

SYLLABUS AND POLICIES
FST 200 INTRODUCTION TO FILM STUDY
Fall 2014

Professor Todd Berliner

Discussion Section Leader: Beth Roddy

Screenings and Lectures (all sections): Thursday 12:30 pm – 3:45 pm (195 min) in KI 101

and

Section 1: Tuesday 12:30-1:45 in BR 102

Section 2: Tuesday 2:00-3:15 in BR 102

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Designed for prospective majors in Film Studies, this course teaches students how to analyze cinema. We will study cinema's stylistic features: mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing and sound. Students will then learn how sounds and moving images work together to structure a film or render a narrative. Students will also learn to write about cinema, and we will spend considerable time in discussion section developing your writing and analytical skills.

The films we will study represent diverse styles, periods, genres, national cinemas, and production modes in order to give students an understanding of the wide range of cinema's expressive possibilities. Throughout the course, we will concentrate on movies *as* movies—as experiences for spectators—and, wherever we are, we will never be far from our central question: What is it about the movies people like that makes people like them?

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

We will teach you to do the following:

1. Analyze the elements of film style (mise-en-scène, editing, cinematography, and sound) and film form (narrative, stylistic structure, genre, and modes of production).
2. Write persuasive, valid film analyses in clear, cogent prose.
3. Give scrupulously close attention to movies and to note, with precision and vivid description, their stylistic and formal elements. In short, we want to teach you *deep vision*.

CLASS MEETINGS, SCREENINGS, AND FILMS

Class meets twice each week: once for film screenings and lecture and a second time for discussion with your section leader, where you will practice the analytical skills addressed in the lectures and readings. You must attend all of every class meeting, even screenings of movies you have already seen, even if you rented the same movie the night before. Please don't ask us if it's okay to come to class late or leave early; it isn't.

During class, you may not use cell phones, laptops or tablets, which distract people. If you have a special reason for needing to use one of these devices during class, please contact Professor Berliner ahead of time for permission.

Copies of the movies we are studying are on reserve in Randall Library. Some of the assignments require that you see portions of a movie again (and again).

Some of the films contain potentially upsetting content or trauma triggers; see Professor Berliner if you're concerned.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

We will calculate your final grades according to the following percentages:

1. Quizzes (best eight scores): 22%
2. Shot Breakdown: 5%
3. Outline for “Movie Clip” Essay: 15%
4. “Movie Clip” Essay: 15%
5. Final Exam: 18%
6. Class Participation: 25%

Class participation is based almost entirely on two factors: attendance and your two best random-observations papers (your top score from units 2-4 and your top score from units 5-7). But a good class participation grade also depends on submitting your thesis on time for the thesis critiques and coming to class prepared for the peer-editing workshop. Productive contribution to class discussion can improve your class participation grade but is not imperative. If you attend discussion, the only way for you to damage your class participation grade in class is through disruptive behavior (texting, chatting, rudeness, etc.). Missing three discussion sessions will automatically cause you to fail class participation; missing four will cause you to fail the course.

The course schedule indicates due dates for all of the assignments. Separate handouts provide instructions for the shot breakdown and writing assignments.

Grade scale (minimums): A (93.3), A- (90), B+ (86.7), B (83.3), B- (80), C+ (76.7), C (73.3), C- (70), D+ (66.7), D (63.3), D- (60), F.

QUIZZES AND READINGS

At the beginning of at least nine discussion-section meetings, without warning, you will take a brief quiz on the week’s reading, lecture, and movie. Quizzes are perfunctory, designed solely to make sure that you have done the reading for the week, that you are attending screenings and lectures, and that you understand the material. Quizzes cannot be made up or taken late. We can usually arrange for you to take a quiz early; you may do that once in the semester. If you miss a quiz, you will receive a zero on it. However, no matter how many quizzes we give, we will count only your best eight scores.

FINAL EXAM

The final exam will cover material presented throughout the semester and will consist of multiple choice, true-false, matching, and short-answer questions pertinent to the readings and lectures; identifications of key concepts; identifications of plot elements from screened films; and shot breakdowns. If you have a qualified time conflict (such as another exam) during the scheduled time of our final exam or if you have a disability that requires extra exam time, please notify us by unit 11 so that we may arrange for you to take the exam early or in a special setting.

ADMISSION TO THE FILM STUDIES MAJOR

FST 200 is the department’s foundational course, teaching and evaluating the skills that students employ in all other courses in the Film Studies major. Students’ final grade in FST 200 determines admission to the FST major. The department admits to the FST major approximately two thirds of the students taking FST 200, usually more.

For purposes of admission to the FST major, the department credits students’ first registered grade in FST 200 (i.e., the department will not credit grades earned upon repeating the course).

