

**FST 500 INTRODUCTION TO FILM STUDY AND PRODUCTION**  
**CRITICAL STUDIES SYLLABUS AND POLICIES**  
 (updated 8/16/20)

Professor Todd Berliner  
 Thursday 5:00-9:15 pm in KI 101 (King Auditorium)

Fall 2020

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

FST 500 immerses students in film style, film form, and film aesthetics. Students produce papers and short film projects that develop their critical, artistic, and technical proficiencies in the study and production of narrative, documentary and experimental films.

This semester, critical studies and production instruction will unfortunately be divided, allowing for limited integration in instruction. However, students in the MFA in Filmmaking and the MA in Film Studies will work in teams on class projects, enabling an integration of approaches, knowledge, and skills.

The critical studies portion of the class, addressed in this syllabus and accompanying assignment documents, will focus on teaching students to analyze the aesthetic properties of movies, scenes, and elements of scenes (shots, performances, sounds, etc.). It will involve a combination of face-to-face instruction and conferences with Professor Berliner over Zoom. If face-to-face instruction becomes untenable, we will move entirely to online instruction.

Wherever we are in the course, we will never be far from our central question and the only question about the cinema that I think much about: What is it about the movies people enjoy that makes people enjoy them?

**STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

1. Demonstrate that a critical understanding of film style and form deepens students' production skills across various modes and traditions.
2. Demonstrate that proficiency in film production enhances students' ability to analyze film style and form.
3. Demonstrate critical and technical proficiency in the fundamentals of cinematography, lighting, staging, sound, and editing in narrative, documentary, and experimental film.

**CLASS MEETINGS AND SCREENINGS**

The critical studies portion of the class will meet on Thursdays in King Auditorium for screenings and discussion. We will take a break at some point, and at times we will not remain for the entire class meeting time. You should, however, plan to attend all of every meeting, even screenings of movies you have already seen, even if you rented the same movie the night before. Don't ask if it's okay to miss class, arrive late, or leave early; it isn't.

You may not use electronics during class time; they're distracting. If you have a special reason for wanting to use electronics, talk to me before you do.

Copies of the movies we are studying are available through Randall Library on disc or streaming. The course screens controversial and potentially upsetting material. See me if you have concerns.

**GROUP CONFERENCES / TUTORIALS**

I will meet with each student group over Zoom to discuss your group's upcoming paper, video project, or presentation. At those meetings, we will also discuss readings, course materials, upcoming assignments, and whatever else comes up. Each student will have at least three conferences/tutorials with me during the course of the semester. Students may also make additional appointments to meet with me either individually or in groups.

Students must sign up for conferences on the Canvas website for the course and come to conferences prepared. Preparation includes: (1) completing all of the readings for the unit, (2) meeting with your group beforehand and creating a detailed plan for completing the upcoming assignment, and (3) developing a list of questions to ask me about the reading, course material, and/or upcoming assignment. Conferences will last up to 50 mins.

During Zoom meetings, everyone's video must be on. We need to see each other.

### **HEALTH PRECAUTIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

For safety during the Covid-19 pandemic, everyone must at all times wear face masks in campus classrooms and buildings and keep 6-feet apart from other people. We'll do our best to make it feel like a normal class, given these weird restrictions.

### **ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

Students will work in assigned groups on the following assignments. Separate handouts provide instructions.

- 1 Oral presentation
- 2 Short papers or short video productions
- 1 Final Project (paper or video production)

Each student must write at least one paper by the end of the semester: So students can do three papers, two papers and one video production, or one paper and two video productions.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Grade Point</b>	<b>Rating</b>
A	93.3%-100%	4	Excellent
A-	90%-93.2%	3.67	
B+	86.7%-89%	3.33	
B	83.3%-86.6%	3.00	Satisfactory
B-	80%-83.2%	2.67	
C+	76.7%-79%	2.33	
C	73.3%-76.6%	2.00	Minimally Acceptable
F	0%-73.2%	0	Failure

### **UNCW STUDENT ACADEMIC HONOR CODE AND PLAGIARISM**

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 a form of academic corruption in which the writer causes or allows the reader to believe that another person's words, work, or ideas are one's own. If you plagiarize, I 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 other professors, or the source of any ideas that are not common knowledge and that didn't originate in your own brain.

Students may not submit work that they have submitted or intend to submit for another course.

