COURSE OVERVIEW

**Description:** ENG 380 looks at the history of the American film and media industry not just as the sum of its products (i.e., films designed for mass consumption), but also as a complex cultural, economic and aesthetic system that produced complex cultural products. From early in its history, Hollywood dominated, and continues to dominate, the world in a way in which no other cultural producer has dominated an industry or art form. This course focuses on the New Hollywood blockbuster film and its relationship with the American film industry from the mid-1970s to the mid-1990s. The course explores the ways in which Hollywood responded to industrial, social, technological, and aesthetic challenges during this period. In order to more fully understand the relationship between Hollywood, American culture, and its films, this course emphasizes in-class viewing, discussion, and analysis. ENG 380 satisfies the Arts and Letters group requirement by actively engaging students in the ways the discipline of film and media studies has been defined by historical inquiry.

**Required Texts:** Tom Shone, *Blockbuster* (2004; print or digital version). All other readings provided on Canvas. Films will be available for check-out in Knight Library Course Reserves after in-class screenings are completed.

**Attendance:** This course is organized around weekly themes and daily screenings (half of a film each day). The weekly structure may be envisioned as a single four-hour seminar spread over two days. For classroom and student success, on-time daily attendance and participation are essential. As such, **attendance is mandatory** and counts as 10% of your final grade. Any behavior that disrupts a respectful learning environment will affect your attendance grade (see Respectful Learning Community policy below). If emergency circumstances prevent you from attending class, you must inform me of the situation before class begins via e-mail (jenee@uoregon.edu) and provide documentation of the emergency. Assessment of any excused absences will be made at the end of term. Late work policies apply (see below).

**GRADING**

- **Attendance (10% of final grade).** Because attendance is mandatory, each absence will reduce your attendance grade by ten percent (zero absences 100%, one absence 90%, two absences 80%, etc.).

- **Course Participation (20% of final grade).** For the overall success of the course, students are expected to be active participants in the course both during and outside of class time. Participation grades will be based on Canvas discussion postings, group film introductions, final project presentations, and other homework and in-class activities.

- **Final Projects (20% of final grade).** Final projects allow students to engage with their individual research or creative interests as related to course topics and themes. Steps include
developing and proposing a project, completing and submitting the project, and presenting the final product to our class. While the final project itself will receive a letter grade (20% of final grade), other steps will count as part of your course participation grade.

• **Midterm and Final Exams (50% of final grade).** Exams will include 4-5 short-answer questions covering concepts and history from readings and lecture materials, and a long essay question asking you to analyze a major course theme using several film and reading examples in support of your analysis. Short-answer questions will cover only the first or second parts of the term; essay questions will cover the term as a whole. A green exam book is required to complete the exams.

Course grades are given based on the following total grade ranges:

- A+ = 98-100%
- B+ = 88-89%
- C+ = 78-79%
- D+ = 68-69%
- F = 0-59%
- A = 93-97%
- B = 83-87%
- C = 73-77%
- D = 63-67%
- A- = 90-92%
- B- = 80-82%
- C- = 70-72%
- D- = 60-62%

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Readings:** Each week, you will have readings assigned from Tom Shone’s *Blockbuster*, a popular history of game-changing Hollywood directors and producers during the 1970s-1990s, as well as critical essays that delve more deeply into industrial, social, technological, and aesthetic challenges during this period. All of a week’s assigned readings are to be completed by Tuesdays (with the exception of Weeks 1 and 5) in preparation for written postings, class lectures, film discussions, and exams. See the course calendar for specific weekly deadlines.

**Original Postings on Readings:** This Canvas discussion board assignment is designed to help students prepare for classroom discussions of the readings and film/episode screenings. Weekly original postings should be treated as formal opportunities (not informal blogging or journaling) to engage more deeply and critically with the assigned readings of the course. **Students must write eight original 250-word postings on assigned readings (one submitted per week as noted on the course schedule).**

Original posts should critically respond to one of the assigned readings. To complete the assignment, go to Canvas > Discussions > Original Postings, and post on the thread created for the week. For grading purposes, **please do not post any follow-up comments on these threads** (instead, refer to the person/comment you want to respond to in the follow-up threads for that week). All postings will be evaluated based on two sets of criteria:

A. **Quality** – Posts must demonstrate your thoughtful engagement with an assigned reading’s key concepts and ideas (e.g. discussing a selected passage, evaluating an author’s main claims, etc.). They should go beyond mere summary or personal response to grapple with important questions and concepts in pursuit of a deeper understanding of the material.

