

SYLLABUS AND POLICIES
FST 200 INTRODUCTION TO FILM STUDY
Fall 2018

Professor Todd Berliner

Discussion Section Leaders: Adam Gnuse and Alison Rodriguez

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

Section 1: Tuesday 12:30-1:45 pm in KI 104 (Gnuse)

Section 3: Tuesday 2:00-3:15 pm in KI 204 (Rodriguez)

Section 2: Tuesday 2:00-3:15 pm in KI 104 (Gnuse)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Designed to prepare students to major in Film Studies, this course teaches students how to analyze the aesthetic properties of cinema. We will first study cinema's stylistic properties, including 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. Along the way, students will develop writing and analytical skills and other technical knowledge applicable to film study.

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 aesthetic 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 enjoy that makes people enjoy them?

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students in the course will learn to do the following:

1. Analyze the elements of film style (mise-en-scène, editing, cinematography, and sound), film form (narrative and stylistic structure) and types of film (genres and modes of production).
2. Evaluate the aesthetic properties of individual films, moments in films, and film techniques.
3. Write persuasive, valid aesthetic analyses in clear, cogent prose.
4. Give scrupulously close attention to movies and vividly describe their sensory properties: In short, you will learn *deep vision*.

FST 200 partially satisfies University Studies' *Aesthetic, Interpretive, and Literary Perspectives* (AIL) component:

5. AIL 1. Employing the methods and terminology of film studies, students critically analyze and make cogent subjective judgments about cinema's formal properties and how movies tell stories, convey meaning, and create experiences.
6. AIL 2. Students demonstrate an understanding of films and film modes within the contexts of their production, with attention to cinema's role as a product of particular technologies and industrial conditions.
7. AIL 3. Students demonstrate an understanding of the importance of artistic expression and open-minded inquiry by analyzing the contribution of cinema to people's understanding of art and experience.

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. Please don't ask us if it's okay to miss class, arrive 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.

Some of the assignments require that you see portions of a movie again (and again). Copies of the movies we are studying are available through Randall Library on disc or streaming through [Kanopy](#) or [Swank](#).

The course has potentially upsetting material and trauma triggers; see Professor Berliner if you have concerns.

QUIZZES

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 a 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 each of the screened films; and shot breakdowns. If you have a qualified time conflict during the scheduled time of our exam or a disability that permits extended time, please notify us by unit 11 so that we may arrange for you to take the exam early in a special setting.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Based primarily on attendance, class participation is essential to the course. You start with 100%. We'll subtract 5% from your class participation grade for missing one discussion section, 13% for missing two, 25% for three, and 42% for four; missing five will cause you to fail the course. Late arrivals or early exits count for half attendance, provided you attend most of the class.

Your participation grade also depends on three other factors: 1) submitting your thesis on time for the thesis critiques (-6% if you fail to do it), 2) preparation for the peer-editing workshop (-8%), and 3) participation in discussion. Productive contributions to class discussion can improve your class participation grade; disruptive behavior (on your phone, sleeping, chatting, etc.) can damage it.

If you're attentive in class, come prepared and on time, and submit your thesis punctually, you'll get an A in class participation.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

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

Writing and Analytic Skills: 45%

1. 2 Random Observations Papers (average of top score from Group I and top score from Group II): 15%
2. Outline for Movie Clip Essay: 15%
3. Movie Clip Essay: 15%

Factual and Technical Mastery: 40%

1. Quizzes (average of your best eight scores): 20%
2. Shot Breakdown: 5%
3. Final Exam: 15%

Class Participation: 15%

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

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.

ADMISSION TO THE FILM STUDIES MAJOR

The Film Studies Department admits a limited number of students each semester. The document, "Instructions for Applying to the UNCW Film Studies Major/Frequently Asked Questions," explains admission procedures and criteria; you can download it from the [Film Studies Department](#) website on the [Admission to the Major](#) page.

