

COURSE SYLLABUS



Intro to Film Studies

Course code: FMS220

Term and year: Fall 2021

Day and time: Monday, 18:30 – 21:15

Instructor: Mary Angiolillo, Ph.D

Instructor contact: mary.angiolillo@aauni.edu 602.441.260

Consultation hours: Mondays 18:00 to 18:30

Credits US/ECTS	3/6	Level	Introductory
Length	14 weeks	Pre-requisite	None
Contact hours	42 hours	Course type	Bachelor required/elective

1. **Course Description:** The course is designed as an introduction to the study of Film Art. The course will focus on understanding how film form and film style is created and meaningfully perceived by spectators. Units include an understanding of narrative structure, mise en scène, setting, cinematic objects, cinematography (frame, camera movement, lighting), editing, sound and acting as creative tools used for the construction of film art. The use of genres as well as the impact of historical/technical developments on film styles are also treated.

Warning: Some of the content and discussion in this course will necessarily engage with filmic representations of violence and other mature themes or traumatic experiences. Students who do not wish to view certain films should inform the instructor.

2. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Define and apply basic film analytical terminology (related to mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing, sound, narrative, etc.)
- Analyze and interpret film sequences for aesthetic qualities and deeper meanings (sequence analysis)
- Outline the general development of the cinematic medium and film culture throughout recent history
- Identify major genres, movements, technological developments, and aesthetic styles from world film history
- Demonstrate an increased level of media literacy, specifically with regard to moving pictures and sound

3. Reading Material

Required Materials (Posted in pdf form on NEO)

- David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson, Jeff Smith. *Film Art*. Eleventh edition. New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2017. Available online as pdf.
- Maria Pramaggiore, Tom Wallis. *Film: A Critical Introduction*. Second edition. Boston: Pearson, 2008. Available online as pdf.
- Richard Barsam & Dave Monahan. *Looking at Movies: An Introduction to Film*. 5th edition. Norton, 2016. Available online as pdf.

Recommended Materials (Available on reserve at AAU library).

- Corrigan, T. & White, P. *The Film Experience: an Introduction*. (On reserve in library)
- Corrigan, T. *A short guide to writing about film*. (On reserve in library)
- Sikov, E. *Film Studies: An Introduction*. (On reserve in library)

4. Teaching methodology: Instructor and student presentations, screenings, discussion

5. Course Schedule

Date	Class Agenda
Session 1 Sept. 6	<p>Topic: Course expectations, syllabus</p> <p>Description: Introductory: Film as Art (creative team, creative process);</p> <p>Screening: <i>Sherlock Jr.</i> (Buster Keaton)(46 min.)</p> <p>Reading: pages from chapter 1 in Bordwell <i>Film Art</i>: pp. 2-4, 10-14, 17-24, 26-36, 40, 42-45</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Download book, reading, go through syllabus</p>
Session 2 Sept. 13	<p>Topic: Film Form & Style</p> <p>Screening: <i>The Wizard of Oz</i></p> <p>Description: Form as overall patterning in a film; Style as film's use of cinematic techniques. Screening <i>The Wizard of Oz</i>, 112min. - screened in class, if time permits; clip from <i>Juno</i> used to explain creation of patterns</p> <p>Reading: chapter 2 in Bordwell <i>Film Art</i>, pp. 50-71; finish watching <i>Wizard of Oz</i> if not completely watched in class. <i>Looking at Movies</i> "Formal analysis" pp. 14-20.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: prepare for first test on chapters one and two in Bordwell.</p>
Session 3 Sept. 20	<p>Topic: Film narrative; classic Hollywood narration</p> <p>Description: Quiz #1 on Bordwell <i>Film Art</i>, pages from chs.1-2. Discussion of narrative, narration, narrator, story, plot and diegesis; Narrative of <i>Casablanca</i> discussed.</p> <p>Screening: <i>Casablanca</i> (120 min.) - screened in class if time permits</p> <p>Reading: <i>Film Art</i>, chapter 3 (pp. 72-93, 97-110); finish watching <i>Casablanca</i> if not completed in class. Note especially the discussion of <i>Citizen Kane</i> in Bordwell, pp. 101-110.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p>

