

FILM 1390 – Intro—Art of Motion Picture
CRN# 22934, Health Science/School of NURS Room 206
University of Texas at El Paso,
Spring 2014

Instructor Information

Instructor: Keri Moe

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*(Note: In email, phone or text messages, please state your first and last name and which class you are in. And, don't forget to let me know how I can return your message.) *

The best way to contact me is via email. 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: R 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. (2007) A Short Guide to Writing About Film. Boston: Allyn & Bacon
- **ADDITIONAL READINGS:** Instructor may provide additional readings via email, WebCT or hard copy

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/HW	375 points
Chapter Exams* -- 3 at 100 points each, based on text; *lowest exam is dropped	200 points
Final Exam (no make-ups/can't be dropped)	200 points
Film Critique/Review	75 points
Theory & Film Paper Proposal, 1-2 pages + Works Cited	50 points
Theory & Film Paper, 8-10 pages + Works Cited	100 points

**All assignments and exams will be announced in advance and specific guidelines will be explained 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 Cinema Novo, 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, several events will be announced in class throughout the semester and will take place at different places and times. If you select this option, your brief analysis, along with any proof that you attended the events (e.g., ticket stubs, programs, etc.) will be turned in on the day of your final exam. You must use a separate sheet of paper for each event and your analysis must include a paragraph describing the event followed by critical analysis describing your thoughts and reaction to the event. 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 final point total, based on the quality of the film review. Partial completion will result in no additional points being added—no exceptions. **DUE THE DATE OF THE FINAL.**

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 WebCT/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 and related concepts or theories. The critique should be an analysis, not a summary. It should follow proper academic format, for examples see 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.

Theory & Film Paper Proposal: Each student submit a 1 —2 page proposal for instructor approval of a research topic related to film theory and criticism. This assignment is your opportunity to begin to consider what you want to do for your Theory & Film paper. It should also contain a draft works cited with a minimum of 3 sources.

Theory & Film Paper: Students will write a detailed paper on a film, theory or related concept of their choosing. This paper should be 8-10 pages in length and of collegiate quality. The paper should be an analysis, not a summary. It should follow proper academic format, for examples see 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 (minimum 5) which are properly cited in APA or MLA style.

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 will not receive participation credit. Students are expected to attend class regularly and attendance will 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, 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. Some films may not be easily available so it may be difficult to see a film screened in class at another time. 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 documentable emergency/extenuating circumstances 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 off can distract others from watching the film.

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 or MLA 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. 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 23rd – Syllabus Review, Introduction

January 30th – Analyzing Movies, Chapter 1

February 6th— Narrative & Genre, Chapter 2

February 13th— Mise-en-Scene, Chapter 3

February 20th— **Chapter Exam I: Chapters 1, 2 & 3**

February 27th— Cinematography, Chapter 4

March 6th— Editing, Chapter 5

March 13th —Spring Break—Institutional Holiday—N☺ Class

March 20th— Sound, Chapter 6

March 27th— **Chapter Exam II: Chapters 4, 5 & 6/** Film Analysis Paper Assigned

April 3rd— Writing About Film, Chapter 10

April 10th— Paper Preparation/Library Research

April 17th—Film History, Chapter 9/**Paper Proposal Due**

April 24th— Commercial & Industrial Contexts, Chapter 7

May 1st — Documentary, Animated & Experimental Film. Chapter 8

May 8th —**Film Analysis Paper Due/ Exam III: Chapters 7, 8 & 9**

May 15th —**FINAL EXAM ****7:00 p.m. – 9:45 p.m.**** Comprehensive 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 what it covered in class or the texts). 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. 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.). All 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.