

**CMST 2012: Introduction to Film
Spring 2016**

TTH 1:30-2:50 PM - Coates Hall 202, Film Screening: T 6:00-8:50 PM – Coates Hall 151

Instructor

Nicole Costantini, ncostal@lsu.edu.

Office: Coates Hall 322 Office Hours: T 3:00 – 5:00 PM, Th 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Required Course Materials

Giannetti, Louis. Understanding Movies. 13th ed., Pearson: 2013. (If you have the 12th edition that will be fine.)

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

Additional materials will 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 practice the concepts by making short video projects.

Goals

By the end of this course you should have: 1. A deeper understanding of how moving images communicate meaning. 2. An 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. Gained confidence and experience working with digital video technology. 5. Developed your ability to communicate with moving images and sound through course projects.

C-I course

This is a certified Communication-Intensive (C-I) course which meets all of the requirements set forth by LSU's Communication across the Curriculum program, including — instruction and assignments emphasizing informal and formal visual and technological communication; — teaching of discipline-specific communication techniques; — use of draft-feedback-revision process for learning; — practice of ethical and professional work standards; — 40% of the course grade rooted in communication-based work; and — a student/faculty ratio no greater than 35:1. Students interested in pursuing the LSU Distinguished Communicators certification may use this C-I course for credit.

For more information about this student recognition program, visit www.cxc.lsu.edu

Course Policies

Participation and Attendance

This is a 4-hour course that includes a two class sessions a week plus a lab component during which we will screen films. Your enthusiastic attendance at all scheduled meetings including Tuesday evening

screenings is expected. I expect each of you to participate in our class discussions about both the course materials and screened films. In addition, you will be working in groups on many 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 group assignment. Both attendance and participation will factor into your final grade.

Citizenship

As a member of this class you are expected to be prepared and engaged. This means that you should be on time for every meeting. Cell phones are banned from our classroom and our film screenings. The ringer on your phone must be turned off during class-- not vibrate, off. If you are using a laptop or tablet to take notes, please avoid any and all social networking, shopping or news sites.

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 before screenings.

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, or represent someone else's ideas, sentences, essays, or speeches as your own you are engaging in plagiarism. Consult the Code of Student Conduct for information about the serious sanctions that will result from plagiarism or any other academic misconduct.

Communication Standards

All work done outside of class is expected to be typed and double spaced. I will not accept handwritten homework or assignments.

Please use the following heading on each assignment:

Name

Due Date

Section

Title of Assignment

All work using citations should be completed in MLA format.

All emails should be written in a professional manner – this means that each email should have a subject line, a greeting and your name at the end.

Grade Discussion

Any questions or concerns that you may have about your grades should be addressed in person. I prefer that you come to office hours (or make an appointment with me) for these discussions. You can email me about setting up an appointment or to give me a heads up about coming to office hours, but do not send questions about your grade electronically. Emailed questions will receive the automated response of “please come to my office hours to address your concerns.”

We will have a 24/7 policy for discussing grades this semester. This means that there will be a 24 hour grace period for you to reflect on your grade before we can discuss it. After the 24 hour grace period, you have 7 days to discuss that particular assignment with me. Once the 7 day period has passed, all grade discussion for that assignment will be over.

After many semesters of hearing this phrase, I am putting a ban on the following sentence and any variation of it: “...but I need an A in this class to_____.” While I do take sympathy with all of the phrases that could fill in the blank, your grade is your responsibility and pleading with me at the end of the semester is not going to help you. I want each of you to succeed and will do my best to assist you. That being said, all grades in this class will be based on merit. It is your responsibility to complete assignments, keep up with the reading, participate in class, etc. It is also your responsibility to keep up with your grades over the course of the semester. We will have much more productive conversations if we talk consistently during the semester than we would if you only come to see me at the end.

If there is an outside situation that is affecting your performance in our class, please talk to me about it as early as possible. The earlier that we can make accommodations, the better off you will be; it is much harder to deal with a situation after the fact.

Assignments

Projects

You’ll work in teams to create four 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.

Reading and Tests

You will need to keep up with the assigned readings to be prepared for our discussions and projects. Assigned readings are expected to be complete prior to class; you should come prepared to discuss them or ask specific questions. Rather than long exams, there are 6 or so short tests designed to assess your attention to this requirement. We may drop the lowest grade. Tests do not appear on the schedule but may be announced in class.

Screening Responses

Following screenings we ask that you write a short response to the film in question; often we will steer you toward a particular aspect of the film to write about, applying concepts from the course readings. Each response should be 1 ½ to 2 pages in length. 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. Points that you earn will compute to letter grades as below:
967-1000 = A+; 933-966 = A; 900-932 = A- 867-899 = B+; 833-866 = B; 800-832 = B- 767-799 = C+;
733-766 = C; 700-732 = C- 667-699 = D+; 633-666 = D; 600-632 = D- 0-599 = F

As of fall 2015, LSU grades will be reported with the +/- system as above.