Admission to the major is based solely on a student's grade in FST 200. FST 200 is the department's foundational course, teaching and evaluating the skills that students use in all other courses in the Film Studies major. While enrolled in FST 200 or any time after completing the course, students seeking to major in film studies must sign the "Film Studies Major Application Form," which may be found in the Film Studies Department office. No other action is necessary.

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, work, 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). 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.

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 your section leader. For questions about the lectures, course organization, or general matters, contact Professor Berliner.

Professor Berliner will hold office hours on Tuesdays 2:00-3:15 pm or by appointment on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday in King Hall 106D. His campus mailbox is located in the Film Studies Department office in King 102. His office phone number is 910-962-3336. Email is the best way to reach him: berlinert@uncw.edu.

Mr. Gnuse will hold office hours on Wednesdays 11:00 am-12:00 pm, or by appointment, in King 106G. His campus mailbox is located in the Film Studies Department office in King 102. His email address is ajg6440@uncw.edu.

Ms. Rodrigues will hold office hours on Wednesdays 12-1:30 pm, or by appointment, in King 106G. Her campus mailbox is located in the Film Studies Department office in King 102. Her email address is air5327@uncw.edu.

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, Eleventh Edition*** by David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2017). You may buy the book (11th edition) in either print or digital format.
- 2) Electronic materials may be obtained on [Blackboard Learn](#). After logging into the course, click "Content Area." Contact [TAC](#) (962-4357) if you need help with Blackboard.
 - **Course Handouts.** Syllabus, Writing Assignment, and Shot Breakdown handouts
 - **Instructions for Applying to the Film Studies Major**
 - **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 Papers and Outlines.** Exemplary Random Observation Papers, Movie Clip Outlines, and Movie Clip Essays, written by students from previous semesters.
 - **Random Observation Clips.** Sample clips from movies we are studying, in case you have trouble locating your own clips for your Random Observation Papers
 - **Shot Breakdown Clip**
 - **Shot Breakdown Test.** This test will appear, as if by magic, on the date indicated in the syllabus.

COURSE SCHEDULE

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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” at the end of the title can be downloaded from [Blackboard](#) (“Content Area”).

PART I: FILM STYLE

UNIT 1 INTRODUCTION TO FILM CRITICISM

Aug 23 Thur **Screening:** *The Maltese Falcon* (USA 1941, 101 min, John Huston).

Lecture: “On the Function of Film Criticism”

Aug 28 Tues Practicing Film Analysis

Reading: 1) *Film Art*, Chapter 1, “Film as Art: Creativity, Technology, and Business” pp. 2-48
2) FST200syllabus.pdf (this 7-page handout)
3) FST200writingassignments.pdf (especially pp. 1-2) (Blackboard)
4) Sample Random Observation Papers (Blackboard)

29 Wed Last day of Add/Drop

UNIT 2 INTRODUCTION TO MISE-EN-SCÈNE

Aug 30 Thur **Screening:** 1) *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari / The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Germany 1920, 77 min, Robert Wiene)

2) *Kustom Kar Kommandos* (USA 1965, 3 min, Kenneth Anger)

Lectures: 1) “German Expressionism”

2) “Analyzing Mise-en-Scène”

Sep 4 Tues **Reading:** 1) *Film Art*, “The Shot: Mise-en-Scène,” pp. 112-131

2) *Film Art*, “German Expressionism,” pp. 463-466

Due at the beginning of class: Random Observations (I) of a clip from *The Maltese Falcon*, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* or *Kustom Kar Kommandos* (hard copy).

UNIT 3 MISE-EN-SCÈNE: PERFORMANCE

Sep 6 Thur **Screening:** *North by Northwest* (USA 1959, 136 min, Alfred Hitchcock)

Lecture: “Analyzing Performance”

11 Tues **Reading:** 1) Naremore.Grant.pdf (Blackboard)

2) *Film Art*, “Staging: Movement and Performance,” pp. 131-140

3) *Film Art*, “*North by Northwest*,” pp. 404-408

Due at the beginning of class: Random Observations (I) of *North by Northwest* (hard copy).

