

ENG 2300-7485: Film Analysis

Fall 2013

Daniel Norford

[norford@ufl.edu](mailto:norford@ufl.edu)

Class: T 7<sup>th</sup> period (1:55-2:45); R 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> period (1:55-2:45, and 3:00-3:50), in TUR 2322

Screenings: M E1-E3 (7:20-10:10) in TUR 2322

Office Hours: T, 3:00-5:00, at TUR 4325

### **Course Description:**

As an introduction to film analysis, ENG 2300 provides students with a working knowledge of film vocabulary (mise-en-scène, editing, cinematography, and sound). As opposed to the “film appreciation” model, ENG 2300 develops these analytical tools in the context of film history and film theory. Thus the course involves films and essays that have proved central to subsequent ways of thinking about cinema. In addition, this course prepares students to write effectively about cinema and film theory; therefore, we will work on planning, drafting, and revising formal essays on the course’s material.

### **Goals/Objectives:**

Having completed this course, students will have a sense of both film history’s general outline and film theory’s most important issues. This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for the Humanities or Composition. For more information, see: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggened.html>.

To graduate, University of Florida students must complete several courses that involve substantial writing for a total of 24,000 words. This course can satisfy the UF requirement for Writing—coursework with at least 6,000 words. For more information, see: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggened.html>.

The student learning outcomes for this course are as detailed in the Undergraduate Catalog at: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggened.html#requirements>.

### **Required Texts:**

Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen, *Film Theory and Criticism*, 7th edition.

Bill Nichols, *Engaging Cinema: An Introduction to Film Studies*.

In addition to these texts, students will be expected to read a number of essays and shorter readings throughout the semester, which will be provided to them in class or posted on the course website.

**Attendance:**

ENG 2300 is a participation-oriented course, which means that you will build your skills and knowledge in each class throughout the semester. Attendance is required. If you miss more than **6** periods during the semester, you will **automatically fail** the entire course. Only those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays are exempt from this policy. Absences for illness or family emergencies will count toward your **six** allowed absences. **Each absence beyond three will lower your overall grade by 50 points (5%). For Tuesday-Thursday classes, missing a class that meets for two straight periods will count as 2 absences.**

**Preparation:**

You are expected to be prepared for every class, including completing all reading and writing assignments on time. Papers and drafts are due at the beginning of class. **Late papers will not be accepted.** Technological issues, freak accidents, or lack of planning are to be expected and will not typically be considered viable excuses.

**Mode of Submission:**

All papers must be in 12-point, plain font, double-spaced with standard margins. Be sure to staple papers before submitting hard copies. Your final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. **Formal essays are due in hard-copy form, in-class, on the day listed on the schedule below.**

**Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism: a student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

- a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student. (University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 31 Oct. 2011 <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>).

University of Florida Students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code.

Important tip: You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without also providing the exact location from which it came.

All acts of plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment and may result in failure of the entire course. Plagiarism can occur even without intention to deceive if the student fails to know and employ proper documentation techniques. Unless otherwise indicated by the instructor for class group work, all work must be your own. Nothing written for another course will be accepted.

**Academic Honesty:**

All students are required to abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: [www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.psp](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.psp).

**Graded Materials:** Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course, and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a re-submission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the student's responsibility to have and to make available this material.

**Classroom Behavior:**

Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diverse student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own.

Unless you have been told that we are using them for a specific purpose in class, laptops should be put away. Cell phones should be turned off and placed in your pocket, bag, or purse. I should not see you looking at your phone in class. If I do, you may be asked to leave the classroom. It is fine to bring a drink to class, but please refrain from eating.

**Students with Disabilities:**

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom. For more information, see: [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/).

**Statement on Harassment:**

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff members that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more information about UF policies regarding harassment, see: [www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php#s4041](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php#s4041).

**Grading Scale:**

5 Reflective Responses (200-400 words; 20 points each; 100 points total)

5 Reading Quizzes (20 points each-100 points total)

1<sup>st</sup> Essay (100 points; 1000 words)

2<sup>nd</sup> Essay (200 points; 1500 words)

Final Presentation (150 points)

Final Paper (350 points; 2500 words)

**Grade Breakdown:**

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

**Assignments in Brief (more detailed instructions will be provided):**

**Reading Quizzes:** These quizzes will test students on the scheduled reading for that day. **Quizzes will be unannounced ahead of time, and students who are absent or tardy will not be allowed to make them up.**

**Reflective Responses:** 1-2 page responses in which students are expected to explore the issues and questions raised by weekly screenings and readings, as well as relevant concepts from class. As the semester progresses, students are advised to use the responses to work towards a final paper project.