The document, “Instructions for Applying to the UNCW Film Studies Major,” explains the admission procedures and criteria. I will email you the instructions, as well as an application to be submitted by students who earn a B or lower in FST 200. Both documents may also be downloaded from the Film Studies department website.

OFFICE HOURS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Your section leader is responsible for leading discussions, administering assignments, and grading. If you have concerns or questions about those issues, contact him or her. For questions about the lectures or general matters, contact Professor Berliner.

Professor Berliner will hold office hours on Tuesday 1:30-3:00 pm or by appointment on Tuesday, Thursday, or Friday in King Hall 106D. His campus mailbox is located in the Film Studies Department office in King 102. His office phone number is 962-3336. Email is the best way to reach him: berlinert@uncw.edu.

Beth Roddy will hold office hours on Tuesdays, 10 am-noon, or by appointment, in King 106E. Her campus mailbox is located in the Film Studies Department office in King 102. Her email address is esr9440@uncw.edu.

UNCW STUDENT ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

All students are subject to the UNCW Student Academic Honor Code, which says, “UNCW students are committed to honesty and truthfulness in academic inquiry and in the pursuit of knowledge.”

Plagiarism is causing or allowing your reader to believe that another person’s words or ideas are yours. If you plagiarize something, we will give you an F in the course and report you to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action. Always cite your sources, whether it is a book, a website, an article, another student, one of your professors, or the source of any ideas that are not common knowledge and that didn’t originate in your own brain.

WRITING HELP

The University Learning Center provides one-on-one consultations by trained writing tutors (962-7857, ulc@uncw.edu, <http://www.uncw.edu/ulc/writing/center.html>). You may make an appointment to see a tutor, drop in at the Writing Lab (DE 1003), or use their Online Writing & Learning (OWL) program that allows you to receive personal responses to your developing papers. Tuition and taxes pay for these services; you might as well use them.

READINGS AND TEXTS

Bring each week’s readings with you to class on the days they are listed in the syllabus.

- 1) ***Film Art: An Introduction, Tenth Edition*** by David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012). You may purchase either the paper or electronic version of the 10th edition.
- 2) The electronic readings may be downloaded from the Blackboard Learn website at <https://learn.uncw.edu/>. After logging into the course, click “Course Content.” Contact TAC (962-4357) if you need help with Blackboard.
 - **Naremore.Grant.pdf.** James Naremore, “Cary Grant in *North by Northwest*” in *Acting in the Cinema* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 213-235.
 - **Sample Writing Assignments.** We have posted exemplary random observation papers, movie clip outlines, and movie clip essays, written by students from previous semesters.
 - **Syllabus, Writing Assignment, and Shot Breakdown handouts.**

RECOMMENDED

Netflix and Amazon Instant Video have copies of the movies we are studying; some of them are streaming.

**FST 200 INTRODUCTION TO FILM STUDY
COURSE SCHEDULE**

Screenings and Lectures (all sections): Thursday 12:30 pm – 3:45 pm (195 min) in KI 101

and

Section 1: Tuesday 12:30-1:45 in BR 102

Section 2: Tuesday 2:00-3:15 in BR 102

Notes:

- Study the readings *before* the class meetings for which they are listed.
- Bring course handouts and the week’s readings with you to each discussion section.
- Readings with “.pdf” or “.doc” at the end of the title can be downloaded from Blackboard (“Course Contents” section).