<p>Session 4 Sept. 27</p>	<p>Topic: Mise en scène: setting, costume Description: Components of mise en scène are examined; Setting, props as narrative and expressive tools. Costume and Make-up, Production design. Clips from tutorials and films are used for elaboration. Clips from <i>Edward Scissorhands</i>, <i>The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari</i> Screening: <i>Citizen Kane</i> (119 min.) Reading: Chapter 4 in Bordwell; Barsam & Monahan, pp. 173-190; Finish watching <i>Citizen Kane</i> if not completed in class. Assignments/deadlines:</p>
<p>Session 5 Oct. 4</p>	<p>Topic: Mise en scène: cinematic objects Description: analysis of the function of cinematic objects; basic semiotics used to analyze visual rhetoric. Includes discussion of Ramsay as <i>auteur</i> Screening: <i>We Need to Talk about Kevin</i> (112 min.) Reading: Chapter 4 in Bordwell; Barsam & Monahan, pp. 173-190 Assignments/deadlines</p>
<p>Session 6 Oct. 11</p>	<p>Topic: Mise en scène: camera (composition/frame), lighting Description: Components of mise en scène are further examined to include cinematography - camera angles, frame, composition, basics of lighting. Clips from tutorials and films are used for elaboration. clip from <i>Night of the Hunter</i> Screening: <i>Edward Scissorhands</i> (105 min.) Reading: Chapter 4 in Bordwell; Barsam & Monahan, pp. 173-190 Assignments/deadlines:</p>
<p>Session 7 Oct. 18</p>	<p>Topic: Sound and Editing; Alternatives to Classical Hollywood Narration Description: Discussion of functions and techniques of sound and editing in film art. Discussion of alternatives to classical Hollywood Narration. Clip from <i>Singing in the Rain</i>, <i>A Man Escaped</i>. Screening: <i>Rashomon</i> (108 min) Reading: Bordwell & Thompson, chapters 6 & 7. Barsam & Monahan, ch. 7, pp. 271-316. Assignments/deadlines: Prepare presentation on Genre; prepare for midterm test, taken online on chapters 3 through 7 in Bordwell <i>Film Art</i>.</p>
<p>Oct. 25</p>	<p>MID-TERM BREAK - NO CLASS</p>
<p>Session 8 Nov. 1</p>	<p>Topic: Acting and the Star system, Film style, Introduction to genre Description: Types of actors, approaches to acting, Directing actors, Acting styles; Screening: clips from <i>There will be blood</i>; <i>On the Waterfront</i>, <i>Streetcar named Desire</i>; <i>Julie and Julia</i> Reading: Pramaggiore: pp. 355-373(on stardom); 374-395 (on genre); Bordwell, chapter 9, pp. 326-350 ; Barsam & Monahan, pp. 85-119 Assignments/deadlines: Prepare presentation on Genre</p>