### **CAMPUS RESOURCES**

#### *Writing Resources*

[The Writing Center](#) provides one-on-one consultations by trained writing tutors (962-7857, [ulc@uncw.edu](mailto: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.

#### *Students with Disabilities*

Students with disabilities should supply me with a letter from the Office of Disability Services (962-7555) that details any necessary class accommodations.

### *Violence and Harassment*

UNCW does not tolerate violent or harassing behavior. If you experience violence or harassment, contact the police at 911 (in cases of emergency) or UNCW CARE at 910-962-2273. Resources for individuals concerned with a violent or harassing situation can be located at [The Woman's Studies Resource Center](#).

### **OFFICE HOURS AND CONTACT INFORMATION**

I will hold office hours over Zoom by appointment.

My campus mailbox is located in the Film Studies Department office in King Hall. My office phone number is 910-962-3336; you can leave phone messages. Email is a good way to reach me: [berlinert@uncw.edu](mailto:berlinert@uncw.edu).

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

#### Books

1. *Film Art: An Introduction* by David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson, and Jeff Smith (New York: McGraw-Hill). You may use the 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th edition in either paper (used or new) or electronic form.
2. *House of Games* screenplay by David Mamet (New York: Grove Press, 1994)

#### Electronic Readings on Canvas

- **Berliner.HollywoodStorytelling.pdf**  
Todd Berliner. "Hollywood Storytelling," in *Hollywood Aesthetic: Pleasure in American Cinema*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017. 51-71.
- **Bordwell.Ozu.LateSpring.pdf**  
David Bordwell. "Late Spring," in *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*. London: British Film Institute, 1988. 307-312.
- **Bordwell.Ozu.Ch5IntrinsicNorms.pdf**  
David Bordwell. "Towards Intrinsic Norms," in *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*. London: British Film Institute, 1988. 73-108.
- **Keating.noirlighting.pdf**  
Patrick Keating. "Film Noir and the Limits of Classicism," in *Hollywood Lighting from the Silent Era to Film Noir*. New York: Columbia UP, 2009. 201-221.
- **Naremore.Hepburn.pdf**  
James Naremore. "Katharine Hepburn in *Holiday*," in *Acting in the Cinema*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1988. 174-192.
- **Sarrazin\_Celluloid\_love\_songs.pdf**  
Natalie Sarrazin. "Celluloid Love Songs: Musical *Modus Operandi* and the Dramatic Aesthetics of Romantic Hindi Film." *Popular Music* 27.3 (2008): 393-411.
- **Thompson.Neoformalism.pdf**  
Kristin Thompson. "Neoformalist Film Analysis: One Approach, Many Methods" in *Breaking the Glass Armor*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1988. 3-46.
- **Turvey.Tati.ch3Beholder.pdf**  
Malcolm Turvey. "The Beholder's Share," in *Play Time: Jacques Tati and Comedic Modernism*. New York: Columbia UP, 2020. 103-174.

## FST 500 CRITICAL STUDIES SCHEDULE

Professor Todd Berliner  
Thursday 5:00-9:15 pm (255 min.) in KI 101 (King Auditorium)

Fall 2020

### Notes on the course schedule:

- *Readings*: Study the reading *before* the meeting for which the reading is listed. PDFs can be downloaded from Canvas.
- *Online Lectures*: Watch the lectures on Canvas *before* the class meetings for which they are listed.
- *Screenings*: Films are screened in class.

### INTRODUCTION

*Topics: What is formal analysis? What is aesthetic value? Analyzing the long take.*

Aug 20 **Reading:** 1) Critical Studies Syllabus and Policies (FST500FilmStudySyllabus.pdf)  
2) Critical Studies Paper and Video Production Assignments (FST500FilmStudyAssignments.pdf)  
3) Oral Presentations (FST500FilmStudyPresentations.pdf)

**Screening:** [\*Touch of Evil\*](#) (USA 1958, 112 min., Orson Welles)

### UNIT 1 MISE-EN-SCÈNE

*Topics: Lighting, staging, performance, setting, costumes, props, Jacques Tati's staging, Katharine Hepburn's acting.*