PART I: FILM STYLE

UNIT 1		INTRODUCTION TO MISE-EN-SCÈNE
Aug	21 Thu	Screening: <i>Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari / The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari</i> (Germany 1920, 75 min, Robert Wiene) Lecture: “Analyzing Film Mise-en-Scène”
	26 Tue	Reading: 1) <i>Film Art</i> , “The Shot: Mise-en-Scène,” pp. 111-131 2) <i>Film Art</i> , “German Expressionism,” pp. 469-472 3) FST200syllabus.doc (“Syllabus and Policies,” this 6-page handout) 4) FST200writingassignments.doc, pp. 1-2 (Blackboard) 5) Sample Random Observation Papers (Blackboard)
	27 Wed	<i>Last day of Add/Drop</i>
UNIT 2		MISE-EN-SCÈNE: PERFORMANCE
Aug	28 Thu	Screening: <i>North by Northwest</i> (USA 1959, 136 min, Alfred Hitchcock) Lecture: “Analyzing Film Performance”
Sep	2 Tue	Reading: 1) Naremore.Grant.pdf (Blackboard) 2) <i>Film Art</i> , “Staging: Movement and Performance,” pp. 131-140 3) <i>Film Art</i> , “ <i>North by Northwest</i> ,” pp. 406-410 Due at the beginning of class: Random Observations (I) of a clip from <i>Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari</i> or <i>North by Northwest</i> (hard copy).
UNIT 3		MISE-EN-SCÈNE AND CINEMATOGRAPHY IN CITIZEN KANE
Sep	4 Thu	Screening: <i>Citizen Kane</i> (USA 1941, 119 min, Orson Welles) Lecture: “Orson Welles and <i>Citizen Kane</i> ”
	9 Tue	Reading: <i>Film Art</i> , “Putting It All Together: Mise-en- Scène in Space and Time,” “Narrative Functions of Mise-en- Scène in <i>Our Hospitality</i> ,” pp. 140-158. Due at the beginning of class: Random Observations (I) of a clip from <i>Citizen Kane</i> (hard copy).
UNIT 4		SOUND
Sep	11 Thu	Screening: <i>Do the Right Thing</i> (USA 1989, 120 min, Spike Lee) Lecture: “Analyzing Film Sound”
	16 Tue	Reading: 1) <i>Film Art</i> , Chapter 7, “Sound in the Cinema,” pp. 266-307 2) <i>Film Art</i> , “ <i>Do the Right Thing</i> ,” pp. 410-415 Due at the beginning of class: Random Observations (I) of a clip from <i>Do the Right Thing</i> (hard copy). Last opportunity to write your first observation.

UNIT 5		CINEMATOGRAPHY I: THE PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGE	
Sep	18 Thu	Screening:	1) <i>Duck Amuck</i> (USA 1953, 7 min, Chuck Jones) 2) <i>Sanjuro</i> (Japan 1962, 96 min, Akira Kurosawa)
		Lecture:	“Analyzing Cinematography: The Photographic Image”
	23 Tue	Reading:	1) <i>Film Art</i> , “The Photographic Image,” 160-178 2) <i>Film Art</i> , “Animated Film,” pp. 386-398
		Due at the beginning of class:	Random Observations (II) of a clip from <i>Duck Amuck</i> or <i>Sanjuro</i> (hard copy).
UNIT 6		CINEMATOGRAPHY II: FRAMING AND SHOT DURATION	
Sep	25 Thu	Screening:	<i>Wo hu cang long / Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon</i> (Taiwan/Hong Kong/USA/China 2000, 120 min, Ang Lee)
		Lecture:	Guest Lecturer, Beth Roddy: “Analyzing Cinematography: Framing”
	30 Tue	Reading:	1) <i>Film Art</i> , “Framing” and “Duration of the Image,” pp. 178-216 2) <i>Film Art</i> , “Hong Kong Cinema: 1980s-1990s” pp. 494-498.
		Due at the beginning of class:	Random Observations (II) of <i>Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon</i> (hard copy).
UNIT 7		EDITING	
Oct	2 Thu	Screening:	<i>The Maltese Falcon</i> (USA 1941, 101 min, John Huston)
		Lecture:	“Analyzing Film Editing”
	7 Tue	Reading:	1) <i>Film Art</i> , Chapter 6, “Editing,” pp. 218-264 2) “Shot Breakdown” handout
		Due at the beginning of class:	Random Observations (II) of <i>The Maltese Falcon</i> (hard copy). Last opportunity to write your second observation
	8 Wed		<i>Last day to withdraw with a W</i>
UNIT 8		ANALYZING A FILM’S STYLE	
Oct	9 Thu	Screening:	<i>Raging Bull</i> (USA 1980, 129 min, Martin Scorsese)
		Lecture:	“ <i>Raging Bull</i> ’s Stylistic Incoherence”
	10 Fri		Due by 11:59 pm: Enter Shot Breakdown answers into Blackboard test, “Shot Breakdown: <i>Notorious</i> .” The test is available on Blackboard from 12:01 am until 11:59 pm on October 10. Once you begin the test, you will have 1 hour to enter your answers into Blackboard. Scores will be available on Blackboard at 11:59 pm on October 10.
	14 Tue		<i>Fall Break!</i>

