

CMST 2012: Introduction to Film

Fall 2014, Section 1

MWF 12:30-1:20 PM, 225 Coates

Mondays 6:00 – 9:00 PM, 151 Coates

Final Exam: Wednesday December 10, 7:30-9:30 AM

Dr. John LeBret

Office: Coates Hall 132

Office Hours: MW 10:30-12:30 or by appointment

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Required Course Materials

Giannetti, Louis. *Understanding Movies*. 13th ed., 2013.

Bang, Molly. *Picture This: How Pictures Work*, 2000.

You will also need notebooks, craft materials, and DVD-Rs.

Additional materials may be posted on Moodle as the semester progresses.

Course Description

"Nature and function of film as a mode of communication; film theory and criticism; historical and technological development of the film industry; selected films screened and studied." (LSU *General Catalog*). In order to gain a deeper understanding of how films communicate, you will also learn and practice some basic digital video making skills.

Goals

By the end of this course you should have:

- 1) A deeper understanding of how moving images as communicate meaning.
- 2) A nuanced understanding of the various languages of film and the vocabulary of terms used in filmmaking and film studies.
- 3) Developed an appreciative and critical capacity for watching films and analyzing how they communicate.
- 4) Developed a functional understanding of the technological elements necessary to create digital videos.
- 5) Gained confidence and experience working with digital video technology.
- 6) Developed your ability to communicate with moving images and sound through course projects.

Course Policies

Participation and attendance

This is a 4 hour course that includes a lab component; your enthusiastic attendance at all scheduled meetings including Tuesday evening screenings is expected. In addition, you will be working in groups on most of the graded projects for this course. You should anticipate a considerable amount of outside time and labor developing, planning, shooting, and editing these projects as part of the workload for this course. Managing how to work in your group is part of each assignment.

Citizenship

As a member of this class you are expected to be prepared and constructively engaged. Don't be late; it slows us all down. The ringer on your phone must be turned off during class-- not vibrate, *off*--and you should not be texting or using social networks during class. Be forewarned that controversial topics, images, and language are often a part of films and will be a part of this classroom experience. If you are concerned that some of the scheduled films might somehow interfere with your ability to learn, please contact me to discuss.

The Americans with Disabilities Act and The Rehabilitation Act of 1973

If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a Coordinator in the Office for Disability Affairs so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letters, please meet with me during the first two weeks of class to discuss the provisions of those accommodations.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a violation of the fundamental principles of intellectual property. If you fail to give proper citation for the direct quote or paraphrase of another's idea, you are engaging in plagiarism. Claiming someone else's ideas, sentences, essays, or speeches as your own is plagiarism. Please consult the Code of Student Conduct for information about the serious sanctions that will result from plagiarism or any other academic misconduct.

Projects

You'll work in teams to create three short video projects. Detailed descriptions and parameters for each assignment will be distributed and discussed in class. Each project has a number of steps such as the creation of storyboards and shot logs; these materials and steps are graded along with the video itself.

Quizzes and exams

During this semester you are to keep up with the assigned readings to be prepared for our discussions and for doing the projects. Assigned readings are expected to be complete prior to class; you should come prepared to discuss them or ask specific questions. There are six short reading quizzes designed to assess your attention to this requirement. You may drop the lowest grade. Quizzes are not announced and are given at the beginning of the class period. Quizzes may not be made up for any reason. You will also take a midterm and a final examination.

Screening responses

Immediately following screenings of full films I ask that you write a short and immediate response to the film in question. These cannot be made up; you must be present at the screenings to complete these assignments.

Grading

This class is graded using a 1000 point scale:

900-1000 points = A	800-899 points = B	700-799 points = C
600-699 points = D	below 600 points = F	

Assessment	Weight
Cut-out storyboards	50 points
Project #1	100 points
Project #2	150 points
Project #3	200 points
Reading Quizzes	75 points
Screening responses	150 points
Show & Tells	75 points
Midterm exam	100 points
Final exam	100 points
Total Points:	1000 points

These are quality points you may earn for completing assignments, assessed by the following qualities: "A" work indicates achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet the requirements of the assignment. It reflects near-perfect technical execution and creativity that exceeds expectations. "B" work indicates achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet the requirements of assignment. "C" work meets, but does not exceed, the requirements of the assignment in every way. "D" work is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet the requirements of the assignment. "F" work fails to meet the basic parameters of the assignment.

