

INTRODUCTION TO FILM STUDIES

Course Syllabus

Instructor: Jill Harper

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Class Time: Tuesdays, 12:00-12:50 pm EST

Course Description:

Welcome to Introduction to Film Studies! As a student of this course, you will expand your understanding and appreciation of the art of cinema through four major studies, including the history of cinema, film genre, global cinema, and the auteur theory. We will study cinematography, composition, mise-en-scene, editing, sound design, screenwriting, acting, and directing throughout the year.

Objectives:

- To understand how films are made
- To understand the choices the director, cinematographer, editor, and others have in creating a film
- To understand the effect that technological advances have had on the development of movies
- To develop an appreciation for the collaborative nature of moviemaking
- To analyze films from a technical, literary, and aesthetic perspective
- To understand film's place as a unique narrative art form
- To understand the history of the movies and major film movements of the twentieth century
- To understand the concept of the film genre
- To understand the idea of the auteur in cinema
- To appreciate world cinema and the way different groups of people approach filmmaking
- To think and speak critically about a variety of films throughout the history of cinema

Text:

There is no required text for the course. Any readings will be made available electronically.

Films:

Semester 1

Week 1: The Story of Film: An Odyssey (documentary)

Week 2: The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1920)

Week 3: Sherlock Jr. (1924)

Week 4: Battleship Potemkin (1925)

Week 5: M (1931)

Week 6: His Girl Friday (1940)

Week 7: Double Indemnity (1944)

Week 8: Mildred Pierce (1945)
Week 9: The Bicycle Thief (1948)
Week 10: Singing in the Rain (1952)
Week 11: Johnny Guitar (1954)
Week 12: Rear Window (1954)
Week 13: The 400 Blows (1959)
Week 15: Some Like It Hot (1959)
Week 16: Psycho (1960)
Week 16: Harakiri (1962)

Semester 2

Week 17: Police Story (1985)
Week 18: A League of Their Own (1992)
Week 19: Lone Star (1996)
Week 20: The Color of Paradise (1999)
Week 21: Who Killed Captain Alex? (2010)
Week 22: Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse (2018)
Week 23: 1917 (2019)
Week 24: Jaws (1975)
Week 25: Raiders of the Lost Ark (1981)
Week 26: Asteroid City (2023)
Week 27: The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar (2024)
Week 28: Lady Bird (2017)
Week 29: Little Women (2019)
Week 30: Barbie (2023)
Week 31: Alien (1979)
Week 32: Student Choice

Film Ratings:

While the films from which illustrative clips are derived range in their MPAA rating from G to R, scenes portraying extreme nudity or violence will not be shown in this class.

Homework:

Outside of class, students will be responsible for viewing the weekly film and writing a short response to the topic of the week. Each written response should take no more than an hour a week.

Final Project:

Students will be expected to complete a final project each semester. The first semester's project will center around film genre, and the second semester will be an in-depth study of the auteur

theory. Students choose their specific topic and decide what type of project they would like to do, from a paper to a creative project to an in-class presentation.