

# FILM AS A MEDIUM – COMM 2340-80 (ONLINE) Winter 2020

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**REQUIRED TEXT:** Film Art: An Introduction, by David Bordwell & Kristin Thompson, 11<sup>th</sup> ed. (9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> edition will work) I suggest you RENT the book from Amazon for about \$30. You WILL NEED it. Rental Info: [Film Art Amazon Rental](#)

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to provide a basic understanding of the narrative structures and formal characteristics of film as a visual/aural medium of communication. The course will examine how formal elements such as camera angle, lighting, color, camera movement, and editing are used as creative tools of visual expression to help generate or reinforce narrative meanings. You will screen films as they relate to textbook chapters.

**ONLINE/BLACKBOARD:** All elements of the class are available once the Winter Session begins. I designed this class to be self-directed: YOU can decide when to watch the films, take the Chapter Quizzes, do the Midterm, Final, and Paper—so long as **ALL WORK IS COMPLETE BY JANUARY 20, 2020 11:59PM**. All work will be completed (quizzes, Midterm, Final) and turned in (Paper) on Blackboard. If you have ANY technical difficulty, let me know, but seek help via the HELP icon on Blackboard. Again: **ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY JANUARY 20, 2020 11:59pm**.

**PROFESSOR INTERACTION:** There is no discussion board. Rather, I am available all the time via email (if you don't hear back in 24 hours, email again). I may send out email reminders, corrections, and comments—so please, for the duration of this class CHECK YOUR EMAIL for this class DAILY! Once I hit SEND, I assume you got it, and thus: YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for any changes, corrections or details disseminated via email.

**FILM SCREENINGS:** The films chosen are all available Netflix, Amazon, YouTube, or somewhere online for free, or for rent. I assume a college student can find any film online. (I have asked tested this with several students and all could find these films easily). And of course, there is your local library. Therefore, not "finding" one is not an excuse. YOU WILL BE TESTED ON THESE FILMS.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

**FILM SCREENINGS:** Because this class is about watching and analyzing films, you need to see them all BECAUSE you will be tested on all of them.

**CHAPTER QUIZZES.** 3-7 questions based on each assigned chapter. They are OPEN BOOK, you will have ONE HOUR to answer the questions. My expectation is that you will answer the questions as you read the Chapter.

**SECTION 1 QUIZ.** On Blackboard, it will be questions about THE FILMS & LINKS for SECTION 1. IF have not watched the films or links, you won't be able to answer the questions. You will only have 1 minute to answer each question. But if you saw the films and links, you will know the answer easy. (Example of the type of question: "In HUNGER GAMES, what weapon did Katniss use? A) Gun, B) Knife, C) She didn't use a weapon, or D) Bow and Arrow." IF you saw the movie, you know the answer. If you didn't, you won't.

**SECTION 2 QUIZ.** On Blackboard, it will be questions about THE FILMS & LINKS for SECTION 2. (\* Same type as Section 1)

**PAPER.** At least 600 words. See below for details. They are also in the Assignments section of Blackboard.

## GRADES:

|                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| Chapter Quizzes | 40% |
| MID-TERM        | 20% |
| PAPER           | 20% |
| FINAL EXAM      | 20% |

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

You will leave this class with a firm understanding of film, not the production part, but the talking about it part. Hopefully, you will look at every film differently after you leave this class and turn into the friend that folks don't like to talk to about film. Specifically:

1. Demonstrate an enhanced appreciation of film language and aesthetics
2. Demonstrate critical thinking skills in analyzing visually expressed messages
3. Communicate effectively, and interpret visually expressed messages
4. Identify styles of cinematic expression shaped in different cultural contexts

## COURSE CONTENT:

You will read about these foundational elements of Film Theory (and you can use them when you talk about film to impress folks with your knowledge of film):

|                    |           |             |
|--------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Cinematic Language | Editing   | Genres      |
| Mise-en-scene      | Narrative | Style       |
| Lighting/Sound     |           | Documentary |

