This course explores the fundamentals of film and media aesthetics, including narrative, mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing, and sound. By learning how to analyze film and utilize proper cinematic language, students will begin to critically understand film as an art form and a product of culture. By the end of the course, students will see all aesthetic elements in a film as a series of choices made through the complex collaboration of artists and craftspeople. Students will also gain the key tools and concepts that they will implement in their own creative work in subsequent courses in the cinema studies major. This course is a required prerequisite for several cinema production courses, including ARTD 256 (digital arts), CINE 270 (narrative) and J 208 (documentary).

**Required Materials:**

Access to Canvas for Additional Materials
Access to Kanopy on the UO Library Website

**Media Aesthetics Course Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Understand how to analyze the aesthetics of film and media in class discussions, group projects, writing assignments, and exams.
2. Develop a strong grasp of the concepts and analytical frameworks that will help you succeed in future cinema and media studies classes.
3. Obtain technical language and concepts that can be applied to your own filmmaking and creative work.
4. Deepen your knowledge and appreciation of a range of cinematic traditions, eras, filmmakers, genres, and styles.

**Cinema Studies Department Learning Outcomes:**

Students that successfully complete courses in the Cinema Studies Department will be able to:

1. Read media and cultural texts with discernment and comprehension 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 analysis of cinematic and other media 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 acknowledgement and citation, as they contribute to a critical essay’s thesis.
**Screenings**
Films for this course may be rated R or TV-MA and contain content that may be objectionable for some viewers; please research the assigned films in advance discuss any issues with me right away.

**Late Work and Attendance**
All late assignments may be submitted for up to three days (72hrs) for 50% credit. No early or late finals. Three absences for whatever reason are excused. Four, five, or six absences each drop final course grade by 3%. Seven absences will result in automatic course failure. Accommodations through the Accessible Education Center and/or due to health issues will be considered on a case by case basis.

**Group Work**
If problems arise with your group, work it out; if you cannot, please contact me to address it.

**Student Resources**

*Students with Disabilities*
The university strives to create inclusive learning environments. Notify me if there are aspects of the course that result in disability related barriers to your participation. You are encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at (541) 346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

*Academic Support*
The University Teaching and Learning Center provides resources to help students succeed, including workshops, courses, tutors, and mentors. For a list of services, please visit: tlc.uoregon.edu

*Discrimination and Harassment*
Students experiencing any form of prohibited discrimination or harassment, including sex or gender based violence, may seek information on safe.uoregon.edu, respect.uoregon.edu, titleix.uoregon.edu, or aaeo.uoregon.edu or contact the non-confidential Title IX office (541-346-8136), AAEO office (541-346-3123), or Dean of Students offices (541-346-3216), or call the 24-7 hotline 541-346-SAFE for help.

**Class Climate**
Open inquiry, freedom of expression, and respect for differences are fundamental to a comprehensive and dynamic education. This course’s learning environment is committed to upholding these ideals by encouraging exploration, engagement, and expression of divergent perspectives and diverse identities.

**Academic Misconduct**
The University Student Conduct Code defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g., quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the student’s obligation to clarify the question with the instructor.

**Note that buying or selling class notes, study guides, exams, and papers from other individuals or services violates this course’s policy. Students found in violation of this policy risk failing the course.**
**Assignments/Grading:** A+ = 100-980pts, A = 979-930, A- = 929-900, B+ = 899-880, B = 879-830, etc.

150pts: Weekly Reading Responses
150pts: Group Reading Presentation
200pts: Group Video Essay Project
200pts: Group Keywords Project
300pts: Final Exam

**Participation**
This is a participation-based class. You will be working together with your classmates on a series of assignments and will be relying on each other for the quality of your work and your grades in the course. Working in cinema and media careers required teamwork and engaged effort, qualities this course will cultivate through group assignments and daily discussions and activities in class sessions.

