

FILM 4390 – Syllabus Appendix:

Further guidelines for “Movie Review” (Paper Assignment)

I. GENERAL TASK: Write a 2-3 page movie review (750–1,000 words), in your own words.

In this 2-3 page paper (about 750 - 1,000 words... as a general guideline), you should write a paper in your own words [Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any way, shape, or form, and will be reported]. You should follow the in-class directions and recommendations from your professor to help you complete this task. Ultimately, this paper should focus on one particular movie (your choice) that you are reviewing as the film & movie scholar/analyst. This is basically an opinion paper so outside research is not needed, but you should include appropriate references *if* you are making in-text references.

II. NAME/DATE: Include your name & date on the paper. Your name & date should be typed on the top, right-hand corner of the first page. But your name does NOT need to be included on the other pages. Your name & date should appear only on the first page.

III. TITLE for paper: Write a title for your paper. It should be specific and descriptive; it should explain what your paper is about. The reader should know what your paper says just by reading the title. It should not be titled “Movie Review #1” as that appears lazy and totally un-creative.

IV. BASIC WRITING/FORMATTING Details: Your paper should be typed or word-processed, and then printed. Please use (a.) basic fonts such as **Times New Roman** or **Arial**, (b.) basic **12 pt. Font size** [regardless of type], and (c.) basic **1-inch margins** (no more than 1 inch all around). Also, **Double Space** your paper throughout. The paper should be double-spaced throughout, and there cannot and should not be any extra spaces in-between paragraphs. Note: The Paragraph Spacing “Before” and “After” should be set at “0 pt” or 0 (zero)... if it is not automatically set at 0/zero. Note: It is the student’s responsibility to check the “Before” and “After” spacing. Finally, please **Number your pages** in the **Top, Right-Hand corner** (on every page that is not the First page), and the final printed paper must also be stapled, with a staple in the left-hand corner.

V. INTRODUCTION for paper: Your introductory sentences should attempt to catch the reader’s attention, and if possible, forecast what you will say in the rest of the paper. You should develop this introduction by naming the movie/film that you’re analyzing, stating the basic plot, and also introducing any main characters (or any other characters that are important for your analysis). Following conventions, any film titles should be writing in italics and should be followed with the year of the movie’s release in parentheses. Example: *Star Wars* (1977), featuring the orphaned “Luke” (played by Mark Hamill).

Please note that you should try to limit the description of the basic plot and details of the film. Since this paper requires YOU to analyze the movie and to write your own thoughts & opinions on this film, the main focus of your writing should be on providing your own thoughts on the movie... rather than just describing the film or repeating basic plot details. A general guideline is to (a.) write a creative introduction for the first paragraph and the provide the basic plot details in the second paragraph, or (b.) write a creative introduction for the first paragraph and then follow that with basic plot details within the same paragraph. Either way, please remember that you should NOT focus too much on describing the plot. The point is to introduce the film, and then move on to your own thoughts and analysis for the rest of the paper.

VI. ORGANIZATION of paper: Remember to follow your professor’s in-class paper guidelines and suggestions for writing. For example, you should begin with an INTRODUCTION, but that should be

followed by your own ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION of the film. The *Analysis & Interpretation* section should be majority of your writing and make up the biggest section of your paper. Around the 3rd page of your paper (nearing the end), you should move on from *Analysis & Interpretation* and then to your own FINAL EVALUATION AND/OR JUDGMENT of the movie. And this *Final Evaluation/Judgment* section should allow you to write your conclusion for the paper. Examples of Final Evaluations or Judgments can include: "Loving" or "hating" a movie, a "thumbs-up" or "thumbs-down" rating system, "Star" ratings system (or, "4-star" or "3-star") or other rating system.

VIII. CONCLUSION for paper: Your conclusion should include a brief summary of your basic argument or the main focus of your analysis (repeating your basic thoughts or arguments about the movie). As stated on the previous page, you should also include your own *Final Evaluation/Judgment* for this film, and this CONCLUSION section is the perfect place to include and/or repeat those main ideas and final judgments. As with the INTRODUCTION to the paper, it is a good idea to try to be creative with your own writing and as you're trying to bring your "Movie Review" to a close. Repeating main thoughts or ideas is one strategy, while saying something humorous or otherwise memorable (or anything related to the movie) can also good strategies for creative writing. By the end of your review, the reader should have a very clear idea about your opinions on this movie.

IX. OTHER WRITING TIPS & Suggestions:

- (a.) Your paper should use correct spelling and follow basic grammar & punctuation rules.
- (b.) Try to avoid slang... unless you're intentionally taking the tone of slang-ish speaking or thoughts for your writing style.
- (c.) Obviously, you should avoid sexist language, racist language, and/or homophobic language. (Unless you're purposely making a statement about race or otherwise... writing in a style just to make a point.)
- (d.) Avoid ethnocentric language. Write "U.S." or "U.S.A." for the country, instead of "America" (slang)
- (e.) Write out "television" (instead of saying "TV"); Write out "advertisement" (instead of saying "ads").
- (f.) Write "1980s" or "1990s" and NOT "1990's" or "1980's". [A decades references does not take "possession" of anything, so the apostrophe for possession doesn't make sense.]
- (g.) Write out all movie titles *in Italic Font*, followed by the year of movie's release – *Star Wars* (1977), although the year of the movie does NOT need to be italicized.

If it occurs, you should follow the same *Italics* format for any television shows or books that you mention. Example: The *Lord of the Rings* movie trilogy (2001-2003) is based on the epic *Lord of the Rings* (1954) book by J.R.R. Tolkien. [Notice the *italics* for movie titles, book titles, etc.]

You should follow the same format for any songs or movie soundtracks that you mention. Example: One of the side-stories in *Guardians of the Galaxy* (2014) is the cassette mix that is left for Peter Quill (Chris Pratt) by this mother. The cassette/mixtape was actually released as a movie soundtrack titled *Awesome Mix Vol. 1* (2014), and the popular soundtrack even plays into some of the details of the *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2* (2017) sequel that followed. The song "Come and Get Your Love," is a song title, so it goes in quotation marks... while the album title gets *italics*. Get the pattern?

Movie titles	= <i>In italics</i> + (Year released)	Movie scenes	= "Quotation marks"
TV show titles	= <i>In italics</i> + (Year released)	Show episodes	= "Quotation marks"
Music album titles	= <i>In italics</i> + (Year released)	Song titles	= "Quotation marks"
Book titles	= <i>In italics</i> + (Year released)	Book chapters	= "Quotation marks"
Magazine/newspaper	= <i>In italics</i>	Article titles	= "Quotation marks"