FLM 101 sec. 2 T, W, Th, F 12:00-4:00

University of Rhode Island
Winter J Term 2018
Ranger Hall 103

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office hrs: by appointment

Course Description

FLM 101 is an introductory course designed for those who have little or no background in film study. The class will cover the essentials of filmmaking, including cinematography, editing, music and sound, acting, directing, and writing. Students will learn the history of cinema, examine narrative structure, and interpret meaning in film. The overall goal will be to better understand and appreciate film form and style, with a focus on individual films seen within their literary, artistic, and cultural contexts.

Required Texts

(for students interested in saving $$$ access can be given to a less expensive version of the text)

Grading

Your final grade for the course will be determined as follows:
  1) Quiz (20%)
  2) Class participation and attendance (50%)
  3) Final Paper (30%)
Please note your attendance and participation in class will affect your final grade. More than three absences will seriously jeopardize your ability to pass this course.

Course Goals

1. To learn the fundamentals required for film study.
2. To understand the basic terms and techniques needed for discussing film.
3. To apply these terms and techniques descriptively and functionally in film analysis.
4. To read and interpret films in their cultural contexts.
5. To articulate your understanding of film and filmmaking knowledgeably and effectively, through both written and oral presentations, and thereby to create well-organized, thoughtful critical analyses of films viewed.
6. To form an intellectually challenging, supportive, and fun classroom community of viewers, readers, writers, and learners.
Course Requirements

Attendance: Class participation is essential to this course, and it’s important all of us be present. If a student misses two classes in a row, you will likely not pass this course. More than two unexcused absences will guarantee a failing grade. Two late attendances will be the equivalent of one absence, and being late on a consistent basis will bring down your grade. Students who miss a class remain responsible for all material covered on that day, and also must explain and verify the absence; contact a classmate about what you have missed, and arrange with me immediately for information on how to get caught up. If an emergency requires you to miss class, you must let me know within 12 hours of the missed class and/or provide documentation so I can excuse your absence(s). If you notify me in advance, absences for religious holidays, athletic participation, or other university-sanctioned events, you will (should the Gods be smiling upon you) be excused. And again, to be clear, University policy dictates that students with 2 or more unexcused absences over the term will fail the course. So, with all that in mind, should it be necessary, you may reach me at the email address above. Please note class attendance and participation reflects 50% of your final grade.

Quiz. One quiz will be administered at the end of the term. It will cover the fundamentals of filmmaking we’ve discussed in class and also what you’ve read in the text up to the point the quiz is given. I urge everyone not to miss the quiz because making it up is not only an enormous pain in the ass, but for this term it’s a practical impossibility.

Paper: One formal essay will be assigned at the end of our first week of meetings. The specific topic is TBD, but it will cover the essentials of the fundamentals of film. Essays must be typed, in a 12-point font (Times New Roman is good…Courier’s fine for script-lovers), double-spaced, and with standard 1” margins. Each student must complete the assigned writing project in order to pass the course. The final paper is due via email to me in a PDF FILE by no later than 4:00pm Sunday, January 22nd, 2017.

NO LATE FINAL PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED. NONE. ZERO. ZIP. SO DON’T BE LATE!!
Writing Center

“All writers, all disciplines, all levels, all stages of writing.” Located in Roosevelt Hall, 4th Floor, the Writing Center provides free tutorials for anyone in the University community wanting feedback on any kind of college or extra-curricular writing. The Writing Center staff works with writers on brainstorming ideas, paragraphing, sharpening thesis statements, documenting sources, organizing material, enhancing clarity, using appropriate evidence, or practicing and internalizing certain grammatical concepts. Bring your assignment and any work you have done on it, and expect to spend the session working. Tutors will not proofread or polish your work for you, but they will work with you to develop strategies you can use in all writing situations. If possible, call ahead for an appointment (874-4690), although drop-in tutorials are often available.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is "borrowing" someone else's work or ideas and presenting them as your own. The following all constitute plagiarism: using a document or part of a document written by another student; buying an essay or term paper from one of the services that sells such documents; using a document published on the Web; having someone else write an essay or term paper for you; or having someone so drastically edit your work so that it is no longer your work. It is always essential to use quotation marks around any words/phrases/sentences that are not yours, and to cite the source of the quote or information properly.