B. **Precision** – Posts must be submitted on time and meet minimum length requirements (quoted passages are excluded from word counts). Posts must use MLA style parenthetical citations (author and page number) for paraphrased and quoted material from assigned readings. External sources consulted, paraphrased, quoted, or linked also must be documented. Postings must be edited for grammar and mechanical errors. Plagiarism of any sort (including copying from other students’ posts) is unacceptable (see Academic Honesty).

Each posting will earn up to 3 points as follows (24 points total):

- 3 points – satisfactory work for both criteria (A and B)
- 2 points – satisfactory work for only one criteria (A or B)
Follow-up Postings: This Canvas discussion board assignment is designed to help students extend classroom discussions of the readings, screenings, and lecture. Follow-up postings should be treated as opportunities to engage more deeply and critically with the materials of the course and with fellow students. **Students must write eight 150-word follow-up commentaries (one submitted per week by Fridays at noon).**

In these posts, you may choose to discuss a scene or character in relation to course concepts, follow-up on screening questions or class discussion, thoughtfully respond to an original or follow-up posting by another student, provide links to and discussion about related external source materials, etc. The possibilities are open so long as follow-up comments go beyond mere summary or personal response to positively contribute to the ongoing discussion and understanding of course content. To complete original postings on readings, go to Canvas > Discussions > Follow-up Postings, and post on the thread created for the week. Each posting will be evaluated on Quality and Precision criteria (see above) and earn 1 point for satisfactory work (8 points total). Plagiarism of any sort (including copying from other students’ posts) is unacceptable (see Academic Honesty). Please review posts by classmates in preparation for further writing and class discussion.

Group Film Introductions: Student groups of 5-7 people will prepare and present PowerPoint introductions to the course’s film and television media. The presentation format is **10 slides in 10 minutes**, following the model provided by the instructor, to briefly highlight the most relevant information that class members need in preparation for screenings and exams. For example, presentations may include some the following information:

- **Films:** title and release date, director, major characters/actors relevant to narrative, story/screenplay, producer(s), production studio/distributor, genre source materials, film facts (original box office revenues, gross revenues, ancillary products, music/score, production notes, popular and critical reception, awards, etc.).
- **TV Shows:** title and release dates for seasons, series creator, major characters/actors relevant to episode, plot summary relevant to episode, episode director/writer(s), producer(s), production and broadcast information, genre source materials, TV facts (number of viewers, music, production notes, popular and critical reception, awards, etc.).

Groups will decide what to include and how to divide the labor of slide production and presentation equally between members. Presenters should keep slide text **concise** (don’t cram all your notes onto a slide) but be prepared to explain and elaborate within time constraints (up to 2 minutes per person). Presentations also must include an 11th slide for names of presenters and their sources. All sources consulted, paraphrased, or quoted in the slides must be documented. Plagiarism of any sort is unacceptable (see Academic Honesty policy).

Groups will compile and export all slides in a single pptx or pdf file (or link) and email it to me at least 30 minutes before class on the presentation date. Presentations will take place at the beginning of the class period. A follow-up self-reflection is also required (submitted in Canvas Assignments). Group presentations count as course participation and will be graded based on the following criteria (5 points total): overall preparedness of group members (2 points), overall group presentation quality (2 points), and individual follow-up reflections on Canvas Assignments (1 point, due as noted on the course schedule).
Final Projects: Students have the option of writing a formal research essay or developing a creative project as the final project for the term. Final project submission will be due on Canvas by midnight on Friday, December 1). Follow written work guidelines. All work submitted for the final project must be produced exclusively for this course; no project materials may originate in part or whole from any other class, campus activity, or non-academic project. Plagiarism of any sort is unacceptable (see Academic Honesty). Proposals and final presentations (see below) are also requirements of the final project and count as course participation grades.

