



DRAM 2366.141CL
Introduction to Cinema
Fall 2021

M-W 11:00am – 12:20pm / Learning Resource – Bldg #8, Room 131

Instructor Information:

Name: Molly Vernon
Email: mvernon@com.edu
Phone: 713.894.3158

Student hours and location: By scheduled appointment only.

Required Textbook/Materials: No textbook required. (NETFLIX, Amazon Prime, HULU, and YouTube for films.)

Course Description: Survey and analyze cinema including history, film techniques, production procedures, selected motion pictures, and cinema’s impact on and reflection of society. The emphasis of this course is on the analysis of the visual and aural aspects of selected Motion Pictures; Dramatic aspects of narrative films; historical growth and sociological impact of film as art. Instruction will focus on American mainstream films.

Course requirements: Discussion, films, and projects as assigned.

Determination of Course Grade/Detailed Grading Formula:

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----|---|
| Attendance/Participation | 20% | The grading scale is as follows: 90 – 100 = A 80 – 89 = B 70 – 79 = C 65 – 69 = D 64 - below = F |
| Quizzes | 20% | |
| Films | 20% | |
| Creative Projects | 20% | |
| Final Exam | 20% | |

Extra Credit for attending MOVIES and COM Theatre Productions:

Sylvia: Sept 9th - 26th

A Divine Kerfuffle: Nov 4th – 21st

All performances run Thursdays – Saturdays at 8:00pm and Sundays at 2:30pm.

- Bring ticket stub to class to turn in to me. Make sure your name is on it.

Late Work, Make-Up, and Extra-Credit Policy:

Satisfactory completion of all graded assignments on the date due – you may not make up a missed or late assignment without loss of credit and permission from the instructor to turn in LATE. (If COVID impacts assignments make sure to speak to the instructor directly.)

Attendance Policy:

Timeliness and presence are crucial to excellence in the performing arts. Each student is allowed **two (2)** absences before your final grade is affected. For each absence beyond these allotted absences, your final grade will be reduced by ½ a letter grade with each subsequent absence. In addition to absences, three tardies or early exits will equal one absence. Please arrive on time. If you do not feel well, do not come to class. If you have extenuating circumstances that affect your ability to follow these policies, you need to speak with the instructor BEFORE being late or absent. If you are impacted by COVID, communicate with your instructor as soon as you are able, and modifications/accommodations will be worked out.

Communicating with your instructor: ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means. (Faculty may add additional statement requiring monitoring and communication expectations via Blackboard or other LMS)

| Student Learner Outcome | Maps to Core Objective | Assessed via this Assignment |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Apply a vocabulary and knowledge of the History, theory, and skills required to mount a film production. | Critical Thinking | Exam 1 & 2 |
| 2. Demonstrate knowledge of the variety of genres in film production. | Communication, Critical Thinking | Quizzes |
| 3. Describe the collaborative nature of production in motion picture arts. | Teamwork, Creativity | Projects |
| 4. Discuss/Describe the relationship of cinema to society as it relates to his/her perspective. | Communication, Critical Thinking, Social Responsibility | Daily work, Discussion, Study and Films |

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty shall constitute a violation of these rules and regulations and is punishable as prescribed by board policies. Scholastic dishonesty shall include, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion.

“Cheating on a test” shall include:

- a. Copying from another student’s test paper
- b. Using test material not authorized by the person administering the test
- c. Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test without permission from the test administrator

- d. Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing or soliciting, in whole or in part, the contents of an unadministered test
- e. The unauthorized transporting or removal, in whole or in part, of the contents of an unadministered test
- f. Substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for oneself to take a test
- g. Bribing another person to obtain an unadministered test or information about an unadministered test

If a student is caught plagiarizing their work, they will receive a zero for the assignment and be reported to the Academic Dean.

Student Concerns: If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information previously provided. If, after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact H. Russ Brown, Director of Theatre, at 409-933-8544 or hrussbrown@com.edu.

Class Rules:

1. No food, gum permitted in class. ALL DRINKS must be in capped, plastic bottles.
2. COM policy states that there is no such thing as a “permitted number of absences.” If you aren’t going to be in class, there’s no need to inform me because the reason doesn’t change anything.
3. The Rules of Theatre Etiquette must be observed at ALL TIMES.
4. Cell phones MUST BE OFF for the duration of the class period – NO EXCEPTIONS.
5. Please be respectful of your classmates by refraining from engaging in private conversation when we are having a class/group discussion, or when a performance is in progress.