**Essay 1—Single-text Analysis and Close Formal Reading:** In 5 to 7 pages, students will explore and analyze a single essay from the syllabus, and then demonstrate how a scene (or scenes) from a specific film confirms, contradicts, and/or complicates the major claims of the chosen argument. **Students must select one of the films screened in class.**

**Essay 2—Synthesis of Two Texts:** In 7 to 8 pages, students will analyze the relationship of two written texts to each other, indicating how this relationship is important in the context of film theory—what, in other words, is the value of reading these texts together, instead of in isolation? As a final step in the argument, students are expected to show how their research influences their reading of a

specific film. **Although no longer a requirement, students are recommended to select a film from the course screenings. Those students who wish to select a film of their own must get approval from the instructor before proceeding.**

**Final Paper:** In 10 to 12 pages, students will revise their synthesis essays and integrate a minimum of 4 scholarly sources into their essay. Students should demonstrate an understanding of how new research affects their original argument, and should see the final paper as an opportunity to extend upon the work they did in the synthesis paper.

**Final Presentation:** In 5 to 7 minutes, students will give an oral version of their argument, demonstrating adequate preparation and progression.

**Assessment Rubric:** Students must conform to the following rubric in order to pass the course with a ‘C’ (satisfactory) or higher. Grades in the ‘A’ and ‘B’ range will be awarded only to those students who exceed the basic expectations described below.

	<b>Satisfactory (C-A range)</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory (C- and lower)</b>
<b>Content</b>	<b>Papers exhibit evidence of ideas that respond to the assignment with complexity, critically engaging with and synthesizing sources, and provide an adequate discussion with basic understanding of visual and written texts.</b>	<b>Papers either include a central idea(s) that is poorly defined or off-topic, or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas, texts and films. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.</b>
<b>Organization and Coherence</b>	<b>Documents and paragraphs exhibit identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement and topic sentences.</b>	<b>Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.</b>
<b>Argument and support</b>	<b>Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, papers may provide only generalized discussion</b>	<b>Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to provide critical analysis of written and visual texts.</b>

	of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments.	
Style	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to an academic context. Sentences should display complexity and logical structure.	Documents rely on word usage this is inappropriate in an academic context. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.
Mechanics	Papers will feature correct and error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, papers may contain a few spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive and do not impede the reader's understanding of the text.	Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader's understanding or severely undermine the writer's credibility.

**Daily Schedule (Subject to Change):**

**Syllabus Key: EC=Engaging Cinema; FTC=Film Theory and Criticism**

**Disclaimer: some films may feature depictions of sex and violence. If you find such material offensive, you are strongly advised to seek another course!**

**Week 1**

R 8/22-Class Introduction-*Film as a language*

**Week 2**

M 8/26-**Screening:** The Lumière Brothers' (early shorts: 1895-1897); Georges Méliès, *A Trip to the Moon* (1902); *The Black Imp* (1905); *Good Glue Sticks* (1907).

T 8/27-**Reading:** Nichols, EC: "The Formal Context," pgs. 29-36; and 50-64; *Introduction to close formal analysis*.

R 8/29-**Reading:** Kracauer, FTC: "Basic Concepts," pgs. 147-159; *Film and Indexicality*.

### Week 3

M 9/2-**Holiday-no screening!**

T 9/3-**Reading:** Nichols, EC: "Introduction," pgs. 3-12; and 17-29; *Film and figures of speech*. **READING RESPONSE #1 DUE!**

R 9/5-**Reading:** Nichols, EC: "Documentary Film," pgs. 99-114; and 126-130; *the uses of reality in film*.

### Week 4

M 9/9-**Screening:** *Nanook of the North* (Robert Flaherty, 1922).

T 9/10-**Reading:** Nichols, EC: "Documentary Film," pgs. 132-134; *Documentary film as a mode of persuasion*.

R 9/12-**Reading:** Nichols, EC: "Ideology and Cinema," pgs. 287-297; **Group Work:** *Cataloguing the rhetorical strategies of documentary film*.

### Week 5

M 9/16-**Screening:** *Within Our Gates* (Oscar Micheaux, 1920).

