Media Aesthetics (ENG 260)
Tuesday/Thursday 10:00-11:50am
214 McKenzie
Spring 2018

Instructor: Daniel Gomez Steinhart (dsteinha@uoregon.edu)
Office Hours: Thursday 12:00-2:00pm or by appointment (127 Franklin)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
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.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon successful completion of this course, you will:
• Understand how to analyze the aesthetics of film and media in class discussions, writing assignments, and exams.
• Develop a strong grasp of the concepts and analytical frameworks that will help you succeed in future cinema and media studies classes.
• Obtain technical language and ideas that can be applied to your own filmmaking and creative work.
• Deepen your knowledge and appreciation of a range of cinematic traditions, eras, filmmakers, genres, and styles.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK
• Additional readings will be available on Canvas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Attendance and Participation 20%
Exam 1 20%
Exam 2 20%
Analysis Paper 1 20%
Analysis Paper 2 20%

Attendance and Participation
Students are required to arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class. Come each week prepared not only to take notes on the lectures and films but also to actively participate in the discussions. Feel free to ask questions at any time and be prepared to respond to questions about the lecture material, assigned readings, and the films screened in class.

Students receive one excused absence during the quarter to cover all conflicting events, including illnesses, school functions, etc. Each additional absence will incrementally lower your grade. With five or more absences, the attendance and participation grade will automatically be calculated as an F.
**Exams 1 & 2**
Two in-class exams will be administered. The exams will test you on your knowledge of film terminology, concepts, and analytical skills. You will receive additional exam guidelines closer to the exam dates.

**Analysis Papers 1 & 2**
There will be two take-home papers that ask you to apply concepts and analytical frameworks to an assigned film. You will receive additional paper guidelines in advance of the assignment due date.

**PAPER POLICY**
The analysis papers are due online on the date indicated on the syllabus. Any assignments submitted after the deadline will be reduced one-third of a grade (i.e., an A becomes an A-). After that, assignments will be reduced an additional one-third of a grade for each day that they are late. I will use Canvas’s “VeriCite” function to screen your assignments for plagiarism.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICE & EMAIL POLICY**
To discourage distractions, laptop and electronic device usage is not permitted. Texting is not permitted. Students seen using electronic devices during class will have their participation grade lowered. Your fully present engagement and cooperation will be much appreciated and rewarded.

You are free to email me with any questions or concerns throughout the quarter, but you should anticipate at least a 24-hour response time. Also, please keep in mind that I will not respond to any writing assignment-related emails after 5pm the day before your papers are due.

**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), AAE0 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.

By registering for this class you are agreeing to the terms of this syllabus. The instructor reserves the right to alter the course syllabus and requirements as the term progresses.

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

**WEEK 1 – Introduction to Media Aesthetics**

Tues, April 3           Course Introduction

Thurs, April 5          Reading: “Documentary, Experimental, and Animated Films.”  
                        *Film Art* (350-398)

**WEEK 2 – Narrative**

Tues, April 10          Screening: *Stagecoach* (1939, John Ford, 99m)

Thurs, April 12         Reading: “Narrative Form.” *Film Art* (72-110)

**WEEK 3 – Narrative**

Tues, April 17          Screening: *Groundhog Day* (1993, Harold Ramis, 101m)

Thurs, April 19         Reading: “Significance of Film Form.” *Film Art* (50-71)

**WEEK 4 – Mise-en-Scene**

Tues, April 24          Screening: *In the Mood for Love* (2000, Wong Kar-wai, 108m)  
                         ***ANALYSIS PAPER 1 DUE***

Thurs, April 26         Reading: “Mise-en-Scene.” *Film Art* (111-158)

**WEEK 5 – Mise-en-Scene**

Tues, May 1             Screening: *Killer of Sheep* (1978, Charles Burnett, 80m)

Thurs, May 3            ***EXAM 1***
WEEK 6 – Cinematography

Tues, May 8 Screening: *Cléo from 5 to 7* (1962, Agnès Varda, 90m)

Thurs, May 10 Reading: “Cinematography.” *Film Art* (159-215)

WEEK 7 – Cinematography

Tues, May 15 Screening: *Y Tu Mamá También* (2001, Alfonso Cuarón, 106m)

Thurs, May 17 Reading: “Film Genres.” *Film Art* (326-349)

WEEK 8 – Editing

Tues, May 22 Screening: *The Shop Around the Corner* (1940, Ernst Lubitsch, 99m)

Thurs, May 24 Reading: “Editing.” *Film Art* (216-262)

WEEK 9 – Sound

Tues, May 29 Screening: *La Ciénaga* (2001, Lucrecia Martel, 103m)

***ANALYSIS PAPER 2 DUE***

Thurs, May 31 Reading: “Sound.” *Film Art* (263-302)

WEEK 10 – Bringing It All Together

Tues, June 5 Screening: *Cloverfield* (2008, Matt Reeves, 85m)

Thurs, June 7 ***EXAM 2***