



Film Studies

Mr. Storey-Rm. 107 (West Wing)

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Extra Help: Anytime before or
after school by appointment



“We live in a total-information culture, which is being increasingly dominated by the image. Intelligent living within such an environment calls for developing habits of perception, analysis, judgment, and selectivity that are capable of processing the relentless input of visual data. Because schools are where the culture passes on its values to the young, schools are where film study should take place.” John Culkin

“You mustn't be afraid to dream a little bigger, darling.” Eames, from *Inception*

Course Description:

Since their invention a little more than one hundred years ago, movies have become one of the world's largest industries and most powerful art form of our time; they are a major presence in our lives, and like other forms of technology, perhaps the most influential product of the 21st century. Movies have always possessed powers to amaze, frighten, and enlighten us. They challenge our senses, emotions, and intellects, pushing us to say, often passionately, that we love (or hate) them. The thrust of this class is to join that enthusiasm with a critical understanding, to learn why we feel so strongly about film and to better understand the true power they possess.

For the most part, the class will study films chronologically within a series of select genres.

Textbook:

Giannetti, Louis *Understanding Movies*. Prentice Hall Tenth Edition 2004

Feel free to visit the following website to supplement your text book study. This website is the official “companion” website to the text:

http://wps.prenhall.com/hss_giannetti_undrstmov_10/

Materials Needed:

- Pen and/or pencil at all times
 - Notebook (for lecture notes and textbook notes).
 - I will provide the template for taking notes while watching films aka-Film Viewing Notes.
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Classroom Expectations

- Be Respectful
- Come Prepared
- Arrive on time
- Refer to separate handout for a more complete breakdown of the class expectations.

Grade Distribution:

- Film Viewing Notes: 40%
- Class Participation: 40%
- Essays/Projects/Tests: 20%

Grading Policy:

In accordance with school policy, the following grade distribution will be used to calculate the final grade for this course:

- 20% - First Marking Period
- 20% - Second Marking Period
- 10% - Mid-term Examination
- 20% - Third Marking Period
- 20% - Fourth Marking Period
- 10% - Final Examination

Classroom Policies:

Absences: If you are absent during any portion of a screening and are unable to screen the film on your own time, with your own DVD, you are required to schedule a viewing with me. DVD's cannot be leant out.

Class Conduct: No sleeping and no cell phones! Both offenses will be treated the same. If you are found sleeping or using a cell phone, the result in an automatic failure for whichever film we are currently watching. A second offense will result in a failure for that entire genre. A third offense will result in failure for the entire marking period.

Course Schedule: Scope and Sequence

<i>Approximate Time Frame</i>	<i>Topics/Skills/Areas of Study</i>
September/October – Marking Period 1	<p>Photography, Mise en Scene, Movement (Ch. 1-3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Historical and theoretical distinctions between realistic, classic, and formalistic film styles• Using these styles to discuss the elements of film photography and the role of the cinematographer.• The six basic camera shots• A director may use lighting and color realistically or symbolically and may use a variety of technical choices—lenses, filters, and film stocks—for their aesthetic or psychological value.• How to take notes while watching film.• Deciphering a director's intended effect (both cinematic and thematic)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spoken language offers a range of possibilities, including off-screen narration, interior monologues. • The beauty in variation and interpretation of tone and subtext. • Stage versus screen acting, traces the history of the American star system, examines acting styles. • Influences on acting styles include the British repertory system, Stanislavsky's "method," and French New Wave improvisation. <p>Genres and Films:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thriller/Suspense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Pulp Fiction</i> ○ <i>The Usual Suspects</i> ○ <i>Rear Window</i> ○ <i>North by Northwest</i> ○ <i>Psycho</i> • Drama/Comedy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i> ○ <i>A Christmas Story, Christmas Vacation</i> or <i>Elf</i> ○ <i>Shawshank Redemption</i> ○ <i>Good Will Hunting</i> ○ <i>On the Waterfront</i> <p>Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film viewing note check after every film • Socratic seminar class participation check after every film • Essay #1
<p>End of January – Mid-term Examination</p>	<p>The Mid-term exam will cover</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 1-6 • All genres and films studied and screened • Exam will consist of three parts: film identification, film analysis and essay.
<p>February/March/April – End of Marking Period 2 Start of Marking Period 3</p>	<p>Ideology cont'd., Director Research, Project</p> <p>Genres and Films:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drama (ideological study: gender roles, institutions, age and race relationships, sympathy for the anti-hero) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest</i> ○ <i>The Graduate</i> ○ <i>Do the Right Thing</i> ○ <i>Children of Men</i> ○ <i>GoodFellas</i> ○ <i>Inglorious Basterds</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Hoop Dreams</i> ○ <i>Bowling for Columbine</i> ○ <i>Restrepo</i> ○ <i>American Movie</i> <p>Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film viewing note check after every film • Socratic seminar class participation check after every film • Essay #2 • Spring Project
<p>May-June Marking Period 4</p>	<p>Ideology cont'd.</p> <p>Genres and Films:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Donnie Darko</i> ○ <i>Stranger than Paradise or Dead Man</i> ○ <i>Buffalo '66</i> ○ <i>Human Remains</i> • Foreign <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The Bicycle Thieves</i> ○ <i>Amelie</i> ○ <i>Pan's Labyrinth</i> ○ <i>City of God</i> • Student Choice! <p>Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film viewing note check after every film • Socratic seminar class participation check after every film • Project #2
<p>End of June – Final Examination</p>	<p>The Final exam will cover</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 1-6 • All genres and films studied and screened from the 2nd Semester • Exam will consist of two parts: film identification, and essay.
<p>Final Note:</p>	<p>There is no simple set of films that every student should see. I'm emphasizing those that I consider fundamentally important to shaping your appreciation and understanding of film, but you are an invited and encouraged to bring your own interests and concerns to the class. I look forward to teaching <i>and</i> learning from you all.</p>