Aug 27 Thur **Reading:** *Film Art*, The Shot: Mise-en-Scène (Ch 4)  
**Online Lectures:** 1) Mise-en-scène 1 (1:47)  
2) Mise-en-scène 2 Lighting (14:57)  
3) Mise-en-scène 3 Performance (15:47)  
**Due by 5:00 pm:** Unit 1 groups sign up on Canvas for a conference

**Screening:** 1) *Kustom Kar Kommandos* (USA 1965, 3 min, Kenneth Anger) (Canvas)  
2) [\*Mr. Hulot's Holiday / Les Vacances de Monsieur Hulot\*](#) (France 1953, 87 min, Jacques Tati)

Aug 31 Mon Group Conferences

**Reading:** 1) Turvey.Tati.ch3Beholder.pdf  
2) Naremore.Hepburn.pdf

Sep 3 Thur **Screening:** [\*The Philadelphia Story\*](#) (USA 1940, 112 min, George Cuckor)  
**Presentations:** 1. Tanner Benson and Justin Clark  
2. Alexis Dickerson and Christina Dietz

Sep 8 Tue **Paper/Video 1 due by noon:** 3. Evan Grysko and Jonathan Furnell  
4. Robert Karmi and Hugh Feldmann  
5. Patrick Hutchens, La-Rel Easter, and Kiersten Houser

## UNIT 2 CINEMATOGRAPHY

**Topics:** *The photographic image, framing, lighting (again), stationary and mobile shots, shot duration, perspective, camera position, film noir lighting*

Sep 10 Thur **Reading:** *Film Art*, The Shot: Cinematography (Ch 5)  
**Online Lectures:** 1) Cinematography 1 Tonality (10:02)  
 2) Cinematography 2 Speed of Motion (5:34)  
 3) Cinematography 3 Perspective Relations (13:53)  
 4) Cinematography 4 Special Effects (9:56)  
 5) Cinematography 5 Framing (21:36)  
**Due by 5:00 pm:** Unit 2 groups sign up on Canvas for a conference  
**Screening:** 1) [The Wonder Ring](#) (USA 1955, 6 min., Stan Brakhage)  
 2) [Night and the City](#) (UK and USA 1950, 101 min, Jules Dassin)

Sep 14 Mon Group Conferences  
**Reading:** Keating.noirlighting.pdf

Sep 17 Thur **Screening:** [Cameraperson](#) (USA 2016, 102 min., Kirsten Johnson). pw: JanusOC  
**Q&A** with filmmaker and cinematographer Kirsten Johnson (7:00 pm)  
**Presentations:** 1. Claude Lilford and Margaret Lansaw  
 2. Genie Mason and Chelsea Lea

Sep 21 Mon **Paper/Video 2 due by noon:** 3. Anna Williams and Pearl Marley  
 4. Tristan Turner and Drew Spenny  
 5. Matthias Smith and Megan McDeavitt

## UNIT 3 EDITING

**Topics:** *Transitions, continuity editing, alternatives to continuity editing, Yasujirô Ozu's cinematography and editing*

Sep 24 Thur **Reading:** *Film Art*, The Relation of Shot to Shot: Editing (Ch 6)  
**Online Lectures:** 1) Editing 1 Transitional Devices (4:28)  
 2) Editing 2 Continuity Editing (27:35)  
 3) Editing 3 Alternatives to Continuity Editing (15:12)  
**Due by 5:00 pm:** Unit 3 groups sign up on Canvas for a conference  
**Screening:** [Late Spring / Banshun](#) (Japan 1949, 108 min, Yasujirô Ozu).

Sep 29 Tue Group Conferences  
**Reading:** 1) Bordwell.Ozu.Ch5IntrinsicNorms.pdf  
 2) Bordwell.LateSpring.pdf

Oct 1 Thur **Screening:** 1) [A Movie](#) (USA 1958, 12 min., Bruce Conner)  
 2) [Stagecoach](#) (USA 1939, 99 min., John Ford)  
**Presentations:** 1. Evan Grysko and La-Rel Easter  
 2. Patrick Hutchens and Hugh Feldmann

Oct 5 Mon **Paper/Video 3 due by noon:** 3. Alexis Dickerson and Kiersten Houser  
 4. Robert Karmi and Justin Clark  
 5. Tanner Benson, Christina Dietz, and Jonathan Furnell

#### UNIT 4 SOUND

*Topics:* *Types of film sound, functions of film sound, sound mixing and design, sound and continuity, sound perspective, genre expectations, the musical genre, Hindi musicals*