UNIT 4 ANALYZING MISE-EN-SCÈNE AND CINEMATOGRAPHY IN *CITIZEN KANE*

Sep 13 Thur **Screening:** *Citizen Kane* (USA 1941, 119 min, Orson Welles)

Lecture: “Orson Welles and *Citizen Kane*”

18 Tues **Reading:** 1) *Film Art*, “Putting It All Together: Mise-en-Scène in Space and Time,” “Narrative Functions of Mise-en-Scène in *Our Hospitality*,” pp. 140-158

2) *Film Art*, “Classical Hollywood Cinema (1926-1950),” pp. 474-477

Due at the beginning of class: Random Observations (I) of *Citizen Kane* (hard copy).

UNIT 5		CINEMATOGRAPHY I: THE PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGE
Sep	20 Thur	Screening: 1) <i>Duck Amuck</i> (USA 1953, 7 min, Chuck Jones) 2) <i>Ohayô / Good Morning</i> (Japan 1959, 94 min., Yasujirô Ozu) Lecture: “Analyzing Cinematography: The Photographic Image”
	25 Tues	Reading: 1) <i>Film Art</i> , “The Photographic Image,” 159-177 2) <i>Film Art</i> , “Animated Film,” pp. 387-398 Due at the beginning of class: Random Observations (I) of <i>Duck Amuck</i> or <i>Good Morning</i> . Last opportunity to write your first observation.
UNIT 6		CINEMATOGRAPHY II: FRAMING AND SHOT DURATION
Sep	27 Thur	Screening: <i>Wo hu cang long / Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon</i> (Taiwan/Hong Kong/USA/China 2000, 120 min, Ang Lee) Lecture: “Analyzing Cinematography: Framing”
Oct	2 Tues	Reading: 1) <i>Film Art</i> , “Framing” and “Duration of the Image,” pp. 177-215 2) <i>Film Art</i> , “Hong Kong Cinema, 1980s-1990s” pp. 488-492. 3) “Shot Breakdown” handout Due at the beginning of class: Random Observations (II) of <i>Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon</i> .
UNIT 7		EDITING
Oct	4 Thur	Screening: 1) <i>À bout de souffle / Breathless</i> (France 1960, 90 min., Jean-Luc Godard) 2) <i>Meshes of the Afternoon</i> (USA 1943, 14 min, Maya Deren) Lecture: “Analyzing Editing”
	9 Tues	Reading: 1) <i>Film Art</i> , Chapter 6, “Editing,” pp. 216-262 2) <i>Film Art</i> , “The French New Wave,” pp. 479-482 Due at the beginning of class: Random Observations (II) of <i>Meshes of the Afternoon</i> or <i>Breathless</i> .
UNIT 8		SHOT BREAKDOWN
WRITING WORKSHOP: THESIS AND ORGANIZATION		
Oct	10 Wed	Due in Blackboard by 11:59 pm: Enter Shot Breakdown answers into Blackboard test, “Shot Breakdown: <i>Notorious</i> .” The test is available on Blackboard 12:01 am until 11:59 pm today. Prepare your answers before beginning the test online. Once you begin the test, you will have one hour to enter your answers. Scores will be available on Blackboard at midnight.
	11 Thur	<i>Fall Break!</i>
	15 Mon	<i>Last day to withdraw</i>
	16 Tue	Reading: FST200writingassignments.pdf, pp. 3-4 (Blackboard) Bring to class: Your shot breakdown answers for a review of the shot breakdown Workshop: How to Develop a Strong Thesis and Organize a Paper
UNIT 9		SOUND
Oct	18 Thur	Screening: <i>Do the Right Thing</i> (USA 1989, 120 min, Spike Lee) Lecture: “Analyzing Film Sound”
	23 Tues	Reading: 1) <i>Film Art</i> , Chapter 7, “Sound in the Cinema,” pp. 263-302 2) <i>Film Art</i> , “ <i>Do the Right Thing</i> ,” pp. 408-413 Due at the beginning of class: Random Observations (II) of <i>Do the Right Thing</i> .

