



Midwestern State University
MASS COMMUNICATION
FIELD & STUDIO PRODUCTION – MCOM 3613
SPRING 2025: FA C111, MW 9AM - 10:20AM

Contact Information

Instructor: Jonathon Quam
Office: Fine Arts D105
Office hours: MW 11:30AM-1:30PM, TR 2PM-4PM
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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.

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.

Handouts will be utilized in our course as well. It is your responsibility to keep track of those handouts. They are available on D2L.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook 2017-18](#)

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Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given).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

Plagiarism: Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Any writing that is not the work of you or your group members is plagiarism. Students in this course are expected to adhere to the MSU Student Honor Code.

AI Statement: You are not to use AI to write your essays. We will discuss its permitted use in class. If I suspect that the work you submitted wasn't written by you, we will need to meet to discuss the issue.

Welcome to the wide world of new programs that can "do your writing for you". Why did I put that into quotes? Because some of the writing is problematic and a lot of it is downright bland. Having said that, I accept that this is yet another way to get around doing your own work, if that is the choice being made. But maybe it can be used for good, and that is where we are right now. In the "what if" and "how to" zone. We might have assignments that use or integrate AI writing this semester. There might be other places where it simply isn't appropriate for the assignment. Perhaps AI can be a helpful tool, and that is part of what we can explore this semester. With that in mind, if you are found to have used AI writing programs in a place where they are not explicitly allowed on an assignment, you will receive a '0' grade, be reported for academic dishonesty, and will not have the chance to re-do or replace that assignment. I'd prefer that we see this as a chance to learn and adapt rather than just another way to cheat, so we'll approach it from that angle and see where we end up. I look forward to entering this newish universe with you.

Grading

Assignments	Percent age
Online Discussions	20
Quizzes	10
Midterm Exam	15
Final Exam	20
Film Review (1,000-1,250 Words)	10
Film Analysis (1,000-1,250 Words)	25

Late work will be accepted at a reduced grade. Papers are to be turned in at the beginning of class on the date they're due. Any missing work at the end of the semester will receive a failing grade. Grading will be based on your comprehension and use of theory, methodology, and technique discussed in class.

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.mwsu.edu/masscomm/>.

Course Activities: This class will consist of lectures, in and out of class screenings, and written projects.

Course Materials and Readings: In addition to the recommended chapters in the text, a number of current articles will be distributed, usually via D2L (these will be required readings).

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

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.

Attendance: This course meets only once a week, so attendance is required at every class. Beyond university approved absences the student will lose 10% of their final semester grade for any absences for any reason. You must notify me and provide documentation for approved absences.

• THE INSTRUCTOR'S RECORDS REGARDING ABSCENCES ARE THE ONLY ONES THAT COUNT AND IT IS THE STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK IN IF LATE.

Withheld Grades/Semester Grades Policy: Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Course Conduct: Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom.

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 (MSU) 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. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

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.mwsu.edu/student-life/disability>.

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

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 prohibits 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 Closures

In the event of a campus closure due to weather or other circumstance, the instructor will communicate with the students regarding how and what to complete during any class periods missed.

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [Undergraduate Catalog](#)

Sanitizing Equipment

Students will be expected to sanitize equipment before they check it out and when they return it as well.

University Information on Campus Coronavirus Policies

Refer to: <https://msutexas.edu/coronavirus/>

Office Hours

I will be holding the required number of office hours this semester; however, I will not be meeting with students in my office. If you require an in-person meeting, a sign-up will be available on my door. We will meet with masks in the studio. If you need help on a project, I will be able to access your computer from my office to demonstrate how to fix issues you may be having. Otherwise, the expectation will be that meetings are done via Zoom, Skype or Meet.

Class Structure

We will be using a split student model this semester. Only half of the class can be in the lab at one time. You will be assigned to either Monday or Wednesday for in-person instruction; however, you will be expected to attend the online zoom broadcast unless told otherwise. Attendance will be taken for the in-person and online students. Recordings of the lectures will be posted online.

Attendance Addendum

Any student who will miss class due to illness should notify the instructor as soon as possible. If you are experiencing symptoms of any illness, please stay home and attend the online lecture. If you are experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19, please seek medical help right away.

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor. Please understand that we will use D2L very heavily just in case there is a need to switch to online instruction. If that switch were to occur our equipment and software will change, but our projects and course goals will not. All projects will remain the same in case of a switch to online instruction.

Course Schedule:

Week 1 01/20 – 01/24	Martin Luther King Day No Class
Week 2 01/27 – 01/31	Course Introduction: Course Mechanics, Basic Concepts & Terminology Screen: <i>La Jeteé</i> (Dir. Chris Marker, 1962), <i>World of Tomorrow</i> (Dir. Don Herzfeldt, 2015)

Week 3 02/03 – 02/07	Cinematography Lecture: Chapters 1 Screen: <i>Tomboy</i> (Dir. Céline Sciamma, 2011)
Week 4 02/10 – 02/14	Mise en Scène Lecture: Chapter 2 Screen: <i>In The Mood for Love</i> (Dir. Wong Kar-wai, 2000)
Week 5 02/17 – 02/21	Writing About Film – Critique Lecture: Chapter 11 Screen: Film of your choosing for film review.
Week 6 02/24 – 02/28	Story Structure Lecture: Chapter 8 Screen: <i>Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind</i> (Dir. Michel Gondry, 2004)
Week 7 03/03 – 03/07	Editing (Montage) Lecture: Chapter 4 Screen: <i>Mad Max: Fury Road</i> (Dir. George Miller, 2015)
Week 8 03/10 – 03/14	SPRING BREAK

<p>Week 9 03/17 - 03/21</p>	<p>Movement</p> <p>Lecture: Chapter 3</p> <p>Screen: <i>Children of Men</i> (Dir. Alfonso Cuaron, 2006)</p>
<p>Week 10 03/24 - 03/28</p>	<p>Midterm</p> <p>FILM TBD</p>
<p>Week 11 03/31 - 04/04</p>	<p>Acting</p> <p>Lecture: Chapter 6</p> <p>Screen: <i>The Florida Project</i> (Dir. Sean Baker 2017)</p>
<p>Week 12 04/07 - 04/11</p>	<p>Drama</p> <p>Lecture: Chapter 7</p> <p>Screen: <i>Her Smell</i> (Dir. Alex Ross Perry, 2019)</p>
<p>Week 13 04/14 - 04/18</p>	<p>Alternatives to Narrative Film</p> <p>Lecture: Handouts</p> <p>Screen: <i>Rocketship</i> (Dir. Jonathon Quam, 2024), <i>Time Piece</i> (Dir. Jim Henson, 1965)</p>
<p>Week 14 04/21 - 04/25</p>	<p>Ideology</p> <p>Lecture: Chapter 10</p> <p>Screen: <i>Do The Right Thing</i> (Dir. Spike Lee, 1989)</p>
<p>Week 15 04/28 - 05/02</p>	<p>Writing</p> <p>Lecture: Chapter 9</p>

	Screen: <i>Adaptation</i> (Dir. Spike Jonze, 2001)
Week 16 05/05 – 05/09	Synthesis Lecture: Chapter 12 Screen: <i>Rear Window</i> (Dir. Alfred Hitchcock, 1954)
Week 17 05/12 – 05/16	Final: 05/14, 5:45PM