Highly engaged students will contribute to the class this term by:
- Contributing actively in most discussions and small group activities;
- Completing any small impromptu in-class assignments;
- Regularly demonstrating that you have read the assigned texts and watched the films closely by pointing to specific passages and scenes during discussions;
- Respecting the diverse bodies, cultural background, beliefs, and opinions of your peers while engaging in free-thinking, open-minded, and well-informed discussions and debates;
- And using electronic devices during class time only to access course material.

**Weekly Reading and Screening Responses**
As you learn about the principles of media aesthetics through our focus on cinematic form, you will practice those skills and sharpen your ability to closely analyze media aesthetics. Each week you will post a 300+ word response to one or most discussion questions at the end of each chapter of the book and get those posted to Canvas before class each Wednesday. These will prompt discussion each week so it is vital that you get them done on time. Each response will include at least one direct citation from the course reading (with the page number cited). You are also encouraged to cite examples from the films screened in class to connect the ideas in the book to examples we are looking at together.

15 points each week based on quality of ideas, engaging with the reading, and organization
**Group Reading Presentation (Groups of 6-7)**

Your presentation group will prepare a reading/study guide for your assigned chapter and an 18-20 minute presentation. Presentation groups will include approx. 6-7 students. One or two students will volunteer as coordinators to document group meetings and decisions about what each person in the group will present. The coordinators will not boss or do all the work for you but simply make sure that things get done in a timely manner and that everyone’s voice and input are valued. Your group must collaborate outside of class to decide on presentation topics, coordinate slides, and practice your presentation. Get to know the names of fellow presenters as you will need to be in contact with them before your presentation. Get contact information in class and also use the Canvas Inbox.

Each student should prepare 3 slides using Google docs, Powerpoint, or Prezi that relate to the content of the textbook. Build your slides around strong images and brief keywords (no blocks of text). Your group may show “BRIEF” media clips but do not let these slow down the presentation too much (gifs or just multi-image slides are preferred for time). The group can divide sections of the textbook and elements of the presentation and study guide so each person can have an assigned topic to work on at home to complete their portion of the work. The more visually and sonically dynamic your presentation the better. Remember you have an audience, so keep them engaged.

Since the class presentation will be limited in length (each person will have 2-3 minutes), your group will also prepare a two-page (max) reading/study guide for your chapter. Your reading guide might include a short chapter summary, key vocabulary, study questions, important quotations or key ideas, and any other information you think people will want to remember at the end of the term when studying for the final exam. Good study guides will influence the questions used on the final.

100 points for the in-class presentation and 50 points for the chapter reading/study guide
* Group coordinators are eligible for an extra credit bonus of up to 15 points (pending completion)

**Group Keywords Project (Groups of 3-5)**

Working in groups of 3-5 you will design a visual keywords project incorporating your choice of important keywords that any student preparing for upper division coursework in cinema studies or a related field should have in their media aesthetics vocabulary. Each student is responsible for 15 keywords regardless of the size of your group. Keywords are terms that represent important concepts, theories, and movements within a particular field of study. I will provide a list to get you started. You will create a design template using Google slides, powerpoint, or other shared software.

For each keyword annotation you will provide:
- a concise but complete definition from the textbook a related source
- Visual and/or audio examples and representations of the keyword
- a 150+ word analysis section discussing your choice of visual examples and your keyword
- Citations for the any sources cited for definitions and analysis (such as the textbook)

200 pts based on quality of writing, citations, and creativity and consistency of the visual design
Group Video Essay Project (Groups of 4-5)
Rather than a traditional midterm exam, you will work with a group of classmates to prepare a 7-9 minute video essay to show in class to demonstrate your progress toward meeting the course learning outcomes. Your video will be similar to those created for the Looking at Movies textbook. You and your group will choose any movie available the UO Library Kanopy streaming service and analyze it’s narrative structure, it’s character development, and its use of film form. You will work in class to develop an outline, write your own part of the essay to fit into this outline, record your project together using screencasting software, and show off your work in class during Week 6.

Step 1: After choosing your movie from Kanopy, set up a time to all watch the movie together in person or virtually using a social media app like Rabbit. Complete by Monday of Week 4.

