

FILM 1502: Introduction to Film Studies  
M/W/F 4:00-4:50 p.m.  
**Monday Screenings: 5:00 p.m.**

LRAP Fall 2015

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OFFICE: LRAP 176

OFFICE HOURS: M/W/F 2:00-3:00, and by appointment

**Course Description:** This course is designed to give you the skills needed to analyze films. You will come away familiar with the component features of the medium (mise-en-scène, cinematography, sound, editing), and an understanding of how these features contribute to the style and meaning of an individual film. The course also provides an introduction to the basic film types, including narrative film, documentary, independent film, and popular genres.

**Text:** Film: An Introduction 4<sup>th</sup> edition William H. Phillips

**Attendance, Participation and Late Work:** Class attendance is required (including screenings). You must be present for the entire class to be counted present. Every class is important. If you are consistently absent, you jeopardize your success in the course. If you miss more than three (3) classes (including screenings), for any reason, your final grade will drop by one grade point (A to A-; A- to B+, B+ to B, etc.). Being on time to class is expected and consistent lateness is considered disruptive to the class. Late work will be docked one grade (A to A-; A- to B+ etc.) for each day it is late.

**Electronic Devices:** The classroom is a learning environment and should be free from computer and cell phone interruption. (Laptops may only be used for taking notes!)

**Course Grading:** Your final grade will be determined based on the accumulated points for the following factors: (See course schedule for descriptions of assignments.)

Four Quizzes (best 4/5)	25 pts. each (100 pts. total) (multiple-choice, true/false, fill in blank)
Short Essays (best 4/5)	25 pts. each (100 pts. total)
Group Presentations	50 pts. (presentations begin after midterm)
Term Essay	100 pts. (8 pages)
<u>Final Film Project</u>	<u>100 pts.</u>
TOTAL	450 pts.

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

**Short Essays:** You will choose ONE question and write a **2-page** essay that includes at least one reference to the assigned reading. The purpose of the essay is to encourage thoughtful engagement with the reading and the films and give you the opportunity to develop your own ideas about the films. Your essay should have a thesis (most likely the “answer” to the question) that you prove with supporting evidence. You should quote from the films, but not extensively; you should not retell the plot. All essays must be turned in on D2L. Your 4 best scores out of 5 will decide your total points overall.

**Group Presentations:** Each group will choose a 3-5 minute clip from a feature-length film to present to the class. (You may choose a film being screened in class or a film of the group's choice. All films must be approved.) Your group will need to view it at least twice and discuss it, do research about the film, and create a handout for the class. The handout will include a brief summary of the film's plot; information about the time, place and production of the film; the major cast and crew; and any other relevant sources and contexts. Presentations should not last longer than 15 minutes.

First you will show the whole clip, and then discuss it. In your discussion of the film, please be sure to include discussion of the film's

- a. techniques, including mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing, and sound (both the techniques and what they contribute to the viewing experience);
- b. the film's genre
- c. style(s)
- d. some of its major possible meanings to the film as a whole (explicit and implicit)

Finally, you will answer questions about the film, the group handout, and your group's presentation.

Presentations will be graded on their adherence to the assignment and on thoroughness, accuracy, clarity, and usefulness to viewers. The more fully your group applies the book's concepts to the film clip, the more useful your presentation (and the higher your grade).

#### **COLLABORATIVE FILM PROJECT:**

Final project options offer you the opportunity to work with other students. The goal is to share knowledge and learn from each other. Together, create a short film (under 10 min.) in the style of one of the filmmakers studied this semester that emphasizes the elements of cinema as discussed in class: mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing, and sound as well as explicit/implicit meaning. The film can be a parody, or it can be done straight, but successful films will be ones that other members of this class can easily recognize as having been created in the style, for example, of Stanley Kubrick. This project can involve several students. We will screen the films in class on Mon. Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> and Wed. Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> and vote on them. The top 2 films will be screened during LRAP's Celebration of the Arts on the evening of Wed., Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>.

**TERM ESSAY:** The goal of your assignment is to analyze one screened in class; although, you may reference other films screened in order to support your argument. Choose one film and write a **8-page** essay that analyzes the significance of the film both cinematically and thematically. Your essay must have a thesis with supporting evidence from the films and the textbook to support your claim. Your essay should develop further or go beyond the ideas discussed during class discussions. Your essay should use specific examples from the film(s) and the reading. If you use other sources, these must also be documented using MLA style. For all essays, pages must be numbered, double-spaced, in typeface about the same size as this. Film titles must be *italicized*. Essays must include brief quotations, summaries, and paraphrases of ideas from the required readings. To check for correct spellings of the names of actors, characters, directors, cinematographers, etc., go to [Imdb.com](http://Imdb.com). All Final Essays must be turned in on D2L.

Course Schedule (subject to change):

### **Week 1**

Monday, Aug. 24

Introductions

Wednesday, Aug. 26

Discussion: Elements of Cinema

Friday, Aug. 28

Discussion: Elements of Cinema

### **Week 2**

Monday, Aug. 30

Reading: Chapter 1—Mise en Scène

~Screening 5:00 p.m.— *Citizen Kane*, D: Orson Welles (1941) 119m.