Students must meet their responsibility as scholars by thoroughly documenting all sources consulted—regardless of whether they are quoted from directly, paraphrased, rephrased or otherwise “borrowed from.” The documentation method endorsed is that of the Modern Language Association. This method is explained and illustrated comprehensively in Gibaldi, MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (6th ed.). Most handbooks also offer detailed guidelines for using the MLA style of documenting sources. In addition, Bedford-St. Martin’s Press offers a user-friendly version of the guidelines online: http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/humanities/english.html

If you plagiarize (and believe me, I’ll know), you will fail this course. Early in the semester, I’ll be familiar with your writing style. Should you submit work that varies in major ways from your unique writing patterns, I’ll assume you’ve plagiarized. Also, it’s extremely easy for faculty members to locate purchased or copied papers on the net. It is essential students credit appropriately and accurately all sources of their words and ideas. For the very integrity of the academic enterprise—the pursuit of knowledge and truth—I will hold students accountable for any instances of “plagiarism” (that is, the misrepresentation of another’s words or original ideas as one’s own) or for any other form of academic dishonesty. The penalties for plagiarism will be a grade of “F” on the assignment in question and a grade of “F” in the course. In addition, I will report the offense to the Dean’s office.

The following is a daily schedule of our class. I want you to have an idea how the class is gonna shake out, but I may shift a few of the movie choices as we go along, cuz after all, things change.

Meeting 1:  Class intro, Syllabus. What’s a film?
   *Narrative Structure introduction
   Screen Chinatown  (Polanski, 1974, US, 130 min).
   Read chapter 4 of the text about Narrative Structure.
Meeting 2:  *Narrative Structure overview  
Screen *Memento* (Nolan, 2000, US, 113 min.)  
Lecture/discussion

Meeting 3:  *Editing introduction  
Screen *Mad Max: Fury Road* (Miller, 2015, AU/US, 120 min.)  
Read chapter 8 of the text about editing.

Meeting 4:  *Editing overview  
Screen *Pulp Fiction* (Tarantino, 1994, US, 154 min.)  
Lecture/discussion

Meeting 5:  *Sound (and Music) introduction  
Screen *Singin’ In The Rain* (Donen/Kelly, 1952, US, 103 min)  
Read chapter 9 of the text about Sound

Meeting 6:  *Sound (and Music) overview  
Screen *Trainspotting* (Boyle, 1996, UK, 94 min)  
Lecture/discussion

Meeting 7:  *Cinematography introduction  
Screen *Pan’s Labyrinth* (Del Toro, 2006, ES/MX/US, 2006 118 min)  
Read chapter 6 of the text about Cinematography

Meeting 8:  *Cinematography overview  
Screen *Saving Private Ryan* (Spielberg, 1998, US, 169 min)  
Lecture/discussion

Meeting 9:  *Acting introduction  
Screen *Mystic River* (Eastwood, 2004, US, 137 min)  
Read chapter 7 of the text about Acting

Meeting 10:  *Acting overview  
Screen *Blue Velvet* (Lynch, 1986, US, 120 min)  
Lecture/discussion

Meeting 11:  *Genre and Film History  
Screen *LA Confidential* (Hanson, 1997, US, 138 min)  
Lecture/discussion

Meeting 12:  *The Film Industry, what to make of it all, and seeing movies in a new light  
*Screen *Upstream Color* (Carruth, 2013, US, 96 min)  
QUIZ  
Wrap-up discussion

AGAIN, THE FINAL PAPER IS DUE JANUARY 22nd BY 4pm AS A PDF, DOCX, OR GOOGLE DOC ATTACHMENT TO MY EMAIL ADDRESS, cmensel@uri.edu. NO LATE
ESSAYS WILL BE ACCEPTED!!

Student Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, each student will be able to:

General Education: Global Responsibility

1. Understand and articulate individual identity within global contexts through comparison of individual character, national, and cultural depictions in film and the moving image.

2. Develop and apply knowledge of patterns of cultural differences through the use of critical analysis of films and moving images to communicate and interact appropriately with people from other geopolitical areas.

3. Identify the perspective and points-of-view of individuals in varying cultural circumstances through the analysis of films and the moving image.

4. Identify and synthesize knowledge of global implications of individual and societal issues as they are depicted in film and the moving image, and make appropriate, sophisticated decisions relating to those issues.

General Education: Arts and Design

5. Identify concepts, terms, and facts related to film studies, film production, and film audiences.

6. Analyze and interpret the significance of film artists, works and ideas through historical knowledge and critical response to film and the moving image.

7. Demonstrate an understanding of the creative process and the aesthetic principles that guide the art and history of film and the moving image.

8. Appreciate and articulate the varied approaches to film in creative expression, preservation of cultural heritage, social responsibility, and/or global communication.

9. Recognize, comprehend and communicate through film and moving images.