Late work, missed exams

Late work does not meet any given assignment's requirements by virtue of missing its deadline. Any work turned in late will therefore merit a lesser grade than if it were handed in on time. In accordance with university policy, make-up exams will only be granted with an excused absence and must be scheduled as soon as possible. They will be different from the regular exam. Late work, generally, will affect your group's ability to proceed on the given project.

Technology

For this class, you will have access to the technologies needed to create your digital video projects (cameras, audio recorders, computers with editing software) through Studio 151, where we also hold our screenings. When you enter Studio 151 you must swipe in using your Student ID. Students must adhere to Studio 151 policies in order to use the equipment. For those of you who are new to any of the technologies or desire a brush-up, we may schedule tutorials in using the cameras or editing software outside of class time. You may come to Studio 151 any time during open lab hours for help and practice, and/or you may schedule an appointment for help. You are welcome to use your own equipment, but be careful to check issues of compatibility.

Schedule subject to change to meet the demands of the course

M 8/25	Introductions	M 10/20	Giannetti Ch. 6 & 7, Acting & Drama
M 8/27	Lab: No LAB!	M 10/20	Screen/discuss <i>Alice</i>
W 8/27	Introduce <i>Picture This</i>	W 10/22	TBA
F 8/29	Cut-out Assignment	F 10/24	Project 2 workday
M 9/1	Labor Day holiday	M 10/27	Project 2 due
M 9/1	Lab: No LAB!	M 10/27	Screen/discuss Project 2 and <i>Poltergeist</i>
W 9/3	<i>Picture This</i> – Entire Text	W 10/29	Assign Project 3
F 9/5	Giannetti Chapter 1, Photography	F 10/30	TBA
M 9/8	Cut-out assignment due; pitch to class	M 11/3	Giannetti Chapter 8, Story
M 9/8	Lab: Screen/discuss <i>Rear Window</i>	M 11/3	Screen/discuss <i>Fast Cheap & Out of Control</i>
W 9/10	In-class <i>Lumiere & Company</i>	W 11/5	Project 3 pitch
F 9/12	Finish <i>Lumiere & Company</i>	F 11/7	TBA
M 9/15	Technology workshop in Studio 151 Project 1 assignment	M 11/10	Giannetti Chapter 9, Writing
M 9/15	Screen/discuss <i>Ed Wood</i>	M 11/10	Screen/discuss <i>Stranger than Fiction</i>
W 9/17	Giannetti Chapter 2, Mise en scene	W 11/12	Project 3 storyboards due
F 9/19	Show & Tell #1	F 11/14	Show & Tell #3
M 9/22	Giannetti Chapter 3, Movement	M 11/17	Giannetti Chapter 10, Ideology
M 9/22	Screen/discuss <i>Strictly Ballroom</i>	M 11/17	Screen/discuss <i>The Cook the Thief His Wife & Her Lover</i>
W 9/24	Project 1 storyboards due	W 11/19	Continue discussion
F 9/26	Project 1 workday	F 11/21	Project 3 workday
M 9/29	Project 1 due	M 11/24	Giannetti Chapter 11, Critique
M 9/29	Screen/discuss project 1 and <i>Rope</i>	M 11/24	Screen/discuss <i>Citizen Kane</i>
W 10/1	Giannetti Chapter 4, Editing Project 2 assignment	W 11/26	Thanksgiving Holiday
F 10/3	Fall Break!	F 11/28	Thanksgiving Holiday
M 10/6	Giannetti Chapter 5, Sound	M 12/1	Project 3 due; Giannetti Chapter 12, Synthesis
M 10/6	Screen/discuss <i>Run Lola Run</i>	M 12/1	Screen/discuss TBA
W 10/8	Show & Tell #2	W 12/3	Catch up/TBA
F 10/10	TBA	F 12/5	Final review
M 10/13	Midterm Exam	W December 10,	7:30-9:30 AM Final Exam
M 10/13	Screen/discuss <i>Hedwig and the Angry Inch</i>		
W 10/15	Project 2 storyboards due		
F 10/17	TBA		