

**FILM 1390— Intro to the Art of Motion Picture**  
 CRN# 26684, College of Business Administration, Room 301  
 University of Texas at El Paso  
 Spring 2015

**Instructor Information**

**Instructor:** Keri Moe                      **Email:** KLMOE@utep.edu                      **Phone:** 915-373-5096

*\*(Note: In email, phone or text messages, please state your first and last name and which class you are in.)*

The quickest way to contact me is via email or text message. I check email regularly during the day M-F and sometimes during weekends. Students can expect a response within 24 hours during the week (M-F) and within 48 hours over the weekend (F-S). Though, often, responses are much quicker than that. If you have not heard from me in that timeframe, please contact me again as I probably didn't get your message.

**Office Hours:** before and after class and by appointment

**Texts & Materials:**

- **REQUIRED:** Lewis, J. (2014) Essential Cinema: An Introduction to Film Analysis. Boston: Wadsworth
- **RECOMMENED:** Corrigan, T. (any addition is okay) A Short Guide to Writing About Film. Boston: Allyn & Bacon
- **ADDITIONAL READINGS:** Instructor may provide additional readings via email, Blackboard or printed copy
- **BLACKBOARD:** Some discussions, assignments or exams may be completed and/or submitted via Blackboard.

**Course Description:**

Understanding and appreciating film as a unique medium for communication and artistic expression. Introduces students to a broad range of types of film. Basic theory presented in class. Films viewed in class and on campus and discussed in class.

**Course Objectives:**

This course will predominantly focus on teaching students to recognize and analyze the narrative, visual, and aural elements of film. The class will examine film theory, film analysis, film and culture and will also teach student to critically evaluate and interpret various elements of film. Students will be exposed to a variety of film styles and genres including Classical Hollywood, realism, expressionism, short films and documentaries over the course of the semester. Students will analyze these films for content, composition as well as for how external forces-economics, politics,culture, technology, etc -shape film aesthetics and perception. Students will also engage in critical discussion of film both verbally and in writing.

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Identify the narrative, visual and aural elements of film.
- Analyze how these elements can contribute to a film's aesthetic and thematic concerns.
- Identify the narrative, visual and aural characteristics of Classical Hollywood cinema, documentaries and avant-garde cinema.
- Recognize alternatives to the Classical Hollywood aesthetic, including Art Cinema, Neorealism, and Third Cinema.
- Proficiency in oral communication skills in interpersonal, group, organizational and public contexts.
- Competence in research methods used in communication contexts related to film theory and analysis.
- Competence in understanding and applying communication (film) theories in interpersonal, organizational and public contexts.

**Assessment\*\*:** A=900-1,000 points; B=800-899 points; C=700-799 points; D=600-699; F=599 & below

Attendance/Participation/Small Group Discussion/Quizzes/Homework	325 points
Chapter Exams*-- 3 at 100 points each, based on text; <i>*lowest exam is dropped (there are no make-up exams)</i>	200 points
Final Exam <i>(no make-ups/can't be dropped)</i>	100 points
Film Screening Short Answer Analysis Homework Assignments <i>(there will be 7-10 throughout the semester based on films screened in class)</i>	150 points
Film Critique/Review	100 points
Theory & Film Paper Proposal, 1-2 pages+ Works Cited	25 points
Theory & Film Paper, 8-10 pages + Works Cited	100points

\*\*All assignments and exams will be announced in advance and specific guidelines will be discussed and distributed in class. It is the student's responsibility to be informed of changes by attending class or by contacting the instructor in case of extenuating circumstances.

## ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW\*:

\*detailed assignment guidelines will be distributed and/or discussed in class

**Extra Credit:** Students may elect the following extra credit option:

Attend a minimum of 10 film screenings throughout the semester and write a one-page critical film review. Note: No more than 5 can be at a traditional movie theater unless it is a foreign or art film and films should be of different genres or themes. Consider screenings at UTEP's Union Theatre Cinema Series, the Fountain Theater in Old Mesilla, EPCC, etc. The El Paso Scene as well as other community papers list films that are being shown. In addition, events may be announced in class throughout the semester and will take place at different places and times. If you select this option, for each event, you will turn in: 1) one page analysis and review of the film along with 2) any proof that you attended the events (e.g., ticket stubs, programs. etc. if available). This is due the last class meeting before the final exam, see course calendar. You must use a separate sheet of paper for each event and your analysis must include a paragraph describing the event followed by your review or analysis. Successful completion requires that you attend a minimum of 10 films outside of class. Students who meet these requirements can get up to 50 points added onto their overall course point total, based on the quality of the film reviews. Partial completion will result in no additional points being added-no exceptions.

**Attendance/Participation/Discussion:** Students are required to attend film screenings. Attendance will be taken randomly and may occur at any time or multiple times during the class meeting. This grade may be determined by a sign-in sheet, quiz, other activity and/or including participation in small group discussions. Students who are not present or who don't participate will not get credit. Discussion will take place in class or via Blackboard. Students must actively engage in critical discussion. Discussion points are awarded based on quantity (amount of involvement and participation) in discussion as well as the quality (how thoughtful, depth of analysis, etc.) of discussion.

**Exams:** There will be three chapter exams during the semester based on the text. There are no make-ups allowed for chapter exams, but the instructor will drop the student's lowest chapter exam grade. The final exam is comprehensive. The final is mandatory and can't be dropped.

**Film Critique/Review:** Students will write a 1-2 page film critique based on a film screened in class. The critique should be an analysis that includes your supported opinion/review of the film, not a summary. It should follow proper academic format, for examples in the text or in the book A Short Guide to Writing About Film, including having: Introduction with thesis statement, well-developed body and conclusion. Ideas should be original. Imagine you were writing a film review for The Prospector.

**Theory & Film Paper Proposal:** This assignment is your opportunity to begin to consider what you want to do for your Theory & Film paper. Each student submit a one page proposal for instructor approval of a research topic related to film theory and criticism. It must include your thesis (one sentence), have bullets previewing your main ideas and also contain a draft works cited with a minimum of 3 sources. It is strongly recommended to have your thesis statement reviewed by the Writing Center.

**Theory & Film Paper:** Students will write a detailed paper on a film, theory or related concept of their choosing. This paper must be 8-10 pages in length and of collegiate quality. The paper must be an analysis, not a summary. It should follow proper academic format, for examples see your required text or the book A Short Guide to Writing About Film, including having: Introduction with thesis statement, well- developed body and conclusion. Ideas should be original and incorporate documentation from outside sources which are properly cited. Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. It is strongly recommended to have your paper reviewed by the Writing Center.

## Instructor Policies:

Attendance/Participation/Late Work, etc.: By enrolling in this class and accepting this syllabus, you agree to come actively participate and engage in this class. Since this course requires film screenings and discussion, regular attendance and participation is imperative to be successful in the course. Since class discussion and small group activities can't be replicated outside of class, if you are absent, you may not receive participation credit. Some films screened in class may be clips or films that are not easily found. While I will let you know what was screened if you are absent, if you miss a screening, you may not be able to find the film on your own to watch later and in most cases, I am unable to provide a copy. Students are expected to attend class regularly and attendance may be taken in the form of random quizzes over the assigned readings and/or by active participation in group activities and/or small group discussion and/or by sign-in sheets at any time during the class meeting. Tardiness could lead to an increase of quizzes at the start of class as leaving early increases probability of quizzes at the end. Other measures of student performance may be implemented at the instructor's discretion. Quizzes, discussions, screenings or activities CANNOT be made up. If you miss a quiz or activity, film screening and/or you are not present when the sign-in sheet is distributed, you lose that day's points. Please do NOT ask me to make up a quiz, group activity or a film screening. Note: A film is not over until the credits have rolled and sleeping does not constitute active participation. I will drop your two lowest quiz/participation grades at the end of the semester as well as your lowest chapter exam grade. Note: An absence does not excuse you from an exam or other assignment due date. Failure to turn in an assignment or take an exam as scheduled will result in a zero. THERE IS NO MAKEUP OR LATE WORK. Not submitting an assignment by the time indicated on the due date will result in a zero (0). Exceptions are at the instructor's discretion and will only be made for a documentable emergency/extenuating circumstance discussed with the instructor in advance or in a timely manner. PLAN AHEAD, SUBMIT EARLY. It is the student's responsibility to stay informed of changes to the syllabus or course calendar. All changes will be announced in class.