Option 1, Formal Research Essay: For this option, you will be analyzing specific aspects of a film or films screened during the term in relation to historical, industrial, cultural, and/or aesthetic concerns. Your argument will be supported with evidence from your own critical reading of the film, from assigned class readings, and from secondary research (including at least five peer-reviewed academic sources). Essays must be 2,500-3,000 words in length and fully documented. Letter grades will be awarded based on the thoughtful quality of the research question, critical analysis, and supporting evidence, as well as precision in writing and documentation.

Option 2, Creative Project: This option allows you to explore narrative art, fan fiction, screen writing, digital media, or other creative options for your final project. Your creative project should explore one or two themes of the class in a visual and/or written narrative form. Written projects (e.g. short story, scripted scene, fan fiction, etc.) should be no longer than ten pages in length. Art projects (e.g. poster, painting, comic, art book, etc.) should be no more than eight sheets of letter-size paper (or equivalent dimensions) and submitted in a digital format (e.g. scans of a hand-drawn comic, photos of a larger painting or collage, etc.). Digital media projects should be no longer than five minutes in length and playable on a Mac (preferably by accessing a web link). Web sites should have a clear analytical or narrative purpose and provide substantive content. In addition to the creative work, you must write a justification essay (1,200-1,500 words in length) that analyzes how class themes, evidence and quotes from readings, film scenes or production styles, and/or other course content are explored in the project. Letter grades will be awarded based on the overall quality of the creative work (i.e. thoughtfulness, effort, and care taken in creating the project, in spite of actual production skills) and depth of analysis in the project justification essay. All source materials (written, visual, and audio primary and secondary sources) must be fully documented and submitted with the justification essay.

Project Proposals: A 250-word proposal describing your final project’s purpose, goals, audience, and timeline for completion will be submitted for approval during Week 6 (see course schedule). I encourage everyone to see me during office hours or by appointment during weeks 4-5 to consult about your ideas. Completion of the proposal is a requirement of the final project and counts as a course participation grade (1 point). Follow written work guidelines.

Final Presentations: During Week 10, you will have five minutes to present your projects as a “work-in-progress”. Your presentation may take the form of a Powerpoint outlining your research essay’s major claims and evidence, the dramatic reading of a short story or scene (with help from friends if needed), a clip from a video work-in-progress, the exploration of a website in development, the discussion of your inspiration behind a movie poster or painting or pages from an original comic...the list goes on. This final project “show-and-tell” is meant to be a fun opportunity for you to share your ideas and independent work with the class, so be creative!

Completion of a presentation is a requirement of the final project and counts as a course participation grade as follows (5 points total): preparedness (2 points), presentation quality (2 points), and demonstrated relevance to course themes (1 point). For smooth transitions between presenters, PowerPoint presentations or digital images/media/links should be emailed to jenee@uoregon.edu at
least 30 minutes before class on your presentation day. Have a file backup, just in case of technical difficulties.

COURSE POLICIES

Our Contract: This syllabus is our contract. By enrolling in this class, you have agreed to adhere to its contents of policy, program, and material.

Completion of Assignments: Students are responsible for submitting all assignments on time. Assignments are due at the time/day stipulated in the syllabus, on the course calendar, or as communicated to you in class or by email.

Late work: Late homework will receive no more than half credit; late essays will receive one full letter grade deduction. To avoid late penalties, extensions on assignment deadlines may be granted on a case-by-case basis under the following conditions: 1) the extension must be requested in writing well in advance of the due date, 2) justifiable reason(s) must be given for the requested extension, 3) a new due date for the assignment must be proposed. If emergency circumstances prevent you from taking an exam or turning in an assignment on time, you must inform me of the situation before class or an assignment due date/time via e-mail at jenee@uoregon.edu. Be prepared to provide documentation. Forgetting to turn in an assignment does not constitute adequate circumstances for extensions.

Communication: Please feel free to contact me if you need additional help with any aspect of this course. In addition to seeing me during office hours, email is the best way for students to contact me. On weekdays, I try to respond to all emails within 24 hours; on weekends, I try to check email at least once, but response is not guaranteed so don’t wait until the last minute to ask important questions. I regularly post announcements, assignment updates, and other vital information by email and on Canvas, so check both daily. I do NOT recommend trying to contact me by phone, unless it is during office hours.

