

FLM 101 T/Th 1-4:45pm Ranger 103
University of Rhode Island
Summer II 2025

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Office hrs: zoom 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

Looking At Movies: An Introduction to Film. 7th Edition. Richard Barsam. New York: Norton, 2021.

electronic link: <https://digital.wwnorton.com/movies7>

Grading

Your final grade for the course will be determined as follows:

- 1) Homework (20%)
- 2) Class participation and attendance (50%)
- 3) Final Paper (30%)

I'd like to point out the importance of **attendance and participation in class**. More than three absences may jeopardize your ability to pass this course, cuz if you're not in class it's kinda hard to participate. Just sayin'.

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.

Class Vibe

In a safe environment, I encourage students to speak their minds about topics covered and films watched, and have always kept the class as **fun and low stress** as possible. After all, **movies are awesome, and watching them while earning credits ain't so bad.**

The following is a VERY LOOSE schedule of our class. I want you to have an idea when screenings, assignments, etc, are due, but I will **DEFINITELY** modify things as we go along to keep everything as smooth and simple as possible, so don't worry.

- Meeting 1:** Class intro. Syllabus. What's a film?
*Introduction/Film History
Screen *A QUIET PLACE* (Krasinski, 2018, US, 90 min).
Read chapter 4 of the text, *Elements of Narrative*
- Meeting 2:** *Narrative Structure/Genre introduction
Screen *MEMENTO* (Nolan, 2000, US, 113 min.)
Lecture/discussion
Read chapter 3 of the text, *Types of Movies (Genre)*
- Meeting 3:** *Genre overview
Screen *GET OUT* (Peele, 2017, US, 104 min)
- Meeting 4:** *Editing introduction
Screen *MAD MAX: FURY ROAD* (Miller, 2015, AU/US, 120 min.)
Read chapter 8 of the text, *Editing*
- Meeting 5:** *Editing overview
Screen *DUNKIRK* (Nolan, 2017, UK/US, 106 min.)
Lecture/discussion
- Meeting 6:** *Sound (and Music) introduction
Screen *WHIPLASH* (Chazelle, 2014, US, 106 min)
Read chapter 9 of the text, *Sound*
- meeting 7:** *Sound (and Music) overview
Screen *BABY DRIVER* (Wright, 2017, US, 113 min)
Lecture/discussion
- Meeting 8:** *Cinematography introduction
Screen *GRAVITY* (Cuarón, 2013, US, 91 min)
Read chapter 6 of the text, *Cinematography*
- Meeting 9:** *Cinematography overview/Acting overall
Double screening:
GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL (Anderson, 2014, US, 99 min)
FRUITVALE STATION (Coogler, 2013, US, 85 min)
Read chapter 7 of the text, *Acting*
- Meeting 10:** *The Film Industry Today/The Future/What to Make of it All
Screen *TBD* (there'll be a class vote or something to figure out a fun final movie)

***keep reading...

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 6 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.

Homework. Approximately 6 homework assignments will be given during the term (specific dates TBD). They will each 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 to TURN IN HOMEWORK ON TIME.**

Paper: One formal essay **WILL BE ASSIGNED** about midway through the term. The topic is TBD, but it will cover the essentials of the fundamentals of film. Essays must be typed, in a 12-point font, double-spaced, and with standard 1" margins (standard MLA format). **Each student must complete the assigned writing project in order to pass the course.**

The final paper must be turned to Brightspace in a PDF file by no later than 4:00pm Monday, July 28th, 2025.

*****more pages, so keep reading...**

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.**

Chat GPT/AI/etc

Just *don't*. Seriously. That said, if you're gonna use it, use it as a tool. Don't have it think for you, because believe it or not, **AI gets a metric shit-ton WRONG.** So doing your own work is simply and absolutely your best bet.

*****but wait, there's *still* more...**

General Education: Global Responsibility Goals

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 Goals

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.

*****and *finally*, the last bits...**

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 early in the semester 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.

Academic Enhancement Center (for undergraduate courses): Located in Roosevelt Hall, the AEC offers free face-to face and web-based services to undergraduate students seeking academic support. Peer tutoring is available for STEM related courses by appointment online and in-person. The Writing Center offers peer tutoring focused on supporting undergraduate writers at any stage of a writing assignment. The UCS160 course and academic skills consultations offer students strategies and activities aimed at improving their studying and test-taking skills. Complete details about each of these programs, up-to-date schedules, contact information and self-service study resources are all available on the AEC website, uri.edu/aec.

If you wish to include additional information about their services:

- **STEM Tutoring** helps students navigate 100 and 200 level math, chemistry, physics, biology, and other select STEM courses. The STEM Tutoring program offers free online and limited in-person peer tutoring this spring. Undergraduates in introductory STEM courses have a variety of small group times to choose from and can select occasional or weekly appointments. Appointments and locations will be visible in the TutorTrac system beginning on January 26th, 2021. The TutorTrac application is available through URI Microsoft 365 single sign-on and by visiting aec.uri.edu. More detailed information and instructions can be found at uri.edu/aec/tutoring.
- **Academic Skills Development** resources help students plan work, manage time, and study more effectively. In Spring 2021, all Academic Skills and Strategies programming are offered both online and in-person. UCS160: Success in Higher Education is a one-credit course on developing a more effective approach to studying. Academic Consultations are 30-minute, 1 to 1 appointments that students can schedule on Starfish with Dr. David Hayes to address individual academic issues. Study Your Way to Success is a self-guided web portal connecting students to tips and strategies on studying and time management related topics. For more information on these programs, visit uri.edu/aec/academic-skills or contact Dr. Hayes directly at davidhayes@uri.edu.
- **The Undergraduate Writing Center** provides free writing support to students in any class, at any stage of the writing process: from understanding an assignment and brainstorming ideas, to developing, organizing, and revising a draft. Spring 2021 services are offered through two online options: 1) real-time synchronous appointments with a peer consultant (25- and 50-minute slots, available Sunday - Friday), and 2) written asynchronous consultations with a 24-hour turn-around response time (available Monday - Friday). Synchronous appointments hosted by WC Online are video-based, with audio, chat, document-sharing, and live captioning capabilities, to meet a range of accessibility needs. View the synchronous and asynchronous schedules and book online, visit uri.mywconline.com.

Graduate Writing Center (for graduate courses): The [Graduate Writing Center](#) provides writing support to all URI doctoral and master's students to foster continuing development of academic and professional writing skills necessary to succeed in graduate programs and academic or professional careers.

ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: To ensure that we are supporting the success of all students, course materials need to be accessible (e.g., videos, audio recording, texts, etc.) in face-to-face, blended and fully online courses. [The Office of Disability Services for Students](#) provides [resources for faculty and staff](#).

[The Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning](#) also has resources available:

<https://web.uri.edu/teachonline/basics-of-accessibility-online/>.

[ITS Instructional Technology and Media Services](#) provides information and support about [captioning video content](#). Adding captioning to video content is an essential step in making videos accessible to all viewers – especially for learners who are deaf or have low hearing. Captions are also shown to increase comprehension for students whose native language is different from what is spoken in the video.