

ENG 260: Media Aesthetics

Winter 2016 CRN: 22172 M/W 8am-9:50am 177 Lawrence Hall

Course Overview:

English 260 is one of four required courses that make up the Fundamentals of the Cinema Studies major. The course will focus on helping you build the critical skills to understand, analyze, and interpret visual media texts. It will do so by highlighting the fundamental formal elements of film and television. Using this vocabulary, we will explore the complex interplay of technical design, social influence, and cultural conventions that shape our media production and consumption experiences. We will also take time to consider how the construction of a media text makes meaning for the viewer. By the end of the class, you will be able to use this knowledge to complete a concept matrix that details technical terms, and write argument-based film criticism that ties those technical qualities to meaning.

The Department's assessment procedure is built around six desired learning outcomes:

1. read literary and cultural texts with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of their conventions;
2. draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate texts within their cultural, political, and historical contexts;
3. perform critical, formal analyses of literary, cinematic, and other cultural texts;
4. write focused, analytical essays in clear, grammatical prose;
5. employ logic, creativity, and interpretive skills to produce original, persuasive arguments;
6. employ primary and/or secondary sources, with proper acknowledgment and citation, as they contribute to a critical essay's thesis.

Required Texts:

Looking at Movies 5th edition, Barsam and Monahan

All films are considered required texts

Course Grading Breakdown (in percentages):

Final Exam	30
Midterm Exam	30
Concept Matrices	20
Quizzes	10
Participation	10
Total Course Percentage	100

Your course grade will be determined by the following percentages:

A+ 100 - 97	B+ 89.9 - 87	C+ 79.9 - 77	D+ 69.9 - 67	F below 60
A 96.9 - 93	B 86.9 - 83	C 76.9 - 73	D 66.9 - 63	
A- 92.9 - 90	B- 82.9 - 80	C- 72.9 - 70	D- 62.9 - 60	

A note on COURSE WORKLOAD:

This class is scheduled for about 4 hours of classroom time each week. In addition to watching films, students must complete significant reading and screening assignments outside of class. The amount of work and its evaluation is comparable to what is assigned in other major courses at similar instructional levels. In other words, we are not just "watching movies" for ten weeks.

Instructor:

Diana Martinez

Office Hours:

PLC 212
M & W 10am-11:30am
& by appointment

Contact:

dem@uoregon.edu
@diana_emmeline
346-3517

Course Blog:

english260.wordpress.com

This class WILL screen media that contains explicit depictions of sex, violence, adult themes, coarse language, and material that many might find offensive. If this might be an issue, reconsider taking this course.

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS (ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE REQUIRED TO PASS THE CLASS):

Exams (60% of Grade): Both the midterm and the final will be taken without the use of notes or your readings. The midterm will consist of multiple-choice, matching, fill-in-the-blank, true/false and brief short answers about film terminology, readings, and screenings.

Concept Matrices (20% of Grade): You will complete in-class worksheets that analyze the relationship of technical form and thematic content for every film discussed in class. This is your opportunity to provide me with a sense of how closely you are watching the films and how well you are able to apply material from lecture, text, and our discussions toward an understanding of the films in a focused context.

Quizzes (10% of Grade): To ensure students are mastering the reading material there will be several quizzes throughout the quarter covering the reading and the outside screenings. All quizzes will be taken in-class (usually at the beginning of class) without the use of notes or your textbook. Quizzes may consist of multiple-choice, matching, true/false, and short answers. Quizzes will be peer-graded in class immediately after the quiz, because of this there will be no makeup quizzes. No exceptions.

Participation (10% of Grade): I measure participation by both quality and quantity; I expect you to express yourself freely, but always with tolerance, patience, and respect for your colleagues. Your regular, engaged presence in the classroom is a key criterion of good participation, as is evidence that you have pondered the assigned readings and screenings. You will get two participation grades this term, one for weeks 1-5, and one for weeks 6-10. Grades are based on the rubric below.

	A (100 or 90/100)	B (80/100)	C (70/100)	D/F (60 or 50/100)
Group Discussion	You frequently participate voluntarily. Your contributions are thoughtful and respectful. You listen well and make space for other classmates to speak.	You occasionally participate voluntarily. You listen thoughtfully and are willing to participate if called on.	You rarely participate voluntarily, but you will if called on.	You are often distracting, inappropriate or disrespectful during large group discussion (sleeping, intentional rudeness, using your phone, etc).
Preparedness	You are always punctual and well prepared. You always bring your textbook and have completed the readings and assignments.	You are frequently punctual and prepared. You usually bring the textbook and have done the readings and assignments.	You are occasionally late or unprepared. You occasionally don't bring the textbook or complete readings.	You are frequently late, or unprepared. You rarely bring the textbook or complete readings and assignments.

GRADES

Grades will be updated periodically on Canvas. Please allow 1 to 2 weeks for grades to be updated after turning in an assignment. If you become concerned about your progress in the course, it is your responsibility to visit me during office hours to discuss your grade and any other class matters. Please do not wait until week 10 to take interest in your academic progress.