**Classroom Behavior:** This is a college class. Mature, respectful and responsible classroom behavior is expected at all times. **DISRUPTIVE OR DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR TOWARDS THE INSTRUCTOR OR OTHER STUDENTS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.** Students must be professional and respectful during all activities and film screenings. Cell phones should be off, avoid disruptive activities, including talking, texting or otherwise inhibiting someone else's ability to view a film. Electronic devices (laptops, tablets, etc.) should not be turned on during film screenings as the light they give distracts others.

**Work Guidelines:** Students are expected to follow instructions and submit work on time. All work prepared outside of class should be typed. Work should also be proofread to avoid errors in grammar, spelling, etc. A strong communicator pays attention to details, therefore you will lose points for these types of errors. Students are expected to do their own work and research. All assignments must reflect the student's own ideas and research must be cited. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be addressed in accordance with UTEP and department policies. It is your responsibility to have your papers **PRINTED, TYPED and STAPLED** on their due dates. Papers should be typed and submitted in person in a printed format. not emailed. Failure to meet these basic criteria will cost you points or your paper may not be graded. All assignments are graded using the same criteria: 1) grammar/spelling; 2) organization; 3) accuracy in use of concepts/terms/theories; 4) originality and depth of analysis; 5) depth of critical thinking; 6) quality of arguments, including use of evidence to substantiate/justify your perspective; and 7) following instructions. Written work should be in APA format. See guidelines for papers and written assignments attached to this syllabus for more details.

**Use of Film/Multi-Media:** Since this course surveys all types of films, students will see a variety of film genres, themes and topics. Films will have a variety of MPAA Ratings or may be unrated. Some films may have violence, sexuality, nudity or other topics that may be offensive or uncomfortable for some people. The purpose of this class is to critically evaluate film and learn to assess meaning and purpose of cinema as a form of communication and artistic expression.

**Dropping the Course:** The instructor reserves the right to and may drop students who are not in active pursuit of the course; this includes excessive absences, lack of participation or missing major assignments. However, if you need to drop the course, it is the responsibility of the student to drop the course by the date indicated in by the UTEP Calendar.

**V. Calendar\*:** \*Tentative subject to change. There will be a film screening at almost all class meetings followed by graded small group and/or class discussions. You should read the specified chapter **BEFORE** coming to class.

January 21<sup>st</sup> /Syllabus Review, Introduction  
& Greg Smith Article

January 28<sup>th</sup> /Analyzing Movies, Chapter 1

February 4<sup>th</sup> /Mise-en-Scene, Chapter 3 & Film Review  
Assigned

February 11<sup>th</sup> /Special Guest & Screening

February 18<sup>th</sup> /Film History, Chapter 9

February 25<sup>th</sup> /Narrative & Genre, Chapter 2  
& Film Review Due

March 4<sup>th</sup> /Cinematography, Chapter 4

~~March 11<sup>th</sup> /Spring Break No Class~~

March 18<sup>th</sup> /Chapter Exam 1: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 & 9

March 25<sup>th</sup> /Editing, Chapter 5

April 1<sup>st</sup> / Sound, Chapter 6  
& Writing About Film, Chapter 10 & Analysis Paper Assigned

April 8<sup>th</sup> /Paper Proposal Thesis Development & Research

April 15<sup>th</sup> / Chapter Exam II: Chapters 5, 6  
& Paper Proposal Due

April 22<sup>nd</sup> /Commercial & Industrial Contexts, Chapter 7

April 29<sup>th</sup> /Documentary, Animated & Experimental Film. Chapter 8

May 6<sup>th</sup> / Chapter Exam III: Chapters 7 & 8 & Extra Credit Due

May 10<sup>th</sup> / Paper must be submitted by 11:30 p.m. via Blackboard. Papers not received by the deadline will not be accepted.