<p>Session 9 Nov. 8</p>	<p>Topic: Genre presentation (Horror) Screening: Scenes from horror films and <i>Psycho</i> (109 min.) Description: Student presentation on the Horro genre; conventions, context, audience expectations, major films and filmmakers working within the genre) Reading: Pramaggiore: pp. 374-395; Bordwell, chapter 8 and chapter 9, pp. 326-350 ; Barsam & Monahan, pp. 85-119; research on particular genre chosen for presentation Assignments/deadlines: Prepare presentation on Genre; Finish watching <i>Psycho</i> if not completed in class.</p>
<p>Session 10 Nov. 15</p>	<p>Topic: Genre presentation (Film Noir) Description: Student presentation on the Film Noir genre; conventions, context, audience expectations, major films and filmmakers working within the genre) Screening: Scenes from film noir movies and <i>Maltese Falcon</i> (101 minutes) Reading: Pramaggiore: pp. 374-395; Bordwell, chapter 9, pp. 326-350 ; Barsam & Monahan, pp. 85-119; research on particular genre chosen for presentation Assignments/deadlines: Prepare presentation on Genre; Make speaker notes from presentation available for class</p>
<p>Session 11 Nov. 22</p>	<p>Topic: Genre presentation (Western) Description: Student presentation on the Western genre; conventions, context, audience expectations, major films and filmmakers working within the genre) Screening: Scenes from westerns and <i>High Noon</i> (85 minutes) Reading/Assignment: Pramaggiore: pp. 374-395; Bordwell, chapter 9, pp. 326-350 ; Barsam & Monahan, pp. 85-119; research on particular genre chosen for presentation Assignments/deadlines: Prepare presentation on Genre; Make speaker notes from presentation available for class</p>
<p>Session 12 Nov. 29</p>	<p>Topic: Genre presentation (Action/Thriller) Description: Student presentation on the Action/Thriller genre; conventions, context, audience expectations, major films and filmmakers working within the genre) Screening: scenes from action films and <i>Taken</i> (90 minutes) Reading: Pramaggiore: pp. 374-395; Bordwell, chapter 9, pp. 326-350 ; Barsam & Monahan, pp. 85-119 Assignment:</p>
<p>Session 13 Dec. 6</p>	<p>Topic: Genre presentation (Crime/Gangster) Description: Student presentation on the Gangster genre; conventions, context, audience expectations, major films and filmmakers working within the genre) Screening: Scenes from gangster films and <i>Goodfellas</i> (146 minutes), or <i>The Long Good Friday</i> Reading: Pramaggiore: pp. 374-395; Bordwell, chapter 9, pp. 326-350 ; Barsam & Monahan, pp. 85-119 Assignment: Prepare for Final Exam (on Dec. 13)</p>

Session 14 Dec. 13	<p>Topic: Comprehensive Final Exam</p> <p>Description: Final exam is comprehensive of all material covered in course, chapters 1-6, 8-9 in Bordwell's <i>Film Art</i>; Barsam & Monahan, pp. 85-119 and chapter 7 in <i>Looking at Movies</i>, ch. 13 Pramaggiore, including student presentations on genres, readings and screenings.</p>
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6.Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

Regular, punctual attendance is mandatory for credit (credit will not be given without at least a 70% attendance.) Presentations must be made on the assigned date. If you do miss a class, you are expected to contact the instructor through email to find out what was covered that day.

Assignment	Workload (hours)	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes	Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes*
[ongoing] Attendance and Class Participation	42	10%	Learn and use basic film analytical terminology, demonstrate an increased level of media literacy with regard to moving pictures and sound.	1,2,3
[assignment 1] Presentation on Genre	40	25%	Demonstrate understanding of film analytic terminology, Identify genre and stylistic principles of film medium; Analyze and interpret film sequences for aesthetic qualities and deeper meanings.	1,2,3
[assignment 2] Quiz on readings	10	10%	Demonstrate understanding of film analytic terminology in regards to material presented in classes on filmmaking process and film form.	1
[assignment 3] Midterm on film art		20%	Understand the general principles related to specific arts within film art (narrative, mise en scene, setting, props, costume, cinematography, sound and editing).	1
[assignment 4] Written analysis of film scene	13	10%	Analyze and interpret a short scene from a film screened in class for aesthetic qualities, mise en scène, narrative function and deeper meanings.	1,2,3

[assignment 5] Final exam on readings and screenings	25	25%	Demonstrate comprehensive understanding of film analytic terminology, understand the general development of the cinematic medium and film culture, acting and the star system, Identify genre, technological, formal and stylistic principles of film medium.	1
TOTAL	150	100%		

*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3 = Effective and Responsible Action

7. Detailed description of the assignments

[Ongoing Assignment]: Attendance and In-class participation. (10% of overall grade)

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Attentive presence in class; listening skills; respect for those speaking	40%
Participation in class discussions; Q & As after presentations & screenings	40%
Evidence of punctual, physical attendance	20%

[Assignment 1]: Presentation on Genre (25% of overall grade) This is a group presentation (group with 2-3 members) made on an assigned date mid-semester, where students teach the class about the conventions, stylistic characteristics and audience expectations for an assigned film genre, using powerpoint and film clips. The presentation should include one scene screened and analyzed from a film within that genre. The film has to be agreed upon with the instructor prior to the presentation. Speaker notes must be submitted and shared with class after presentation. Once committed to a presentation date, students should make every effort to keep the date.