Wednesday, Sept. 2

Discussion: *Citizen Kane*

Friday, Sept. 4

TELLURIDE FILM FESTIVAL

D2L online assignment

### **Week 3**

Monday, Sept. 7

Labor Day, No Classes, No Screening

Wednesday, Sept. 9

Discussion: *Citizen Kane*

Friday, Sept. 11

Discussion: *Citizen Kane*

### **Week 4**

Monday, Sept. 14

Reading: Chapter 2—Cinematography

~Screening 5:00 p.m.— *Pan's Labyrinth*, D: Guillermo del Toro (2006) 119m.

Wednesday, Sept. 16

Discussion: *Pan's Labyrinth*

Friday, Sept. 18

Discussion: *Pan's Labyrinth*

### **Week 5**

Monday, Sept. 21

**Quiz# 1 (Chapters 1 & 2)**

Discussion: *Pan's Labyrinth*

~Screening 5:00 p.m.— *Persona*, D: Ingmar Bergman (1967) 105m.

Wednesday, Sept. 23

Discussion: *Persona*

Friday, Sept. 25

Discussion: *Persona*

**Week 6**

Monday, Sept. 28

**Short Essay #1 Due; turn in on D2L**

Discussion: *Persona*

Reading: Chapter 4—Sound

~Screening 5:00 p.m.— *The Graduate*, Mike Nichols (1967) 105m.

Wednesday, Sept. 30

Discussion: *The Graduate*

Friday, Oct. 2

Discussion: *The Graduate*

**Week 7**

Monday, Oct. 5

**Quiz# 2 (Chapters 3 & 4)**

Reading: Chapter 5—Sources for Fictional Films

~Screening 5:00 p.m.— *K-19: The Widowmaker*, D: Kathryn Bigelow (2002) 138m.

Wednesday, Oct. 7

Discussion: *K-19: The Widowmaker*

Friday, Oct. 9

Discussion: *K-19: The Widowmaker*

**Week 8**

Monday, Oct. 12

**Short Essay #2 Due; turn it in on D2L**

Reading: Chapter 6—Components of Fictional Films

~Screening 5:00 p.m.— *Dancer in the Dark*, D: Lars von Trier (2000) 140m.

Wednesday, Oct. 14

Discussion: *Dancer in the Dark*

Friday, Oct. 16

Discussion: *Dancer in the Dark*

**Week 9**

Monday, Oct. 19

**Quiz #3 (chapters 5 & 6)**

Discussion: *Dancer in the Dark*

~Screening 5:00 p.m.—*The Bicycle Thief*, Vittorio De Sica (1948) 93m.

Wednesday, Oct. 21

Reading: Chapter 7: Types of Fictional Films, pages 307-333

Discussion: *The Bicycle Thief*

Friday, Oct. 23

Discussion: *The Bicycle Thief*

**Week 10**

Monday, Oct. 26

**Short Essay #3 DUE; turn it in on D2L**

Discussion: *The Bicycle Thief*

~Screening 5:00 p.m.—*Breathless*, D: Jean-Luc Godard (1959) 90m.

Wednesday, Oct. 28

Discussion: *Breathless*

Friday, Oct. 30

Discussion: *Breathless*

**Week 11**

Monday, Nov. 2

Discussion: *Breathless*

~Screening 5:00 p.m.—*Stories We Tell*, D: Sarah Polley (2012) 108m.

Wednesday, Nov. 4

Reading: Chapter 9: Experimental, Hybrid, and Animated Films

Friday, Nov. 6

**In Class Screening 5:00 p.m.— *Un Chien Andalou*, D: Luis Bunuel (1929) 16m.**

**& *Meshes of the Afternoon*, D: Maya Deren (1943) 14m**

**Week 12**

Monday, Nov. 9

**Quiz #4 (chapters 7, 8 & 9)**

Discussion: *Stories We Tell*

~Screening 5:00 p.m.—*Requiem for a Dream*, D: Darren Aronofsky (2000) 102m.

Wednesday, Nov. 11

Discussion: *Requiem for a Dream*

Friday, Nov. 13

Reading: Chapter 10: Understanding Films Through Contexts

Discussion: *Requiem for a Dream*

**Week 13**

Monday, Nov. 16

**Short Essay #4 Due; turn it in on D2L**

~Screening 5:00 p.m.—*Django Unchained*, D: Quentin Tarantino (2012) 165m.

Wednesday, Nov. 18

Reading: Chapter 11: Thinking About Films

Discussion: *Django Unchained*

Friday, Nov. 20

Discussion: *Django Unchained*

**Nov. 23—27—Fall Break: No Classes**

**Week 14**

Monday, Nov. 30

Reading: Chapter 12: Reading and Writing About Films

**~Screening 5:00 p.m.— *American Psycho, D: Mary Harron (2000) 102m.***

Wednesday, Dec. 2

Discussion: *American Psycho*

Friday, Dec. 4

Discussion: *American Psycho*

**Week 16**

Monday, Dec. 7

**Short Essay #5 Due; turn it in on D2L**

**In-class Screening: Student Films**

**Screening 5:00 p.m.— *The Player, Robert Altman (1992) 124m.***

Wednesday, Dec. 9

Reading: Chapter 13: A Sample Description and Analysis: *The Player*

**In-class Screening: Student Films**

Celebration of the Arts—5:45 in the Libby Basement

Student Film Festival: 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 11

Last Day of Classes

**Quiz #5 (chapters 10, 11, 12 & 13)**

Thursday, Dec. 17

**FINALS WEEK**

**TERM Essay Due on D2L**

Midnight on Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>.

No late work will be accepted after Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>.