

syllabus

FILM & VIDEO ANALYSIS * MCOM 111 * Section 6331

Lecture- Monday 9:30- 10:20, Films- Friday, 9:30- 12:20, room 257

A comparative study of motion picture films, with an emphasis on analysis and discussion of the narrative structure, aesthetics, acting, directing, and the technical elements of motion pictures . We will examine and discuss interpretations of the American social and cultural contexts of motion pictures .

Faculty: **William Snead**; Phone, **644-7289**; e-mail , **william.snead@gcccd.net**
Office – **200 B-7** ~ Hours...Mon./Wed. 10:30-11:30 am, Tue. 1-2pm, Thur/Fri. 8:30- 9:30am

Required Texts: **THE ART of WATCHING FILMS** by Joseph Boggs
AMERICAN CINEMA, AMERICAN CULTURE by John Belton

Recommended text: **MEDIA VIRUS** by Douglas Rushkoff

In order to pass this class, all enrolled students will be required to :

- ❖ Recall and apply a set of criteria from the text and lectures to evaluate visual design, sound design, editing, acting, directing, and storytelling in motion picture films.
- ❖ Attend at least 80% of classes, view selected films, and share your reviews in class.
- ❖ Evaluate film elements and content by participating in classroom discussions.
- ❖ Write a one page typed and dated review of each classroom film viewed.
- ❖ Write two four page essay papers on specified films viewed outside of class.
- ❖ Write a seven page essay paper in which you analyze a film of your choice.
- ❖ Complete and pass 3 quarterly tests plus a comprehensive Final Exam.

Seeing all of the films and reviewing them is mandatory. If you miss a showing, you must view the film at home to complete your review. Films we view are videotape releases of theatre films, may be rated (NC-17) or (R), and may contain adult language or adult material.

About the course and the instructor:

This introductory media analysis course is designed to instruct you in the technical theory of production and aesthetic qualities of films in order to enhance your understanding and enjoyment of media viewing. Your image analysis will be guided by lecture, text readings, and classroom discussions.

My background includes a B.A. from the University of California, San Diego in Radio and Television Production and a Masters Degree from Ohio University in Broadcast Television Management and New Technology, as well as, 2 years Graduate Studies in Film Production at UCSD. I have done professional video production for many years, including work in the studio and remote production for broadcast. I have also supervised and /or engineered studio and field productions creating sports, magazine, documentary, training, music, and live broadcast programming. I was selected to manage a television facility for the Atlantic Olympic Games in 1996. I have produced a film and crewed on 6 motion picture films and numerous TV programs, many of which are currently playing both locally and nationally.

I will help you to understand the **language, methods, and conventions** of producing professional motion pictures, and answer your questions about film elements. I will help you as much as possible to progress through school at Grossmont College, but I will expect you to **learn, grow, and mature**. After passing this class, new viewing, film analysis, and discussion skills will provide you with enriched film viewing experiences and an expanded vocabulary to assist you in discussion of future film screenings.

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I will recommend to the Dean of Fine Arts a failing grade for:

- **Excessive tardiness or absence.** One (1) unexcused absence will be allowed for everyone. A second (2) will require missed work to be made up. **A third (3) absence may result in a drop from the class.** Attending film screenings and discussion in class is required. I understand that job or family activities can be important for you, however, if high grades are a priority, you won't miss class. Missing lecture or lab will lower your grade. **Call me before class at 644-7289 to be excused.**
- **Disruptive or destructive behavior – Course termination may result from mis-behavior during class sessions at Grossmont College. Pagers and cell phones must be turned off during class discussions and film screenings. Read the College Student Handbook for prohibited conduct.**
- **Cheating - Cheating in any form is not acceptable:** 1) Plagiarism from any source including other students; 2) Fabricating attendance at class events; 3) Failure to attribute sources for information; 4) Intentional destruction or devaluation of another's work. 5) Use of electronic devices to send or receive messages. **Violators will receive a lower project grade or fail the course.**
- **For accommodations due to disability, students are encouraged to see the instructor and/or contact Disabled Students Programs & Services early in the semester. Students may contact DSP&S in person in room 110 or by phone (619) 644-7112 or TTY (619) 644-7119.**

Grading:

*Tests are graded on the accuracy and completeness of your answer, **as per the reading and lecture material.** Make-ups and disputes regarding test answers must be discussed with me during a scheduled office visit **within a week** of the exam. Test grades will be based on a 100 point scale:

88 - 100 = A, 77- 87 = B, 66 -76 = C, 55- 65 = D, 0 - 54 = F

* Papers will be graded on content, clarity, completeness, meeting assigned goals, spelling, and grammar. Papers are accepted until the end of class on the due date, **except by prior arrangement.**

* I will ask for oral film reviews during class and I expect all students to be prepared.