Selected Genres/Selected Films:

Horror: *Psycho*

Western: *High Noon*

Action: *Taken*

Film Noir: *The Maltese Falcon*

Crime/Gangster: *Goodfellas*

Assessment breakdown (Detailed assessment form will be distributed in class)

Assessed area	Percentage
Delivery factors (volume/projection, clarity, design of slides, energy, contact with audience)	10%
Content of presentation (must include placing genre within context of film history, characteristics of genre, conventions, audience expectations, major films and filmmakers working within the genre)	60%
Scene analysis (selected scene analyzed to demonstrate formal and stylistic principles related to genre)	15%

Speaker notes (clarity, punctual submission, organization)	15%
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[Assignment 2]: One quiz (10% of overall grade) This is a short answer test on the material presented in the assigned chapters of the course books, specifically related to lectures and screenings on class one and class two related to filmmaking process and film form.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Objective knowledge of principles related to film studies, explained by authors of text and lecturer/evidence of careful reading and understanding. Will be taken online.	100%

[Assignment 3]: Midterm (20% of overall grade) This is a short answer test on the material presented in the assigned chapters of the course books. This test covers material presented in chapters 3 through 7 of *Film Art*, and material presented in lectures and screenings related to narrative, mise en scene, cinematography, sound, editing and acting.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Objective knowledge of principles related to film studies, explained by authors of text and lecturer/evidence of careful reading and understanding. Will be taken online.	100%

[Assignment 4]: Written analysis of film scene (10% of overall grade)

Assessment breakdown (Detailed assessment form distributed in class: Students are to choose a scene from a film studied in the course and write a detailed analysis of the scene's narrative function, mise en scene components, editing, sound and performance (800 - 1000 words). This can be the same scene used to present genre conventions in Assignment 1.

Assessed area	Percentage
Analysis of narrative function	20
Components of mise en scène (composition/frame,movement, lighting, costume, setting/props)	50
Analysis of sound, editing and performance	30

[Assignment 5]: Final Exam on readings, presentations and screenings (25% of final grade). This is a comprehensive short answer/short essay test on the material presented in the assigned chapters of the course book, presentations on genres plus screening of films over course of the semester.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Objective knowledge of principles related to film studies, explained by authors; evidence of careful reading and	100%

understanding; evidence of understanding the material presented in class presentations on genre and in film screenings. Will be taken online.	
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- **8. General Requirements and School Policies**

General requirements

All coursework is governed by AAU's academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules in the Academic Codex and Student Handbook and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work.

Electronic communication and submission

The university and instructors shall only use students' university email address for communication, with additional communication via NEO LMS or Microsoft Teams. Students sending e-mail to an instructor shall clearly state the course code and the topic in the subject heading, for example, "COM101-1 Mid-term Exam. Question". All electronic submissions are through NEO LMS. No substantial pieces of writing (especially take-home exams and essays) can be submitted outside of NEO LMS.

Attendance

Attendance, i.e., presence in class in real-time, is expected and encouraged. However, the requirement that students miss not more than 35% of real-time classes is temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Absence excuse and make-up options

Should a student be absent from classes for relevant reasons (illness, serious family matters), and the student wishes to request that the absence be excused, the student should submit an Absence Excuse Request Form supplemented with documents providing reasons for the absence to the Dean of Students within one week of the absence. If possible, it is recommended the instructor be informed of the absence in advance. Should a student be absent during the add/drop period due to a change in registration this will be an excused absence if s/he submits an Absence Excuse Request Form along with the finalized add/drop form.

Students whose absence has been excused by the Dean of Students are entitled to make up assignments and exams provided their nature allows. Assignments missed due to unexcused absences which cannot be made up, may result in a decreased or failing grade as specified in the syllabus.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructor within one week of the date the absence was excused to arrange for make-up options.

