

**INTRO TO THE ART OF THE MOTION PICTURE
FILM 1390 CRN 21731 SEC 003
SPRING 2021**

INSTRUCTOR: Nakisha Acosta

OFFICE HOURS: Monday and Wednesday 2:00 – 4:00 PM by email

LOCATION: Online

DATE AND TIME: Wednesday (New lectures and assignments will automatically be posted on Wednesdays at 12:00 am on Blackboard. You will have the week to look over the course materials, complete the exercises, and participate in the weekly discussion board.)

EMAIL: ntacosta@utep.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course focuses on understanding and appreciating film as a unique medium for communication and artistic expression. It will introduce students to a broad range of films, and cover film concepts, theory, and genre.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- I. Students will be able to differentiate genres by examining films.
- II. Students will be able to recognize different shot types, and editing and filming techniques.
- III. Students will interpret underlying meaning in a film sequence by examining the mise-en-scène.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

Attendance is determined by participation in the learning activities of the course. Your participation in the course is important not only for your learning and success but also to create a community of learners. Participation is determined by completion of the following activities:

- Reading/Viewing all course materials to ensure understanding of assignment requirements.
- Participating in engaging discussions with your peers on the discussion boards.
- Other activities as indicated in the weekly Blackboard assignments.

Because these activities are designed to contribute to your learning each week, they cannot be made up after their due date has passed.

GRADING:

If you come to class regularly and on time, take your assignments and screenings seriously, and participate in the class discussions, (i.e. asking questions, and sharing your opinions) you can expect to do well in this class.

Completion of a group presentation, midterm paper, and final paper are required in order to pass this class. No late work will be accepted.

Grading Scale: 100

100 – 90 = A

89 – 80 = B

79 – 70 = C

69 – 60 = D

59 and below = F

GRADING BREAKDOWN:

Attendance and Participation: 20%

Presentation: 20%

Midterm Paper: 30%

Final Paper: 30%

REQUIRED READINGS:

Looking at Movies by Richard Barsam and Dave Monahan, sixth edition. This textbook is available in the UTEP bookstore.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Mid-Term Paper: Choose any film discussed in class or listed in the book, and write a six to eight page paper explaining its genre. Make sure to include examples of why that particular film is considered part of the genre. Include a cover page and works cited page. Note: You must use your course book as a source, along with **two** outside sources.

Note: If you email your paper to the writing center for help I will give you 5 points to your mid-term paper grade. You must forward to me proof that the paper was reviewed by the writing center.

Mise-en-scene Presentation: Choose any 5 minute sequence from one of the films listed in the book, and describe the mise-en-scene.

Final paper: Using any film listed in the course textbook, write a six to eight page paper analyzing the mise-en-scène of three scenes. Include a cover page and works cited page. Note: You must use your course book as a source, along with **three** outside sources.

Note: If you email your paper to the writing center for help I will give you 5 points to your final paper grade. You must forward to me proof that the paper was reviewed by the writing center.

PAPER GUIDELINES

The paper **MUST** have a cover page and works cited page done in MLA format. The cover page should include your name, date, class number, and topic. The page should have a maximum of 1-inch margins all around. The font should be size 12, and commonly used like Times New Roman or Arial. Double spaced.

Requirements

Students need a computer and internet access throughout the semester to stream movies, turn in assignments, and participate in weekly discussion boards on Blackboard.

COURSE COMMUNICATION: HOW WE WILL STAY IN CONTACT WITH EACH OTHER

Because this is an online class, we won't see each other in the ways you may be accustomed to: during class time, small group meetings, and office hours. However, there are a number of ways we can keep the communication channels open:

- Office Hours: We will not be able to meet on campus, but I will still have office hours for your questions and comments about the course. My office hours will be held through email at the following times.

Mondays: 2 – 4 p.m.

Wednesdays: 2 – 4 p.m.

- Email: UTEP e-mail is the best way to contact me. I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24-48 hours of receipt. When e-mailing me, be sure to email from your UTEP student account and please put the course number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail, clearly state your question.
- Announcements: Check the Blackboard announcements frequently for any updates, deadlines, or other important messages.

ETIQUETTE

You will be giving feedback to student's comments and presentations so please keep in mind the following rules:

- All communication should reflect polite consideration of other's ideas.
- Respect and courtesy must be provided to classmates, and to the instructor at all times. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- When reacting to someone else's message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.
- Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all postings should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted on these online spaces is intended for classmates and the professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space.

DEADLINES, LATE WORK, AND ABSENCE POLICY

Major Assignments

- Major assignments (midterm, mise-en-scene presentation, final) will be due on Wednesdays at 4:30 pm.

Weekly Blackboard Discussions / Assignments

- All weekly Blackboard assignments will be due on Tuesday at midnight (11:59 pm). No late work will be accepted.

Assignments will be posted to Blackboard a week in advance. If you miss one of these weekly assignments you will receive a 0 for your attendance / participation grade. I will only accept late work for the major assignments (midterm, mise-en-scene presentation, final), but 10 points will be deducted for every day it is late up to 3 days, at which point you will receive a 0. It is important to contact me if you are having any issues completing an assignment.

ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF SUBMITTING WORK IN CASE OF TECHNICAL ISSUES

I strongly suggest that you submit your work with plenty of time to spare in the event that you have a technical issue with the course website, network, and/or your computer. I also suggest you save all of your Blackboard postings in a separate Word document as a backup. This way, you will have evidence that you completed the work and will not lose credit. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through Blackboard, please contact the UTEP Help Desk. You can email me your backup document as a last resort.

