAL ANALYSIS ESSAY 3 DUE by 2:00 p.m.)

4/20 – Film Genre (in-class screening and GROUP ANALYSIS)

4/27 – Film Genre (in-class screening and GROUP ANALYSIS)

5/4 – Last Class Meeting / Film Genre (in-class screening and GROUP ANALYSIS)

There will be no class meeting during final exams week.