

FILM 101: INTRODUCTION TO FILM

Section 003 (1102): Asynchronous—no *scheduled* online class sessions

Program in Film/Media

University of Rhode Island

J Term 2022

Professor Beazley Kanost

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Office: Zoom Meeting Space

Office hours: Weekdays, 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. & by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Film 101 (4 credits) is an introductory course designed for those who have little or no background in film study. Over the semester, you will be introduced to the elements of cinematography and principles of editing; the means of analyzing narrative structure and interpreting meaning in films; some relevant aspects of International film history and theory; as well as ways to better understand and appreciate film form and style. The focus in this course will be on individual films seen within their literary, artistic and cultural contexts.

Course Goals

1. To acquire the fundamentals needed for film study.
2. To learn the basic terms and techniques needed for discussing works of film art, and recognize the theories and concepts that are relevant in understanding and analyzing films and visual texts.
3. To apply these terms and techniques descriptively and functionally in film analysis.
4. Identify the narrative, visual, and aural elements of films.
5. Analyze how these elements can contribute to a film's overarching aesthetic and thematic concerns.
6. To engage in the reading and the interpretation of films in their international and cultural contexts.
7. To articulate your understanding of film and filmmaking knowledgeably and effectively, through both written and oral presentations, creating well-organized, thoughtful papers that engage in the critical analysis of the films we are viewing.
8. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate, integrate, and apply appropriate information from various sources to create cohesive, persuasive written arguments.
9. Conduct research in film studies by focusing specifically on how the historical and geographical circumstances of a film's production shape its aesthetic sensibility.
10. To form a classroom community of viewers, readers, writers, and learners which is intellectually supportive and challenging.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to do these things:

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.

COURSE POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

Required Texts

Readings and **videos** posted on Brightspace.

Films: Our primary texts will be the films we watch.

- Some of our films are available on Kanopy, via the URI Library. Directions for using Kanopy are on our Brightspace site.
- You will be required to rent 2 films during the term: *Hero* (Yimou Zhang, China, 2002) and *Get Out* (Jordan Peele, USA, 2017).

Other texts: include readings and videos posted on our Brightspace site.

THE J TERM: COMPLETING A COLLEGE COURSE IN THREE WEEKS

Over 3 weeks, with 14 class days, we will complete a course that usually takes 14 weeks.

This will require that you

- **Devote about 4 hours each weekday to our class work.**
 - This amounts to 3 class hours and an hour of homework.
- **Keep up with assigned work and meet deadlines**—if you fall behind, catching up will be difficult.

You will find that **our assignments take varied forms**: you will learn from videos and slide presentations as well as reading, and assignments will ask you to create and read images, as well as write about them. This variety is intended to help you remain focused.

WORKING ONLINE

Our class is **entirely online**, and **asynchronous**—it does not include any scheduled sessions when we have to meet online together.

This means that you must have access to a computer that can

1. Access and perform all activities on Brightspace.
2. Stream films and videos.
3. Produce documents: you will submit your term project in the form of a pdf or Word file.
4. Access Zoom meetings for individual conferences with Prof. Kanost and to attend her office hours.

Remember that URI's Information Technology Services can help you maintain your connection to our online technology. Here is a link to their home page: <https://its.uri.edu/>

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

ASSIGNMENTS

Daily writings will be submitted in Discussions on our Brightspace site, **due at midnight every weeknight**. They will be graded on how thoughtfully you examine specific aspects of mise-en-scene, specific film-making techniques, and how they produce meaning; they will **not** be graded for grammar, punctuation, etc.

Exercises may ask you to take and post photographs that demonstrate that you understand specific visual aspects of film or find information online. You will post your exercises on designated Discussions on Brightspace.

Quizzes will ask you questions about that day's topic and film.

Term Project: You may either 1. write an analytical essay or 2. make a film with a written reflection for your term project. Your daily assignments will help you prepare for both types of project.

We will not have a final exam: your last assignment will be your Term Project.

Deadlines:

- Unless special arrangements have been made with me, a late assignment will lose 5% from its grade for every day it is late. You may turn assignments in before they are due.
- If you do not submit all your assignments by midnight of the day on which it is due, I will assign it a zero. You can submit it for reduced credit after that time, and then your grade will be changed.
- If you do not turn in your **Term Project** by the due date **at the end of our last week of class**, you will receive a zero for it.

I will **not** assign grades of Incomplete **except** for extraordinary, adequately-documented circumstances.