DISCUSSION SECTION POLICIES

About Screenings:

We will watch some required media in class. If you miss a film screening for any reason, you are responsible for watching the film on your own. Most films and television episodes are available through Hulu, Netflix, or Amazon Prime, as well as YouTube. Additionally, all media viewed will be available for checkout from me after the week they are

screened. In addition to our collective screening, you are required to view, in their entirety, some films outside of class. Every film we screen in-class and every required outside screening is available in the reserve section of Knight Library for viewing (4-hour checkout). These films are also available, at your own expense, through video rental and streaming services such as Netflix, iTunes, Hulu, etc. If you cannot find the film, or will undergo a financial hardship for renting the film, please see me.

Attendance:

Attendance is not tracked. However, with this lax attendance policy comes specific obligations and expectations that all students will be responsible for mastering the material on their own, if they are absent. However, do note that consistent disruptions like incessant lateness or early departures will be taken into account in the participation grade. Please be in your seat at the beginning of class; we will start our films, lectures, and discussions promptly when class starts.

Some "exceptions": If you drop the class unexpectedly, please email me. The registrar asks for a date of last attendance for financial aid reasons, and I would like documentation to make the process easier for you. Also, if you are absent for an extracurricular activity please provide that documentation because it may impact assignment deadlines.

Late Work:

All assigned work is due at the beginning of class. If you must miss class due to an emergency, turn in your work *before* our class meeting to receive credit. If you know you will be absent ahead of time, you must contact me at least 48 hours in advance of the deadline for other possible arrangements, or else your late work will not be accepted.

E-Mail Communication:

I will respond to all student e-mail within 24 hours of receipt (except weekends); please do not expect immediate responses to e-mail. Additionally, while I strive to maintain a relaxed attitude in class to help facilitate discussion, I request that your email correspondence with me maintain a professional etiquette.

Academic Honesty:

All assignments must adhere to standards of academic honesty outlined in the Student Handbook. Do not turn in work prepared for other classes. **Document all sources** consulted in preparing your work, including movies, websites and other materials obtained. If in doubt, document. Plagiarism will result in failure for the course and additional sanctions determined by the director of Student Judicial Affairs. Do not risk your grade because you are feeling lazy or overwhelmed. I guarantee it will not be worth it.

Registration:

The only way to add this class is through DuckWeb; I cannot add you to the class. If you are not yet registered, but intend to be, you may not sit in the class until you are officially registered in the course.

Access:

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me in week one if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You may also wish to contact Disability Services in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or disabsrv@uoregon.edu.

Technology Use:

To be respectful of others, cell phones must be either turned off, ringers silenced, or set to "vibrate" mode *before* the start of class. You may use laptops, Kindles, or iPads to take notes and follow along during lectures; make sure notifications are silenced on these devices as well. However, if you are not paying attention because of a technological device, I reserve the right to ask you to turn it off.

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS
(All dates are DUE dates)

Week 1: Introductions & Film Form

MON Introductions & Lecture

WED Lecture

Reading: Ch. 2 Principles of Film Form

Week 2: Classical Hollywood Narrative

MON Lecture

Reading: Ch. 4 Elements of Narrative

WED Screening: *Rocky IV* (dir. Sylvester Stallone, 1985)

Week 3: Classical Hollywood Narrative & Mise-en-Scene

MON Discussion and Lecture

Reading: Ch. 5 Mise-en-Scene

Outside Screening: *Sunset Boulevard* (dir. Billy Wilder, 1950)

WED Screening: *Ex Machina* (dir. Alex Garland, 2015)

Week 4: Mise-en-Scene & Cinematography

MON Discussion and Lecture

Reading: Ch. 6 Cinematography

Outside Screening: *Rear Window* (dir. Alfred Hitchcock, 1954)

WED Discussion

Week 5: Cinematography & Midterm Week

MON Discussion & Midterm Review

WED MIDTERM IN CLASS

Week 6: Editing

MON Lecture

Reading: Ch. 8 Editing

WED Screening: *Spring Breakers* (dir. Harmony Korine, 2013)

Week 7: Editing & Sound

MON Discussion and Lecture

Reading: Ch. 9 Sound

Outside Screening: *Point Break* (dir. Kathryn Bigelow, 1991)

WED Discussion

Week 8:	Experimental Film
TUE	Lecture
	Reading: TBA
THU	Screening: <i>In Absentia</i> (dirs. Stephen and Timothy Quay, 2000)

Week 9:	Genre & Production
MON	Lecture
	Reading: Ch. 3 pp 85-111 and Ch. 11 pp 483-490
WED	Screening: <i>Creed</i> (dir. Ryan Coogler, 2015)

Week 10:	Final Exam Prep & Wrap-Up
MON	Discussion
WED	Final Exam Review

FINAL EXAM: Monday, March 14, 2016 at 10:15am

