

ORAL PRESENTATIONS
FST 500 INTRODUCTION TO FILM STUDY AND PRODUCTION
CRITICAL STUDIES
(UPDATED 8/16/20)

Professor Todd Berliner

Fall 2020

Each student will participate in a group presentation to the class, followed by a Q&A. Afterward, the class will critique each presentation to help presenters improve their presentation skills. The topic and date of each student's group presentation is listed below.

The classroom has a DVD player, Blu-Ray player, PC (with PowerPoint and a USB drive), and projector. You may also connect your laptop to the projector through HDMI. Arrive 15 minutes early on your presentation day so that you have time to set up before class begins.

Your goal is to help the class better understand the topics, readings, and films of the unit we are currently studying. Presentations must advance a discrete set of points; do not lead a discussion. *Your job is to teach students something that you understand and they may not.* So you will need to develop some expertise in the material (readings, films, concepts) of the unit. However, presentations should include not just explanation of the readings but also original formal analyses of one or more films we have seen during the unit.

The content of your presentation is up to you, but your two primary goals are as follows:

1. Explain some aspects of the unit readings that you believe the class might have difficulty understanding.
2. Relate the unit readings and topics to the movies of the unit (and perhaps to movies we saw earlier in the semester, if appropriate) using still images or clips from the movies to illustrate your points and offering original formal analyses related to the unit topic.

Presentations should divide evenly among the presenters, about 10 minutes per person. Two-person presentations should last no longer than 20 minutes, three-person presentations no longer than 30 minutes. You must work together to coordinate your portions of the presentation so that it is coherent. There should be no delay between your separate portions—put the entire presentation together in one file or computer.

Your group and I will meet over Zoom a few days before your presentation. At that meeting, I will answer any questions you have about the material and give you other help you may require. Come to the meeting *prepared* with questions for me. Your presentation should be near completion by this point so that I can offer you the most help. If you also want to meet sooner, line up a conference with me.

PRESENTATION TOPICS, DATES, AND GROUPS

Unit 1 Mise-en-Scène: September 3.

Group 1: Tanner Benson and Justin Clark
Group 2: Alexis Dickerson and Christina Dietz

Unit 2 Cinematography: September 17

Group 1: Claude Lilford and Margaret Lansaw
Group 2: Genie Mason and Chelsea Lea

Unit 3 Editing: October 1

Group 1: Evan Grysko and La-Rel Easter
Group 2: Patrick Hutchens and Hugh Feldmann

Unit 4 Sound: October 15

Group 1: Matthias Smith and Pearl Marley
Group 2: Tristan Turner and Megan McDeavitt

Unit 5 Style as a Formal System: October 29

Group 1: Robert Karmi, Jonathan Furnell, and Kiersten Houser

Unit 6 Narrative as a Formal System: Nov. 12

Group 1: Anna Williams and Drew Spenny

ORAL PRESENTATION TIPS

General

- 1) Make sure you understand the material you are presenting on. Your superior knowledge of the material authorizes you to make your presentation to the rest of the class. This is the most important tip of all.
- 2) Presentation format: 1) you present, 2) we clap, 3) you say something like, “We would be happy to take your questions.” Your presentation ends after the Q&A, then we move to critique.
- 3) Rehearse your presentation several times—know it well.
- 4) Time your presentation. Use all of the time you have and no more (it’s permissible to come in a few minutes under or a minute over). If you go on too long, I will cut you off.
- 5) Come to class 15 minutes early to set up your presentation and test your clips (including sound). You don’t want to be troubleshooting during your presentation.
- 6) Speak clearly, loudly, slowly.
- 7) Face your audience, not the screen. Look at us.

Tips on PowerPoint (or whatever computer presentation tool you prefer)

General

- 8) Use PowerPoint slides only to present information to your audience. Don’t use PowerPoint to remind yourself about what you want to say. For reminders, use either notecards or the PowerPoint “Notes” feature. The “Notes” feature displays notes that you can see and your audience cannot, but you’ll need to bring your own laptop to take advantage of it.
- 9) When you want to stress an important point, insert a *blank slide* into PowerPoint: Everyone will suddenly turn their gaze from the screen to you.

Text

- 10) People cannot read and listen at the same time. So use minimal text—only for headings, quotes, and data. Keep the focus on your oral presentation; don’t make people read more than they need to.
- 11) When text is longer than a few words, read the text aloud as soon as you put it on screen. Don’t put text onscreen until you are ready to read it aloud.

Still Images and Clips

- 12) To illustrate visual qualities of a film, use still images (rather than clips) whenever you can; stills are more efficient uses of your presentation time.
- 13) Use clips to illustrate things that can only be illustrated with clips (sound devices and moving visuals). Don’t use clips to illustrate plot points; just explain a plot point.
- 14) Rip a clip and embed it in your presentation, rather than linking to a clip from a website (such as Youtube). Online clips are clunky and unreliable, they sometimes have pop-up ads, and they are usually longer than you need; they look unprofessional.
- 15) Make your clip as short as possible—trim it down to the essential frames.
- 16) Set up a clip beforehand: Tell us what to look for in the clip before we watch it or during the clip, not after. We need to know why we are watching the clip *as* we watch it.
- 17) If you are using a clip to illustrate visual devices, mute the sound. Muting lessens distraction and helps focus your audience on the relevant visuals. Muting also enables you to talk over your clip as it plays.