Formatting: Your Term Project

- must be typed, double-spaced and formatted with one-inch margins.
- have your name on it
- have numbered pages.

Citing Sources: Use MLA in-text citations for citing sources.

GRADING

Percentage of final grade

Daily analytical writing:	40%	Daily writings posted in Discussions on our Brightspace site. These assignments will help prepare you to write your term project. Late submissions will receive lowered scores.
Exercises:	10%	Exercises may include visual assignments that ask you to develop and demonstrate your understanding of film through taking photographs, or online research.
Quizzes:	10%	Questions will cover daily topics and films.
Term project:	30%	An analytical essay or 3-minute film with a reflective essay.

Participation: 10% this is based on the quality and number of your contributions to daily online discussions & the timely submission of all your work.

Grading Scale

A+	98%	C+	78%
A	94%	C	74%
A-	90%	C-	70%
B+	88%	D+	68%
B	84%	D	64%
B-	80%	F	59%

PARTICIPATION

You will earn your participation grade by doing these things:

- Turning in your daily analytical writing **BY MIDNIGHT**. THIS ENSURES THAT YOUR CLASSMATES HAVE TIME TO READ AND RESPOND TO IT by the 5 pm deadline the next day.
 - If you turn in your writing late, your classmates won't have time to respond to it.
 - You owe it to them to submit work on time.
- Responding to your classmates' postings **BY 5 pm the following day**.
- Writing thoughtful, original comments in response to others' postings that not only make a point but explain it. **Do not** simply write, "I agree with your point" or repeat other people's comments. **You have interesting things to say: take the time to put them into words.**
- Using Prof. Kanost's office hours on Zoom—she
 - Loves to talk about film, about how to analyze scenes, and about how to write analyses. So please make her happy and stop in via Zoom to chat.
 - Needs to know what you find unclear, so please tell her!
- **Reading all class emails and announcements** to keep current with the class.
 - Because we don't meet in the classroom, Prof. Kanost must make announcements and give you reminders **via email—and you must read those emails.**
 - Important information and any changes in course work will come via email, so please check it often and read it.

If illness interferes with your ability to complete class work, be sure to tell Prof. Kanost. She will be glad to help you catch up—but you need to **communicate with her** when you need assistance.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to be honest in all academic work. A student's name on any written work, quiz or exam shall be regarded as assurance that the work is the result of the student's own independent thought and study. Work should be stated in the student's own words, properly attributed to its source. Students have an obligation to know how to quote, paraphrase, summarize, cite and reference the work of others with integrity. The following are examples of academic dishonesty.

- Using material, directly or paraphrasing, from published sources (print or electronic) without appropriate citation
- Claiming disproportionate credit for work not done independently
- Unauthorized use of another's work or preparing work for another student
- Fabricating or falsifying facts, data or references
- Facilitating or aiding another's academic dishonesty
- Submitting the same paper for more than one course without prior approval from the instructors.
- Altering or attempting to alter grades
- The use of notes or electronic devices to gain an unauthorized advantage during exams

You need to understand plagiarism and its consequences. We will review this briefly when your Class Memoir and Term Project are assigned. Please consult the URI Student Handbook about academic honesty for more detail. Many online resources also offer extensive help on matters of plagiarism and how to acknowledge source material. If you need more help understanding when to cite something or how to make your citations clear, PLEASE ASK.

YOU WILL FAIL THE COURSE IF YOU PLAGIARIZE.

Support Beyond the Classroom

I am always delighted to discuss your ideas, the readings, and class assignments with you.

- We can meet on Zoom during my office hours or make an appointment to meet at another time.
- I check my email daily at 10:30 a.m.; please feel free to email me with any questions or problems.

Anti-Bias Syllabus Statement: We respect the rights and dignity of each individual and group. We reject prejudice and intolerance, and we work to understand differences. We believe that equity and inclusion are critical components for campus community members to thrive. If you are a target or a witness of a bias incident, you are encouraged to submit a report to the URI Bias Response Team at www.uri.edu/brt. There you will also find people and resources to help.

Disability Services for Students Statement: Your access in this course is important. Please send me your Disability Services for Students (DSS) accommodation letter right away so that we have adequate time to discuss and arrange your approved academic accommodations.

If you have not yet established services through DSS, please contact them to engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations in the classroom. DSS can be reached by calling: 401-874-2098, visiting: web.uri.edu/disability, or emailing: dss@etal.uri.edu. We are available to meet with students enrolled in Kingston as well as Providence courses.