Samples of Student Work: From time to time, I will request that students send me a copy of an assignment for use as a student example. By sending me the requested work, you are giving permission for me to use the work as a student example in my classes or other professional activities. All sample work will remain anonymous.

Respectful Learning Community: It is important that we each contribute to creating an environment in which everyone feels free to express opinions while simultaneously respecting a plurality of perspectives and identities. This includes introducing yourselves in class and on discussion threads by your preferred name and gender pronouns (e.g. she/her/hers, he/him/his, they/their/theirs, ze/hir/hirs), pronouncing each other’s names correctly, and asking politely to know a person’s preferred pronouns before referring to her/him/them/hir in the third person.

In order to ensure that everyone is free from unnecessary distractions and disruptions in class, it is imperative that everyone in the course follows these rules:

- Come prepared: do readings and review other materials (e.g. discussion postings) before the class period for which they are assigned.
- Arrive 5 minutes before class begins to sign in.
- Turn off and store cell phones (no using phones for anything during class or screenings).
- Listen, speak, and pay attention respectfully (no private conversation during class).
- Do not gather materials to leave until class is finished.
If a warning is necessary, your attendance grade may be affected. Students who fail to comply with a warning will be asked to leave the class and given an absence for the day.

**Academic Honesty:** All work submitted in this course must be your own original work and must be written exclusively for this course. To avoid plagiarism, any use of printed or digital source materials for ideas, summaries, paraphrases, quotations, and graphics in Canvas postings and class presentations must be properly documented. *Plagiarism of any kind will receive zero points for the assignment and undergo academic misconduct review by the Student Conduct office.* Please see me if you have any questions about documentation and your use of sources. If there is any question about whether use of sources, sharing of work, or other acts may constitute academic misconduct, it is the student’s obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before performing the act. In cases where academic misconduct has been established, an F will be given for the final course grade. For more information on academic conduct, see the University Student Conduct Code or go to http://dos.uoregon.edu/conduct.

**Access:** If you have a disability (physical or learning) which you think may affect your performance in this class, please see me during the first week of the term so we can make appropriate arrangements for your full access to all classroom activities. I also recommend that you contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu to discuss testing and other accommodations. In addition, English language learners are encouraged to talk with me prior exams and project deadlines to discuss your needs and receive additional assistance.

My own classroom access may be affected at times due to a hearing condition that can make ordinary sounds uncomfortable. During these times, I may wear acoustic filters to adjust sound levels for myself and I may speak more quietly. Normal speaking volume is usually audible to me but may be more difficult under some conditions, so I may ask students to speak louder. Quiet speakers or those with difficulty hearing may wish to sit near the front of class.

**Written Work Guidelines:** All written work must be typed, spell-checked, and proofread. Essays and other formal written work (excluding discussion board postings) must be double-spaced. To meet length requirements, you must submit at least the minimum number of words required. Format documents as follows:

- Use 12-point font in the Times Roman family.
- Use 1-inch margins (you may need to change the default settings in MS Word).
- Indicate your name, date, instructor, and assignment in the top left-hand corner of the first page. Follow with the essay title (centered), then begin your first paragraph (indented one-half inch).
- Last name and page number on all pages after the first, in the upper right-hand corner.
- Documents submitted on Canvas must be in Microsoft Word DOC, DOCX, or PDF file formats. (Pages documents MUST be exported in an acceptable file format before uploading.)
- Image files should be saved as JPG or PDF.
- Media files should be playable on common Apple media players or accessible via a web link.

If your assignment does not meet all of the above requirements, it will be considered incomplete and will not be graded until requirements are met. **ALL ideas, paraphrases, and quotes from sources must be properly cited using MLA Style.**
COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change with notice)
All readings are due by Tuesdays, unless otherwise noted. All discussion postings are due on the time/date noted in the schedule.