## **THE ASSIGNMENTS – 2 SECTIONS- Please read carefully**

**\*\*\* I listed at least one website where the films are available for rent. They can, of course, be found at other places online. \*\*\***

**SECTION I** Links are also in the Course Assignments Section of Blackboard.

### CHAPTER 2 The Significance of Film Form

Screen: *The Piano*—Jane Campion (120 mins) Available: (youtube.com)

Screen: *Rear Window*—Alfred Hitchcock (112 mins.) Available: (youtube.com)

Read/Quiz: Chapter 2 (Film Form)

### CHAPTER 3 Narrative Form

Screen: *Citizen Kane* —Orson Wells (120 mins.) Available: (youtube.com)

Read/Quiz: Chapter 3 Narrative Form

THE IMPORTANCE OF CITIZEN KANE: *Regarded as the greatest film ever, these links will show you why- not that they will make you like it, but respect why so many hold the film in such high regard (these links will be included in the Midterm quiz.)*

- Roger Ebert introduces Citizen Kane: [https://youtu.be/ND6i\\_7HYIRA](https://youtu.be/ND6i_7HYIRA) (4 mins)
- Clip from “The Battle Over Citizen Kane” Documentary <https://youtu.be/79R8k6v4sKA> (10 mins)
- Reflections On Citizen Kane <https://youtu.be/83n7WdEFLks?t=1s> (26 mins)
- Anatomy Of A Classic Cinematography Citizen Kane [https://youtu.be/fkN\\_2GH-F6k](https://youtu.be/fkN_2GH-F6k) (6 mins)
- Anatomy Of A Classic SFX Citizen Kane <https://youtu.be/FmToy5NCBTg> (4 mins)

### CHAPTER 4 & 5 The Shot: Mise-en-Scene/ The Shot: Cinematography

Screen: *How to Speak Movie Part 2: Mise en Scène* <https://youtu.be/clBT7O3A3wI>

Screen: *Children of Men* by Alfonso Cuaron (110 mins) Available: (youtube.com)

Read/Quiz: Chapter 4 (The Shot: Mise-en-scene)

Read/Quiz: Chapter 5 (The Shot: Cinematography)

## **AFTER SCREENING THE ABOVE FILMS & LINKS, PLEASE TAKE THE SECTION I QUIZ**

**(Based on: The Piano, Rear Window, Citizen Kane, Citizen Kane Links,  
Mise-en-scene links, and Children of Men).**

## SECTION 2

CHAPTER 6 The Relation of Shot to Shot: Editing

*Screen: Breathless—Jean-Luc Godard (85 mins.) Available: (youtube.com)*

*Read/Quiz: Chapter 6 Chapter 6 (The Relation of Shot to Shot: Editing)*

FILM EDITING (Links in the Course Material Section of Blackboard)

- Alfred Hitchcock on 3 theories of film editing
- Constructive and Analytical Editing by David Bordwell

CHAPTER 7: Sound in the Cinema/ Chapter 8: Style as a Formal System

*Screen: Run Lola Run—Tom Tykwer (81 mins) Available: (youtube.com)*

*Read/Quiz: Chapter 7 (Sound in Cinema)*

*Read/Quiz: Chapter 8 (Style as a Formal System)*

CHAPTER 9 Film Genres

*Screen: Singing in the Rain—Stanley Dolan (103 mins.) Available: (youtube.com)*

*Read/Quiz: Chapter 9 (Film Genres)*

CHAPTER 10 Documentary, Experimental, and Animated Film

*Screen: 4 Little Girls – Spike Lee (101 mins.) Available: (youtube.com)*

*Read/Quiz: Chapter 10 (Documentary)*

**AFTER SCREENING THE ABOVE FILMS AND LINKS, PLEASE  
TAKE THE SECTION 2 QUIZ.**

**(Breathless, Film Editing Links, Run Lola Run,  
Singing in the Rain & 4 Little Girls)**