A Word about BOUNDARIES: At COM Theatre we strive to champion a professional atmosphere of non-judgmental inclusion, open communication, and enthusiastic consent so that all involved can feel free to be a pro-active participant in their own artistic growth. It is crucial that you gain an ever-evolving awareness of your own personal boundaries, so that you may teach those boundaries to us – in order to assure the personal comfort and safety of yourself, your partners and the ensemble. Please feel free to inform instructors of any physical or emotional limitations that may hinder your performance of any techniques/material presented in class so that they may be appropriately adapted. In performance-oriented classroom or production situations, it may sometimes be necessary during the use of techniques and exercises for the Instructor/Director to interact physically with students or for students to interact physically with one another. This is part of the learning process, and any contact is intended to be professional and clinical in nature. If at any time a student is uncomfortable with the idea or the practice of

that physical contact, the student will be given an opportunity to voice their concern and the need for adaptation will immediately be respected without fear of reprisal, reprimand or dismissal.

Institutional Policies and Guidelines

Grade Appeal Process: Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook. <https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student_Handbook_2019-2020v5.pdf. *An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.* https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student_Handbook_2019-2020v5.pdf

Academic Success & Support Services: College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

ADA Statement: Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact Holly Bankston at 409-933-8520 or hbankston@com.edu. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in the Student Success Center.

Counseling Statement: Any student needing counseling services is requested to please contact Holly Bankston in the student success center at 409-933-8520 or hbankston@com.edu. Counseling services are available on campus in the student center for free and students can also email counseling@com.edu to set up their appointment. Appointments are strongly encouraged; however, some concerns may be addressed on a walk-in basis.

Textbook Purchasing Statement: A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Withdrawal Policy: Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a "W" grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw for the fall session is November 19th.

F_N Grading: The F_N grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The F_N grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed

to withdraw. The issuing of the F_N grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an F_N grade.

Early Alert Program: The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program you will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

COVID-19 Statement: All students, faculty, and staff are expected to familiarize themselves with materials and information contained on the College of the Mainland's Coronavirus Information site at www.com.edu/coronavirus. In compliance with Governor Abbott's May 18 Executive Order, face coverings/masks will no longer be required on COM campus. Protocols and college signage are being updated. We will no longer enforce any COM protocol that requires face coverings. We continue to encourage all members of the COM community to distance when possible, use hygiene measures, and get vaccinated to protect against COVID-19. Please visit com.edu/coronavirus for future updates.

Course Outline:

- Week 1 M. Introductions, Syllabus, Class Design
W. Movies are Stories (Story Elements), Story FIRST, and Intro to *Raiders of the Lost Ark*
- Week 2 M. Screening *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, review story, genre, composer and discussion 1st half
W. Finish screening *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, Review and Quiz
- Week 3 M. HOLIDAY (Labor Day)
W. Characters, building story, conflict, intro to *Shawshank Redemption*
- Week 4 M. Screening *Shawshank Redemption*, genre and discussion first half
W. Screening *Shawshank Redemption*, Plot Points assignment and quiz
- Week 5 M. Silent movies (genre), dialogue, movie history, and Hollywood
W. * If possible silent movie argument film project
- Week 6 M. Director (job, style) genre, introduction to Tarantino and *Pulp Fiction*
W. Screening 1st half of *Pulp Fiction*
- Week 7 M. Screening 2nd half of *Pulp Fiction*, review and quiz
W. Sets, Props, construction and period pieces
- Week 8 M. Wardrobe, Makeup, monsters, aliens, FX creatures, and genre(s)
W. Mid-Term Evaluations

- Week 9 M. Review Set, props, makeup, wardrobe and introduction to *The Matrix*
W. Screening 1st half *The Matrix*
- Week 10 M. Screening 1st half *The Matrix*, review and quiz
W. Director of Photography, cameras, lens and crew, framing, composition and genre
- Week 11 M. Introduction to Hitchcock and *Psycho*
W. Screening 1st half of *Psycho*
- Week 12 M. Screening 2nd half of *Psycho*, review and quiz
W. Unions, Royalty, MPPAA, SAG-AFTRA, IATSE, Guilds, Legal Paperwork, IMDb, and Jobs
- Week 13 M. Writing Project
W. writing day
- Week 14 M. Design Project
W. design day
- Week 15 M. Select final film for viewing – TBD by class
W. Screening 1st half of FINAL film
- Week 16 M. Screening 2nd half of FINAL film, review for final
W. Exam (or possibly projects)

Course Outline: *This outline is subject to change during the semester. Students will be notified immediately of any changes and will be given the appropriate time and accommodations in the event of those changes.*

Films for class Fall 2021:

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Raiders of the Lost Ark</i> | (1981) | Steven Spielberg | Action/Adventure (115) |
| <i>Shawshank Redemption</i> | (1996) | Frank Darabont | Drama (142) |
| <i>Pulp Fiction</i> | (1994) | Quentin Tarantino | Crime, Drama (154) |
| <i>The Matrix</i> | (1999) | Wachowski's | Action, Sci-Fi (136) |
| <i>Psycho</i> | (1960) | Alfred Hitchcock | Horror, Mystery, Thriller (109) |