PART II: FILM FORM

UNIT 10 ANALYZING FILM FORM

- Oct 25 Thur **Screening:** *Raging Bull* (USA 1980, 129 min, Martin Scorsese)
Lecture: “*Raging Bull*’s Stylistic Dissonance”
- 30 Tues **Reading:** 1) *Film Art*, Chapter 8, “Style and Film Form,” pp. 303-324
2) *Film Art*, “*Raging Bull*,” pp. 446-450
3) FST200writingassignments.pdf (“Movie Clip Assignments”) pp. 3-4 (Blackboard)
Due at the beginning of class: Random Observations (II) of *Raging Bull*. Last opportunity to write your second observation.

UNIT 11 NARRATIVE AS A FORMAL SYSTEM

WRITING WORKSHOP: THESIS CRITIQUES

- Nov 1 Thur **Screening:** 1) *Un Chien Andalou / An Andalusian Dog* (France 1929, 16 min, Luis Buñuel)
2) *His Girl Friday* (USA 1940, 92 min, Howard Hawks)
Lecture: “Classical and Non-Classical Storytelling”
- 5 Mon **Due to your discussion section leader by email by noon:** Working thesis for your Movie Clip Outline and Essay.
- 6 Tues **Reading:** 1) *Film Art*, Chapter 3, “Narrative as a Formal System” pp. 72-110.
2) *Film Art*, “Surrealism,” pp. 468-470.
3) *Film Art*, “*His Girl Friday*,” pp. 401-404.
4) Sample Outlines (Blackboard)
Workshop: Thesis Critiques

UNIT 12 STYLE AS A FORMAL SYSTEM

WRITING WORKSHOP: OUTLINE PEER EDITING

- Nov 8 Thur **Screening:** 1) *Ballet mécanique / Mechanical Ballet* (France 1924, 16 min, Fernand Leger)
2) *Play Time* (France 1967, 126 min, Jacques Tati)
Lecture: “Style as a Formal System: *Ballet mécanique* and *Play Time*”
- 13 Tues **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: TYPES OF FILMS AND MODES OF PRODUCTION

UNIT 13 FILM GENRES

Nov 15 Thur **Screening:** *Star Wars* (1977/2015 “Despecialized Edition,” 121 min., George Lucas)
Lecture: “Genre Expertise and Aesthetic Pleasure, or Why Film Scholars Didn’t Like *Star Wars*”

19 Mon **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.docx”). Graded outlines will be returned by email on November 30.

20 Tues **Reading:** 1) *Film Art*, Chapter 9, “Film Genres,” pp. 326-349
2) Sample Movie Clip Essays (Blackboard)

22 Thur *Thanksgiving Holiday!*

UNIT 14 EXPERIMENTAL FILM

Nov 27 Tue **Reading:** *Film Art*, “Experimental Film,” pp. 369-386
Screening: 1) *La Jetée / The Pier* (France 1962, 28 min., Chris Marker)
2) *Mothlight* (USA 1963, 3 min, 14 sec, Stan Brakhage)
Tip: Purchase a Scantron Form 30423 (large form) this week for the final exam; the bookstore sometimes runs out during finals week.

UNIT 15 DOCUMENTARY FILMS

Nov 29 Thur **Screening:** 1) *Window Water Baby Moving* (USA 1959, 12 min, 13 sec, Stan Brakhage)
2) *Rivers and Tides: Andy Goldsworthy Working with Time* (Germany / Finland / UK 2002, 90 min, Thomas Riedelsheimer)
Lecture: “Documentary Filmmaking: *Window Water Baby Moving* and *Rivers and Tides*”

Dec 4 Tue Last class meeting
Bring to class: *Film Art* and Naremore reading

6 Thur **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.docx”).

13 Thur 11:30 am – 2:30 pm in KI 101 **Final Exam.**
Purchase and bring Scantron Form 30423 (large form) and a few sharp #2 pencils.