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

- STAY AT HOME and REPORT screening.utep.edu if you (1) have been diagnosed with COVID-19, (2) are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or (3) have had recent contact with a person who has received a positive coronavirus test.
- If you know of anyone who should report any of these three criteria, you should encourage them to report. If the individual cannot report, you can report on their behalf by sending an email to COVIDaction@utep.edu.

For each day that you attend campus—for any reason—you must complete the questions on the UTEP screening website (screening.utep.edu) prior to arriving on campus. The website will verify if you are permitted to come to campus.

While on campus:

- Wear face coverings when in common areas or when others are present.
- Maintain a minimum separation of six (6) feet between yourself and others when possible, and arrange spaces to make this possible in almost all circumstances.
- Adhere to room / space limitations on number of occupants.
- Wash and/or sanitize hands frequently.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

The University of Texas at El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence. In all matters of intellectual pursuit, UTEP faculty and students must strive to achieve excellence based on the quality of work produced by the individual. In the classroom and in all other academic activities, students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty is an affront to the pursuit of knowledge and jeopardizes the quality of the degree awarded to all graduates of UTEP. It is imperative, therefore, that the members of this academic community understand the regulations pertaining to academic integrity and that all faculty insist on adherence to these standards. Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the *Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP)*, and available in the Office of the Dean of Students and on the homepage of the Dean of Students at www.utep.edu/dos, may result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to a failing grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others.

CASS POLICY:

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu. Or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.

You need to make sure to contact me the first week of the semester so we can discuss your accommodations for the course.

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT FOR COURSE MATERIALS

All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: This course calendar may change at any time under the discretion of your instructor. Chapters should be read before the class date in which they are assigned.

WEEK 1

JAN. 20 Class introduction and syllabus. Answer the questions on the Blackboard discussion board.

WEEK 2

JAN. 27 CHAPTER 1 LOOKING AT MOVIES
CHAPTER 2: PRINCIPLES OF FILM FORM
Pattern, light, space, and time.
Discussion, and scenes from *Silence of the Lambs* (1991), *Gold Rush* (1925), *The Godfather* (1972)

WEEK 3

FEB. 3 CHAPTER 3: TYPES OF MOVIES
Documentary Introduction
Clips: Scenes from *Nanook of the North* (1922), and *Grey Gardens* (1975) Experimental films: Scenes from *Jabberwocky* (1971), and *An Andalusian Dog* (1929)

Genre: Character type, setting, presentation

Gangster film: Introduction
Clips: *Scarface* (1932), *Scarface* (1983), *The Public Enemy* (1931), *Goodfellas* (1990)

Film Noir: Introduction
Clips: *Double Indemnity* (1944), *Sunset Boulevard* (1950) *The Usual Suspects* (1995)

Science fiction: Introduction
Clips: *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), *Metropolis* (1927), *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951), *War of the Worlds* (1953), *War of the Worlds* (2005)

WEEK 4

FEB. 10 CHAPTER 3: TYPES OF MOVIES (CONTINUATION)
Horror: Introduction
Clips: *Nosferatu, A Symphony of Horror* (1922), *Frankenstein* (1931), *Freaks* (1932), *Psycho* (1960) *Night of the Living Dead* (1968), *Suspiria* (1977), *Halloween* (1978)
The Western: Introduction

Clips: *Shane* (1953), *The Searchers* (1956), *The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly* (1966)

The Musical: Discussion

Clips: *The Jazz Singer* (1927), *42nd Street* (1933) *West Side Story* (1961), *The Sound of Music* (1965)

Evolution and transformation of genre

WEEK 5

FEB. 17

CHAPTER 4: ELEMENTS OF NARRATIVE

Narrator, direct-address, and third-person narrator *Funny Games* (1997), *Rear Window* (1954)

Narrative structure

WEEK 6

FEB. 24

CHAPTER 5: MISE-EN-SCÉNE

Design and Composition

Elements of Design

Expressionism, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920) Italian Neorealism, *The Bicycle Thief* (1948)

Composition, open and closed frames

Kinesis

WEEK 7

MAR. 3

Examples of mise-en-scène in *Harold and Maude* (1971)

Work on your midterm paper. If you want to get the extra 5 points you need to send your paper to the writing center at least 72 hours ahead of time.

WEEK 8

MAR. 10

MIDTERM PAPER DUE AT 4:30 PM

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WEEK 9

MAR. 17

SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10

MAR. 24

CHAPTER 6: CINEMATOGRAPHY

CHAPTER 7: ACTING

WEEK 11

MAR. 31 CHAPTER 8: EDITING
CHAPTER 9: SOUND

WEEK 12

APR. 7 CHAPTER 9: SOUND

WEEK 13

APR. 14 CHAPTER 10: FILM HISTORY CHAPTER 11: FILMMAKING TECHNOLOGIES
AND PRODUCTION SYSTEMS
Discussion of preproduction, production, and postproduction. The studio
system versus Hollywood productions today.

WEEK 15

APR. 21 PRESENTATIONS: 1 - 13

WEEK 16

APR. 28 PRESENTATIONS: 14 - 27

WEEK 17

MAY 5 PRESENTATIONS: 28 - 41

WEEK 18

MAY 12 FINAL PAPERS DUE 4:30 PM
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