PART II: FILM FORM

UNIT 9	NARRATIVE AS A FORMAL SYSTEM
	WRITING WORKSHOP: THESIS AND ORGANIZATION
Oct 16 Thu	Screening: 1) <i>Un Chien Andalou / An Andalusian Dog</i> (France 1929, 16 min, Luis Buñuel) 2) <i>His Girl Friday</i> (USA 1940, 92 min, Howard Hawks) Lecture: “Film Narrative: Classical and Non-Classical Storytelling”
21 Tue	Reading: 1) <i>Film Art</i> , Chapter 3, “Narrative as a Formal System” pp. 72-110. 2) <i>Film Art</i> , “Surrealism,” pp. 474-476. 3) <i>Film Art</i> , “ <i>His Girl Friday</i> ,” pp. 403-406. Workshop: How to Develop a Strong Thesis and Organize a Paper
UNIT 10	FILM STYLE I: STYLE AS A FORMAL SYSTEM
	WRITING WORKSHOP: THESIS CRITIQUES
Oct 23 Thu	Screening: 1) <i>Ballet mécanique / Mechanical Ballet</i> (France 1924, 16 min, Fernand Leger) 2) <i>Play Time</i> (France 1967, 126 min, Jacques Tati) Lecture: “Style as a Formal System: <i>Ballet mécanique</i> and <i>Play Time</i> ”
27 Mon	Due to your discussion section leader by email by noon: Working thesis for your Movie Clip Outline and Essay.
28 Tue	Reading: 1) <i>Film Art</i> , “Experimental Film,” pp. 369-386 2) <i>Film Art</i> , Chapter 8, “Style and Film Form,” pp. 308-326 3) <i>Film Art</i> , “Writing a Critical Analysis of a Film,” pp. 450-453 4) FST200writingassignments.doc (“Movie Clip Assignments”) pp. 3-4 (Blackboard) 5) Sample Outlines (Blackboard) Workshop: Thesis Critiques
UNIT 11	FILM STYLE II: CLASSICAL AND NON-CLASSICAL FILM STYLE
	WRITING WORKSHOP: OUTLINE PEER EDITING
Oct 30 Thu	Screening: 1) <i>La Jetée / The Pier</i> (France 1962, 28 min., Chris Marker) 2) <i>The General</i> (USA 1926, 80 min, Buster Keaton) Lecture: “Classical and Non-Classical Film Style”
Nov 4 Tue	Due at the beginning of discussion section: 4 hard copies of your outline for your movie clip essay (no longer than 2 double-spaced typed pages). Workshop: Peer Editing of Movie Clip Essay Outline

PART III FILM TYPES

UNIT 12		DOCUMENTARY
Nov	6 Thu	Screening: 1) <i>Window Water Baby Moving</i> (USA 1959, 12 min, 13 sec, Stan Brakhage) 2) <i>Rivers and Tides: Andy Goldsworthy Working with Time</i> (Germany / Finland / UK 2002, 90 min, Thomas Riedelsheimer) Lecture: “Documentary Filmmaking: <i>Window Water Baby Moving</i> and <i>Rivers and Tides</i> ”
	7 Fri	Due by email (MS Word attachment) to your discussion section leader by noon: Outline for Movie Clip Essay. The title of your attachment should start with your last name (e.g. “yourlastname_outline.doc”). Graded outlines (with comments) will be returned by email on November 17.
	11 Tue	Reading: <i>Film Art</i> , “Documentary,” pp. 350-369 Bring to class: Your shot breakdown answers. Review of Shot Breakdown
UNIT 13		FILM GENRES
Nov	13 Thu	Screening: <i>Singin' in the Rain</i> (USA 1952, 103 min., Stanley Donen & Gene Kelly) Lecture: “The Hollywood Musical and <i>Singin' in the Rain</i> ”
	18 Tue	Reading: 1) <i>Film Art</i> , Chapter 9, “Film Genres,” pp. 327-348 2) Sample Movie Clip Essays (Blackboard)

PART IV PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION, EXHIBITION

UNIT 14		PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION, AND EXHIBITION
	20 Thu	Screening: 1) <i>Mothlight</i> (USA 1963, 3 min, 14 sec, Stan Brakhage) 2) <i>Festen / The Celebration</i> (Denmark 1998, 105 min, Thomas Vinterberg) Lectures: “Exhibition and Distribution: Feature Filmmaking” / “Dogme 95”
	24 Mon	Due by email (MS Word attachment) to your discussion section leader by noon: Movie Clip Essay. The title of your attachment should start with your last name (e.g. “yourlastname_essay.doc”). Graded essays (without comments) will be returned by email on December 3.
	25 Tue	Reading: <i>Film Art</i> , Chapter 1, “Film as Art: Creativity, Technology, and Business” pp. 2-47. Tip: Purchase a Scantron Form 30423 (large form) this week for the final exam; the bookstore sometimes runs out during finals week.
	27 Thu	<i>Thanksgiving Break!</i>
Dec	2 Tue	Reading: Review the semester’s readings and your lecture notes to prepare for the final exam. Bring to class: <i>Film Art</i> , Naremore reading, and course syllabus.
	11 Thu	Final Exam (time and place TBA). Purchase and bring Scantron Form 30423 (large form), a few sharp #2 pencils, and something hard to write on.