Week 1, September 26 & 28: New Hollywood I
Screening: *Jaws* (1975)
Reading (for Thursday):
- Shone, Introduction and Ch. 1
- Biskind, “Introduction” from *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls*
- Mann, “1975 – Movies and Conflicting Ideologies” (pages 148-153 only)
Thursday: original postings due (class time on Canvas); group presentation sign-ups
Friday: follow-up postings due (noon on Canvas)

Week 2, October 3 & 5: New Hollywood II
Screening: *Star Wars* (1977)
Reading:
- Shone, Ch. 2
- Johnston, “Science Fiction and Technology”
- Schatz, “The Studio System and Conglomerate Hollywood”
- Friedman, “Introduction: Movies and the 1970s”
Tuesday: original postings due (class time on Canvas), Group 1 Film Introduction
Thursday: Group 1 reflections due (class time on Canvas)
Friday: follow-up postings due (noon on Canvas)

Week 3, October 10 & 12: Blockbusters and Visual Aesthetics
Screening: *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977)
Reading:
- Shone, Ch. 3
- Turnock, Ch. 3 “The Expanded Blockbuster”
- Turnock, Ch. 6 “More Philosophical Grey Matter”
- Massood, “1977 – Movies and a Nation Transformed” (pages 182-192 only)
Tuesday: original postings due (class time on Canvas), Group 2 Film Introduction
Thursday: Group 2 reflections due (class time on Canvas)
Friday: follow-up postings due (noon on Canvas)

Week 4, October 17 & 19: Race and Gender
Screening: *Alien* (1979)
Reading:
- Shone, Ch. 4
- Kavanaugh, “Feminism, Humanism and Science in *Alien*”
- Newton, “Feminism and Anxiety in *Alien*”
- Lev, “1979 – Movies and the End of an Era” (pages 246-249 only)
Tuesday: original postings due (class time on Canvas), Group 3 Film Introduction
Thursday: Group 3 reflections due (class time on Canvas)
Friday: follow-up postings due (noon on Canvas)

Week 5, October 24 & 26: Television
Tuesday: MIDTERM EXAM (bring green exam book)
Screening: *The Simpsons* (episode TBA)
Reading (for Thursday):
- Shone, Ch. 5-6
- Prince, “Introduction: Movies and the 1980s”
- The Simpsons reading TBA
Thursday: original postings due (class time on Canvas), Group 4 Series Introduction
Friday: follow-up postings due, Group 4 individual reflections due (noon on Canvas)

**Week 6, Oct. 31 & Nov. 2: Film Bodies**
Reading:
- Shone, Ch. 7-8
- Wasser, “Ancillary Markets – Video and DVD”
Tuesday: original postings due (class time on Canvas), Group 5 Film Introduction
Thursday: **Final Project Proposal due**, Group 5 reflections due (class time on Canvas)
Friday: follow-up postings due (noon on Canvas)

**Week 7, November 7 & 9: High Concept Film**
Screening: *Top Gun* (1986)
Reading:
- Shone, Ch. 9-10
- Wyatt, Ch. 2 “Construction of the Image and High Concept Style”
- Wyatt, Ch. 3 “High Concept and Changes in the Market for Entertainment”
- Holmlund, “Introduction – Movies and the 1990s”
Tuesday: original postings due (class time on Canvas), Group 6 Film Introduction
Thursday: Group 6 reflections due (class time on Canvas)
Friday: follow-up postings due (noon on Canvas)

**Week 8, November 14 & 16: Digital Spectacle**
Screening: *Jurassic Park* (1993)
Reading:
- Shone, Ch. 11-12
- Buckland, “Between Science Fact and Science Fiction: Spielberg’s Digital Dinosaurs…”
- Kleinhans, “1993 – Movies and the New Economics of…” (pages 91-103 only)
Tuesday: original postings due (class time on Canvas), Group 7 Film Introduction
Thursday: Group 7 individual reflections due (class time on Canvas); presentation sign-ups
Friday: follow-up postings due (noon on Canvas)

**Week 9, Nov. 21 & 23**
Tuesday: **FINAL EXAM (bring green exam book)**
Thursday: Thanksgiving Holiday (no class)

**Week 10, Nov. 28 & 30**
Tuesday and Thursday: **Final Project Presentations**
Friday, December 1: **FINAL PROJECTS DUE on Canvas by midnight**