Assignment	Weight
Cut-out storyboards	50 points
Project #1	100 points
Project #2	100 points
Project #3	100 points
Project #4	200 points
Tests	200 points
Screening responses	200 points
Attendance/Participation	50 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. Plus and minus grades within each of the above generally pertain to more nuanced particulars of each assignment.

Late work, Missed tests and Assignments

Late work does not meet any given assignment’s requirements by virtue of missing its deadline. Therefore, late work will not be accepted. In accordance with university policy, make-up tests will only be granted with an excused absence that could not have been foreseen, and must be scheduled as soon as possible. They will be different tests than those given in class. If you have a university-excused absence that you know about in advance, you must do the work in advance rather than make it up.

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, you may consult with the instructors and make use of the tutorials on Lynda.com available to you free with your MyLSU accounts. 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 with your team members.

Course Schedule

Th January 14 – Introductions

T January 19 –Introduction continued; City of Cranes

Film Screening: *Rear Window*

Th January 21 – Film Discussion. Introduction to Picture This. Assign **Cut Paper Project**

T January 26 – *Picture This* Continued

Film Screening: *Lumiere and Company*

Th January 28 – Cut Paper Workshop

T February 2 – Giannetti, Chapter 1 - Photography

Film Screening: *Visions of Light*

Th February 4 – Film Discussion, **Cut Paper Project Due**

T February 9 – **NO CLASS MARDI GRAS HOLIDAY**

NO SCREENING

Th February 11 – Assign **Project 1**, Giannetti Chapter 2 – Mise en Scene

T February 16 – Giannetti, Chapter 2 Continued, **Test #1**

Film Screening: *Cool Hand Luke*

Th February 18 – Film Discussion, **Cinematography Workshop**

T February 23- Giannetti, Chapter 3 - Movement

Film Screening: *Heavenly Creatures*

Th February 25 – Film Discussion, Giannetti, Chapter 4 - Editing

T March 1- Project 1 Workshop Day

Film Screening: *Run Lola Run*

Th March 3 – Film Discussion, **Project 1 Due, Assign Project 2**

T March 8 – Giannetti, Chapter 5 - Sound

Film Screening: *TBA*

Th March 10 – Film Discussion, **Midterm**

T March 15 – Giannetti, Chapter 6 - Acting

Film Screening: *Antonia's Line*

Th March 17 – Giannetti, Chapter 7 – Dramatization

T March 22 – **NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK**

NO SCREENING

Th March 24 – **NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK**

T March 29 – Giannetti, Chapter 8 - Story

Film Screening: *City of God*

Th March 31 – Film Discussion, **Project 2 Due, Assign Project 3**

T April 5 – **Sound Workshop**

Film Screening: *Amacord*

Th April 7 – Project 3 Workshop Day

T April 12 – Test #3, Giannetti, Chapter 9 - Writing

Film Screening: *North by Northwest*

Th April 14 – Film Discussion, Project 3 Due, Assign project 4

T April 19 – Giannetti, Chapter 10 - Ideology

Film Screening: *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane*

Th April 21 – Film Discussion, Gianetti, Chapter 11 - Critique

T April 26 – Giannetti, Chapter 12 – Synthesis, Project 4 Storyboards and Shot List Due

Film Screening: *Citizen Kane*

Th April 28 – Film Discussion, Project 4 in-class workshop

Final Exam Period: Thursday May 5, 3:00 – 5:00 PM

Screening Schedule

1/19 – *Rear Window*/ Alfred Hitchcock/ 1954

1/26 – *Lumiere and Company*/ Sarah Moon/ 1995

2/2- *Visions of Light: The Art of Cinematography*/ Arnold Glassman et al./ 1993

2/9 – NO SCREENING, MARDI GRAS HOLIDAY

2/16 -*Cool Hand Luke*/ Stuart Rosenberg/ 1967

2/23 –*Heavenly Creatures*/ Peter Jackson/ 1994

3/1 –*Run Lola Run*/ Tom Tykwer/ 1998

3/8 – TBA

3/15 – *Antonia's Line*/ Marleen Gorris/ 1995

3/22 – NO SCREENING, SPRING BREAK

3/29 – *City of God*/ Fernando Meirelles/ 2002

4/5 – *Amacord*/ Federico Fellini/ 1974

4/12 – *North by Northwest*/ Alfred Hitchcock/ 1959

4/19 – *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane*/ Robert Aldrich/ 1962

4/26 – *Citizen Kane*/ Orson Wells/ 1941