If you are scheduled to make a presentation in class on a particular day, and you simply do not show up, without notifying the instructor that you would be missing, it may no longer be possible to make the presentation and your grade will be affected. **Always notify the instructor in advance if you are expected to make a presentation and you cannot make it,** just as you would notify the organizer of a presentation event in a professional situation.

Late work: No late submissions will be accepted – please follow the deadlines.

Electronic devices

Electronic devices (e.g. phones, tablets, laptops) may be used only for class-related activities (taking notes, looking up related information, etc.). Any other use will result in the student being marked absent and/or being expelled from the class. No electronic devices may be used during tests or exams unless required by the exam format and the instructor.

Eating is not allowed during classes.

Cheating and disruptive behavior

If a student engages in disruptive conduct unsuitable for a classroom environment, the instructor may require the student to withdraw from the room for the duration of the class and shall report the behavior to the student's Dean.

Students engaging in behavior which is suggestive of cheating will, at a minimum, be warned. In the case of continued misconduct, the student will fail the exam or assignment and be expelled from the exam or class.

Plagiarism and Academic Tutoring Center

Plagiarism is “the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work.” (Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2nd Edition, Random House, New York, 1993)

Turnitin's White Paper 'The Plagiarism Spectrum' (available at <http://go.turnitin.com/paper/plagiarism-spectrum>) identifies 10 types of plagiarism ordered from most to least severe:

1. CLONE: An act of submitting another's work, word-for-word, as one's own.
2. CTRL-C: A written piece that contains significant portions of text from a single source without alterations.
3. FIND-REPLACE: The act of changing key words and phrases but retaining the essential content of the source in a paper.
4. REMIX: An act of paraphrasing from other sources and making the content fit together seamlessly.
5. RECYCLE: The act of borrowing generously from one's own previous work without citation; To self-plagiarize.
6. HYBRID: The act of combining perfectly cited sources with copied passages—without citation—in one paper.
7. MASHUP: A paper that represents a mix of copied material from several different sources without proper citation.
8. 404 ERROR: A written piece that includes citations to non-existent or inaccurate information about sources
9. AGGREGATOR: The “Aggregator” includes proper citation, but the paper contains almost no original work.
10. RE-TWEET: This paper includes proper citation, but relies too closely on the text's original wording and/or structure.

At minimum, plagiarism from types 1 through 8 will result in a failing grade for the assignment and shall be reported to the student's Dean. The Dean may initiate a disciplinary procedure pursuant to the Academic Codex. Allegations of bought papers and intentional or consistent plagiarism always entail disciplinary hearing and may result in expulsion from AAU.

If unsure about technical aspects of writing, and to improve their academic writing, students are encouraged to consult with the tutors of the AAU Academic Tutoring Center. For more

information and/or to book a tutor, please contact the ATC at:
<http://atc.simplybook.me/sheduler/manage/event/1/>.

Course accessibility and inclusion

Students with disabilities should contact the Dean of Students to discuss reasonable accommodations. Academic accommodations are not retroactive. Students who will be absent from course activities due to religious holidays may seek reasonable accommodations by contacting the Dean of Students in writing within the first two weeks of the term. All requests must include specific dates for which the student requests accommodations.

4. Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage*	Description
A	95–100	Excellent performance. The student has shown originality and displayed an exceptional grasp of the material and a deep analytical understanding of the subject.
A–	90–94	
B+	87–89	Good performance. The student has mastered the material, understands the subject well and has shown some originality of thought and/or considerable effort.
B	83–86	
B–	80–82	
C+	77–79	Fair performance. The student has acquired an acceptable understanding of the material and essential subject matter of the course, but has not succeeded in translating this understanding into consistently creative or original work.
C	73–76	
C–	70–72	
D+	65–69	Poor. The student has shown some understanding of the material and subject matter covered during the course. The student's work, however, has not shown enough effort or understanding to allow for a passing grade in School Required Courses. It does qualify as a passing mark for the General College Courses and Electives.
D	60–64	
F	0–59	Fail. The student has not succeeded in mastering the subject matter covered in the course.

* Decimals should be rounded to the nearest whole number.

Prepared by: Mary Angiolillo
Date: July 20, 2021

Approved by:
Date: AK 26/7/21