T 9/17-**Reading:** Manthia Diawara, FTC: "Black Spectatorship: Problems of Identification and Resistance," pgs. 767-777; *on resistant spectatorship*. **ESSAY #1 DUE!**

R 9/19-**Reading:** Nichols, EC: "Race and Ethnicity in Film," pgs. 325-345; *the universal versus the particular*.

### Week 6

M 9/23-**Screening:** *The Battleship Potemkin* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925)

T 9/24-**Reading:** Sergei Eisenstein, FTC: "Beyond the Shot," pgs. 13-24; *Editing as dialectical conflict*.

R 9/26-**Reading:** Nichols, EC: "Modernism," pgs. 188-200; *Modernist techniques of viewer alienation*.

### Week 7

M 9/30-**Screening:** *The Bitter Tea of General Yen* (Frank Capra, 1933)

T 10/1-**Group Work:** *Identity and difference in Capra's film; formal strategies of fragmentation*. **READING RESPONSE #2 DUE!**

R 10/3-**Reading:** David Palumbo-Liu: "Rescripting the Imaginary: The 'Bitter Tea' of Frank Capra," (PDF handout).

### Week 8

M 10/7-**Screening:** *It Happened One Night* (Frank Capra, 1934)

T 10/8-**Reading:** Nichols, EC: “Realism as the Cornerstone of Film Style,” pgs. 175-188; *Classical Hollywood film as an ideal world-picture*.

R 10/10-**Reading:** Thomas Schatz, FTC: “Film Genre and the Genre Film, pgs. 564-575; *the ideological nature of the Happy Ending*.

### **Week 9**

M 10/14-**Screening:** *moi, un noir* (Jean Rouch, 1958).

T 10/15-**Group Work:** *Jean Rouch, Cinema Verité, and the blending of fictional and documentary techniques*. **READING**

**RESPONSE #3 DUE!**

R 10/17-**Reading:** Matsuhiko Yoshimoto, FTC: “The Difficulty of Being Radical: The Discipline of Film Studies and the Postcolonial World Order,” pgs. 865-877; *the author’s position and ideological complicity*.

### **Week 10**

M 10/21-**Screening:** *Night and Fog* (Alain Resnais, 1955); *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (Alain Resnais, 1959).

T 10/22-**Group Work:** *Comparing and contrasting Resnais’s films*.

R 10/24-**Reading:** Deberati Sanyal, “Auschwitz as Allegory in *Night and Fog*” (PDF handout); *Films and the ongoing question of universality*.

### **Week 11**

M 11/4-**Screening:** *Breathless* (Jean Luc-Godard, 1960).

T 11/5-**Reading:** Nichols, EC: “The Uses of Film Form to Challenge the Dominant Ideology,” pgs. 310-325.

R 11/7-**Group Work:** ‘*Aesthetic form*’ vs ‘*social impact*’ in *Godard’s film*. **SYNTHESIS ESSAY DUE!**

### **Week 12**

M 10/28-**Screening:** *Mandabi* (Ousmane Sembene, 1968).

T 10/29-**Reading:** Françoise Pfaff, “Sembene, a Griot of Modern Times” (PDF handout); *Sembene’s film and the construction of ‘the people.’* **READING RESPONSE #4 DUE!**

R 10/31-**Reading:** Frantz Fanon, “The Pitfalls of National Consciousness” (PDF handout); *the position of the post-colonial intellectual*.

### **Week 13**

**M 11/11-Holiday-No Screening!**

**T 11/12-Group Work:** *Brainstorming ideas for the final research paper. FINAL READING RESPONSE DUE!*

**R 11/14-Reading:** Arjun Appadurai, “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy” (PDF handout).

### **Week 14**

**M 11/18-Screening:** *Demonlover* (Olivier Assayas, 2002).

**T 11/19-Reading:** Guy Debord, “Separation Perfected” (PDF handout).

**R 11/21-Writing Day:** *Come to Class prepared to work on your final paper and/or presentation—bring questions for the instructor!*

### **Week 15**

**M 11/25-No Screening-Work on Presentations!**

**T 11/26-Presentations-FINAL PAPERS DUE!**

**R 11/28-Thanksgiving-No class!**

### **Week 16**

**M 12/2-No Screening-Work on Presentations!**

**T 12/3-Presentations.**

**R 12/5-Presentations.**