May 13<sup>th</sup> / Final Exam \*\*7:00 p.m.-9:45 p.m.\*\* Final exam covers ALL chapters from text.

## GUIDELINES FOR PAPERS & WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST FOLLOW APA GUIDELINES. FAILURE TO FOLLOW APA GUIDELINES WILL RESULT IN A GRADENO HIGHER THAN "C."

**An "A" paper will be a paper that is superior.** It will address all of the issues assigned (i.e., directions are followed). The writer(s) will demonstrate exceptional fluency and use of language. The paper will be distinguished by the quality of its content, the amount of detail used to support or illustrate its central ideas, and the coherency of the analysis presented. It will contain very few grammatical errors. It will include original analysis of the theories/concepts (not repeating- hat it covered in class or the texts). It will accurately cite sources (using APA style; this means citing them in text as well as including a reference list) and use the sources well. That is, there is a good amount of substance from the sources and it is accurate. The sources are strong, academic sources. Finally, the paper will be well organized with a clear purpose/thesis statement, clear topic sentences for paragraphs, good transitions, and good previews and reviews of main points.

**A "B" paper will be above average.** It will be well organized and developed, and it will demonstrate a clear understanding of the assignment (i.e., all issues are addressed-directions followed). Although it may contain minor flaws, the writing will exhibit an ability to use the language effectively and the analysis presented will be relatively coherent. It will include original analysis of the theories/concepts, but not quite as compelling as an A paper (e.g., not as well supported with evidence). It will accurately cite courses (using APA style; this means citing them in text as well as including a reference list) and use the sources well. The amount of substance is strong, but not as well developed as an A paper and there may be minor flaws in the evidence. The sources are strong, academic sources. Finally, the paper will be well organized, but with some minor flaws in organization (presented above).

**A "C" paper will be an average paper.** It will demonstrate an adequate level of organization and development. It will contain enough specific information to illustrate a described experience or a proposed argument. Although the paper may contain writing errors, they will not be serious or frequent enough to distract the reader from the content. All issues must be addressed for it to receive a "C" (i.e., you must follow directions to get a C. The analysis is largely repetitive with what is presented in class or texts and thus is not original. Sources are not cited properly or the amount of substance from the sources is limited (An example of limited substance is using one quotation-usually a definition-from the source to show you used it in order to count as one of the required sources.). Many of the sources are not strong academic ones. Finally, the organization has some flaws. For example, main points may not be clear, the paper lacks a thesis, etc.

**A "D" paper will be below average.** It will reveal one or two of the following weaknesses: (1) all objectives of the assignment are not addressed (you did not follow directions), (2) serious problems of organization or focus, (3) insufficient information to illustrate experiences or support the arguments, (4) serious problems in sentence structure, (5) errors in writing that are sufficient to distract the reader from the content of the paper, (6) not enough outside sources (or none), and (7) lacking original analysis.

**An "F" paper will demonstrate little understanding of the assignment or the mechanics of writing.** Essentially, it will include three or more of the weaknesses presented in the "D" paper.

I have high standards of excellent work. To receive an excellent grade you will need to work hard AND do excellent work. Hard work is necessary but not sufficient to receive high grades. The assignments are designed to challenge you, and expect you to do more than memorize concepts. Engage the readings and contribute your original ideas to the class discussions and in your assignments. Use the Writing Center to help you.