Step 2: The group will meet to decide on a focus for the analysis (one scene, a group of formal elements, a visual or audio motif, a theoretical perspective, etc) and create a group outline assigning people to analyze various elements of film form and narrative. Your group is strongly encouraged to review the useful Screening Checklists at the end of each chapter in the textbook for ideas on creating your outline and deciding what to have each person focus on. Each person will post a short essay of 300-400 words gathering their initial ideas to keep things on track. Complete during Week 4.

Step 3: Using Screencasting software such as Screencast-o-matic or Panopto your group will meet to prepare a group introduction and conclusion to tie everyone’s ideas together and to record your 7-9 minute video essay. Screencasting allows you the option recording clips from the film playing on your screen as well as using your webcam to record yourselves. You will produce and edit the video as a group. See Canvas for tutorial videos and more information. Complete during Week 5.

Step 4: You will show your video essay in class on Wednesday of Week 5 and submit a complete written transcript of your essay to Canvas. Groups or individuals that want their work to be graded individually rather than as a group can indicate this preference when submitting their transcript.

200 points based on quality of ideas, organization, collaboration for video and transcript.

Final Exam
Your final exam will be a multiple-choice, true/false, matching style exam focusing on questions from the course textbook, readings, lecture notes, and film screenings. Short essay questions will also be included. We will review in class during Week 10. The exam will take place in McK 214 at 10:15am on Wednesday, March 18. No early or late exams. 300 points.

Extra Credit (Solo or Groups of 2+)
Attend a screening of any film on campus or at the Bijou or Broadway Metro with one or more classmates and the meet afterwards to discuss the film; write a 300+ word film review and a 300+ summary and reflection on your post-film discussion with your classmate(s) for a 3% boost to your final course grade. OR: Attend any Cinema Studies or English Department sponsored event this term with a classmate and write a 500+ word reflection on the event for a 3% boost to your final course grade. 2% if you do either activity solo. 5% cap on all extra credit.
Course Schedule

Week 1: Historical Development of Narrative Cinema
M, 6 Jan. Screen and discuss: Captain Fantastic (2017)
W, 8 Jan. Read before class: Looking at Movies, Chapter 1, Response 1 due before class

Week 2: Principles of Film Form
W, 15 Jan. Read before class: Looking at Movies, Chapter 2, Response 2 due before class

Week 3: Types of Movies: Narrative, Documentary, Experimental
M, 20 Jan. MLK Holiday – No class meeting
W, 22 Jan. Screening and discussion of Un Chien Andalou, Meshes of the Afternoon, and La Jetée
Read before class: Looking at Movies: Chapter 3, Response 3 due before class
Chapter 3 Group Presentation

Week 4: Narrative
M, 27 Jan. Screen and discuss: Shoplifters (Japan, 2018)
W, 29 Jan. Read before class: Looking at Movies: Chapter 4, Response 4 due before class, Essay
drafts for Video Essay project due before class
Chapter 4 Group Presentation

Week 5: Mise-en-Scène
W, 5 Feb. Read before class: Looking at Movies: Chapter 5, Response 5 due before class
Group Video Essay presentations
Week 6: Cinematography

W, 12 Feb. Read before class: *Looking at Movies*: Chapter 6, **Response 6 due before class**
Chapter 6 Group presentation

Week 7: Acting

W, 19 Feb. Read before class: *Looking at Movies*: Chapter 7, **Response 7 due before class**
Chapter 7 Group Presentation

Week 8: Editing

W, 26 Feb. Read before class: *Looking at Movies*: Chapter 8, **Response 8 due before class**, 
Chapter 8 Group Presentation

Week 9: Sound
M, 2 Mar. Screen and Discuss: *Avatar* (2009)

W, 4 Mar. Read before class: *Looking at Movies*: Chapter 9, **Response 9 due before class**
Chapter 9 Group Presentation

Week 10: Film Production and The Digital Future

W, 11 Mar. Read before class: *Looking at Movies*: Chapter 11, **Response 10 due before class**
Group Keywords Project Due before class

Finals Week
Final exam: 10:15am Wednesday, March 18 in McK 214 (mandatory)