- Oct 8 Thur **Reading:** *Film Art*, Sound in Cinema (Ch 7)  
**Online Lectures:** 1) Sound 1 Types of Film Sound (5:15)  
 2) Sound 2 Functions of Film Sound (13:05)  
 3) Sound 3 Sound Recording, Mixing, and Design (20:13)  
**Due by 5:00 pm:** Unit 4 groups sign up on Canvas for a conference  
**Screening:** *Veer-Zaara* (India 2004, 192 min., Yash Chopra) (included with Amazon Prime)
- Oct 12 Mon Group Conferences  
**Reading:** *Sarrazin\_Celluloid\_love\_songs.pdf*
- Oct 15 Thur **Screening:** 1) *The Girl Chewing Gum* (UK 1976, 12 min., John Smith) (Canvas)  
 2) *Chi-Raq* (USA 2015, 127 min., Spike Lee)  
**Presentations:** 1. Matthias Smith and Pearl Marley  
 2. Tristan Turner and Megan McDeavitt
- Oct 19 Mon **Paper/Video 4 due by noon:** 3. Genie Mason and Drew Spenny  
 4. Anna Williams and Margaret Lansaw  
 5. Claude Lilford and Chelsea Lea

#### UNIT 5 STYLE AS A FORMAL SYSTEM

*Topics:* *What is film style? What is film form? Stylistic structure, intrinsic and extrinsic norms, classical film style, directorial style*

- Oct 22 Thur **Reading:** *Film Art*, Style and Film Form (Ch 8)  
**Online Lectures:** 1) Classical Film Style 1 Norms and Techniques (13:30)  
 2) Classical Film Style 2 Coherent Time and Space (3:10)  
 3) Classical Film Style 3 Paradigms (13:04)  
**Due by 5:00 pm:** Unit 5 groups sign up on Canvas for a conference  
**Screening:** *The Five Obstructions / De fem benspænd* (Denmark 2003, 90 min, Jørgen Leth and Lars von Trier)
- Oct 26 Mon Group Conferences  
**Reading:** *Thompson.Neoformalism.pdf*
- Oct 29 Thur **Screening:** *Son of Saul / Saul fia* (Hungary 2015, 107 min., László Nemes)  
**Presentations:** 1. Robert Karmi, Jonathan Furnell, and Kiersten Houser
- Nov 2 Mon **Paper/Video 5 due by noon:** 2. Tanner Benson and Hugh Feldmann  
 3. Alexis Dickerson and La-Rel Easter  
 4. Evan Grysko and Justin Clark  
 5. Patrick Hutchens and Christina Dietz

**UNIT 6 NARRATIVE AS A FORMAL SYSTEM**

*Topics:* Plot, story, and narration; cause and effect; range of story information; classical Hollywood narration; non-classical narration; movie dialogue

Nov 5 Thur **Reading:** *Film Art*, Narrative Form (Ch 3)

**Online Lectures:** 1) Classical Narration 1 Story, Plot, and Narration (3:00)  
 2) Classical Narration 2 Canonic Story (11:03)  
 3) Classical Narration 3 Segments (4:28)  
 4) Classical Narration 4 Characteristics (5:46)  
 5) Classical Narration 5 Classical Spectator (6:27)

**Due by 5:00 pm:** Unit 6 groups sign up on Canvas for a conference

**Bring to Class** (but don't read yet): *House of Games* Screenplay

**Screening:** 1) [La Jetée / The Pier](#) (France 1962, 28 min., Chris Marker)  
 2) [House of Games](#) (USA 1987, 102 min., David Mamet)

Nov 9 Mon Group Conferences

**Reading:** 1) *House of Games* Screenplay  
 2) Berliner.HollywoodStorytelling.pdf

Nov 12 Thur **Screening:** [The Rules of the Game / La règle du jeu](#) (France 1939, 110 min., Jean Renoir)

**Presentations:** 1. Anna Williams and Drew Spenny

Nov 16 Mon **Paper/Video 6 due by noon:** 2. Claude Lilford and Megan McDeavitt  
 3. Genie Mason and Margaret Lansaw  
 4. Matthias Smith and Chelsea Lea  
 5. Tristan Turner and Pearl Marley

Nov 19 Thur **Screening:** TBD

Dec 1 Tues Final Project due by noon