Final grades will be determined on a 1000 point scale by your scores as follows:

Final Exam- 200 points A comprehensive written test of all class material. You must take and pass the final exam to pass the class. Permission of the instructor and **a written request to the Dean of Fine Arts** is required to change your Final Exam schedule. **There will be no exceptions.**

Analysis Paper- 200 points Individual written outline and essay analyzing a film of your choice using theory, elements, references and terminology from the textbook. **7 page paper- must be typed.**

Essay Paper- 100 points Two reviews of film titles provided (**50 pts each**) and seen in the theatre or at home . **4 page papers must be typewritten, submitted by e-mail or on computer disc.**

Quarterly Tests- 300 pts written exams on text readings and lecture material. (**100 each**)

Notebooks- 200 points 14 Review paragraphs evaluating films shown in the class. **Notebook film reviews due at 7 and 14 weeks** may be typed, e-mailed or submitted on disc.

Extra Credit- 50 points A compare and contrast essay of four pages as assigned by the instructor.

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- 9) 3/25 - ACTING FOR THE SCREEN - midterms returned
- **Discussion:** "good" acting, bad acting & typecasting
Belton- Ch 5
4/2 - Film: **FAR FROM HEAVEN** (1 hr 48 min)
Assignment: 4 pg Essay # 2
Reading: **Boggs- Ch 7**
Belton- Ch 14
- 4/5 to 4/11 - **SPRING BREAK -**
- 10) 4/12 - POST-PRODUCTION ELEMENTS
- **Due: 4 pg. paper # 2**
Reading: **Boggs- Ch 6**
Belton- Ch 3
- 4/16 - Film: **A TIME TO KILL** (2 hr 30 min)
- **Discussion:** Special effects
Reading: **Boggs- Ch 14**
Belton- Ch
- 11) 4/19 - **Test #3: Boggs- Ch 6, 7, 8, & 15; Belton- 3, 8, 11 13, 14**
Reading: **Boggs- Ch 15**
- 4/23 - Film: **REMEMBER THE TITANS** (1 hr 54 min)
- **Discussion:** Editing
Reading: **Boggs- Ch 9**
- 12) 4/26 - AUDIO AND SOUND DESIGN
- **Discussion:** Audio elements
Reading: **Boggs- Ch 8**
Belton- Ch 11
- 4/30 - Film: **8 MILE** (1 hr 51 min)
- 13) 5/3 - SEXUALITY AND RACISM
- **Discussion:** Movie censorship in America
Reading: **Boggs- Ch 16**
Belton- Ch 13
- 5/7 - Film: **JUNGLE FEVER** (2 hr 11 min) **DUE: 7 pg ANALYSIS PAPER**
- 14) 5/10 - STEREOTYPES AND RACISM
- **Discussion:** Culture mediates the film experience
Reading: **Media Virus**
- 5/14 - Film: **HIGHER LEARNING** (2 hr. 7 min)
- 15) 5/17 - THE RELEVANCE OF FILMS TODAY
- **Discussion:** How does Hollywood shape our views
Reading: **Media Virus**
Belton- Ch 15
- 5/21 - Film: **" O "** (1 hr 34 min) **Discussion:** Review for final exam
due: JOURNAL PART II - 2ND SET OF 7 FILMS
Reading: **Media Virus**
- 16) 5/24 - **FINAL EXAM: 9:30pm - 11:30 pm, Room 257**
- 5/31..... **SCHOOL HOLIDAY Memorial Day**
- 6/2 - SEMESTER ENDS... final grades turned in....
- 6/3 - **Grossmont Commencement @ 5:30 pm**