

Introduction to Film Studies

Professor Phil Solomon

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Office Hours - Summer semester:

MWF 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Syllabus

Film 1502 Introduction to Film Studies

Class Meetings:

MWF 9:15 a.m. - 12:35 p.m. Ramaley C250 (13 sessions)

Required Reading:

**FILM ART: AN INTRODUCTION**

by David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson

5th Edition

located at the school store (both) and on reserve in Norlin

Attendance:

Attendance in this class is *mandatory*. There are only 13 classes for 3 credits and every class is vital to understanding the nature of this course. If you miss 2 (unexcused) sessions, *your grade will be deducted by A FULL LETTER* (B will be your highest possible grade). If you miss 3 sessions, your grade will be deducted by 2 FULL LETTERS (C will be the highest grade), and so on.

No Kidding.

I will also expect you to participate in class discussions as an integral part of your grade.

Grading:

Grading will be based on a mid-term exam (factual answers, technical information, reading information, multiple choice, fillintheblank, etc.) and a paper (5-7 pages, double spaced, normal font) analyzing one of the films screened in the class.

Mid Term - 40%

Final Paper - 40%

Class attendance and participation - 20%

Purpose:

The purpose of this class is to introduce to you some of the basic concepts in the study of film as an art. My goal is to provide you with a kind of film *primer*, a basic, but thorough grammar with which to talk about and write about film art, from both a technical and an aesthetic perspective. We will also touch on the major areas of film study, including a bit of film theory and a bit of history. This is an *overview* class, designed to lead you on to further study in film, especially in history classes and genre studies. In a way, this can be viewed as a language class, as we are trying to find ways to articulate, with language, the rather ephemeral nature of this magical ‘moving picture’ medium.

July 9 - Introduction to the class; syllabus; What is Cinema?  
Reading: B&T, pp. 3-10, 42-62, 157-163, 226-227

New York Near Sleep (Peter Hutton)  
A Movie (Bruce Conner)  
Passage A L’acte (Martin Arnold)  
Lumiere premiere program (August and Louis Lumiere)  
Opening of the 19th Century (Ken Jacobs)  
Magic of Melies (George Melies)

July 11 - David Wark Griffith and the origins of narrative film grammar, composition and narrative logic  
Reading: pp. 65-85, 169-205, 442-449

Griffith Biographs  
Broken Blossoms  
Intolerance  
Birth of a Nation (excerpts)

July 14 - Soviet Cinema and concepts in film editing (montage)  
Reading: pp. 415-420, 456-459

Strike, Potemkin, October (excerpts) - (Sergei Eisenstein)  
Man with a Movie Camera (Dziga Vertov)

July 16 - Orson Welles’ masterpiece of space, time, light, and sound  
Reading: pp. 108-125, 360-368

Citizen Kane

July 18 - Lecture on *Film Language* - various laser discs and tapes  
Readings: pp. 10-34, 210-258

July 21 - Film Directors - Alfred Hitchcock (The Auteur Theory, The Male Gaze) -  
Reading: pp. 89 -110

Rear Window

July 23 - *Mid - Term*

The Documentary Film

Reading: pp. 128-146, 409-415

High School (excerpt) (Fred Wiseman)

Sherman's March (excerpt) - Ross McElwee

July 25 - The Avant Garde Cinema

Reading: pp. 146-157

Un Chien Andalou (Dali/Bunuel)

Ballet Mechanique - (Leger)

Meshes of the Afternoon (Maya Deren)

Scorpio Rising (Kenneth Anger)

Window Water Baby Moving (Stan Brakhage)

21/87 - (Arthur Lipsett)

Chronic (Jenn Reeves)

July 28 - Experimental Animation

Reading: pp. 46-50

Swiss Army Knife ( Robert Breer)

Fuji (Breer)

Streets of Crocodiles (Brothers Quay)

Asparagus (Suzanne Pitt)

Duck Amuck (Chuck Jones)

Mothlight (Stan Brakhage)

Beautiful Funerals (Stan Brakhage)

Frankenstein Screams

Altair (Lewis Klahr)

Secret Stories (Janie Geiser)

July 30 - Film Noir, Expressionistic B&W Cinematography (James Wong Howe)

Reading: pp. 210-232

Seconds (John Frankenheimer)

August 1 - Art Direction, Mise-En -Scene, Contemporary Surrealism  
Reading: pp. 355-360

Brazil (Terry Gilliam)

August 4 - Classic European Cinema  
Reading: pp. 259-264

8 1/2 (Frederico Fellini)

August 6 - The Genre Film  
Reading: pp. 270-310

The Godfather, Part II (Francis Ford Coppola)

August 8 - *Final Exam due*

Silence of the Lambs (Jonathan Demme)