



JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

2021SP-FLM230-001

FLM 230: Introduction to Film

MW 1:45-3:15PM Stone Center 334

Spring 2021 Syllabus

Instructor: James Watkins

Visiting Assistant Professor of Film

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Office: Stone Center 332-E

Virtual Office Hours: MW 11:45-1:45PM; TR 12:30-2:30PM

MANDATORY COVID-19 SAFETY MEASURES

To protect the health and safety of all employees, visitors, and students during the COVID-19 pandemic, Jacksonville State University has adopted mandatory face covering and social distancing requirements. Students must always wear face coverings (continuously covering mouth and nose) when inside campus buildings (classroom, lab, common areas, etc.). Students should maintain social distancing in classrooms, hallways, etc. Students violating these requirements will be referred to the Office of Community Standards and Student Ethics and will be sanctioned accordingly which could include fines, educational sanctions, disciplinary probation, housing probation, housing suspension without a refund and/or University suspension.

ALERT

The class will be split into two groups that will alternate in-class and remote attendance.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Due to the dangerous conditions presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, please remain at home if you are not feeling well. You will not be penalized for failing to attend in-person. You should, however, be prepared to contact me ahead of time if you are unable to make your scheduled class.

PARTICIPATION/LATE WORK

You will get the most out of a class when you participate fully. This includes being actively engaged when attending virtually. If you are having trouble keeping up with assignments, please let me know as soon as possible so we can develop a game plan. Otherwise, 1% of your project grade will be deducted for each day that it's late.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Introduction to Film (3). Introduction to film terminology, history, and theory; overview of the filmmaking process from concept to completion.

OBJECTIVES

In this class we will examine the filmmaking process vis-a-vis its history, technical components and styles, both as a business and art form. Expected outcomes are as follows:

(1) Demonstrate ability to analyze cinematic texts

- (2) Demonstrate ability to recognize and interpret techniques and strategies used by filmmakers to convey form and content
- (3) Incorporate industry vocabulary into written and verbal discussions
- (4) Demonstrate ability to discuss films in relation to their historical, ideological, technological, economic and/or aesthetic contexts
- (5) Compose essays that employ well-considered arguments and provide textual support for those arguments
- (6) Illustrate learned filmmaking techniques and strategies through hands-on filmmaking projects

REQUIRED TEXT

Barsam, R. M., & Monahan, D. (2018). *Looking at Movies: An introduction to film* (6th ed.). New York: W.W. Norton & Company. ISBN-13: 978-0393674699

SUGGESTED TEXTS:

Hornaday, Ann. *Talking Pictures: How to Watch Movies* (2018). ISBN: 978-1541672970

QUIZZES/WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS/SHORT FILM SCRIPT (35% OF OVERALL GRADE)

There will be seven assignments during the semester: a combination of in-class/online quizzes and short written papers that cover textbook chapters and assigned films, as well as an original 3-page short film script (5 points each). The quizzes are timed and may include multiple choice, fill in the blank, true/false, or short answer questions. Short papers should be a minimum of 500 words or 1 full-page, single-spaced. Due dates can be found on the course syllabus. Assignments are due by 5pm on Sunday, upload on-time to Canvas in .pdf format.

FILMMAKING PROJECTS (25% OF OVERALL GRADE)

You will be expected to submit two film projects: a shot by shot recreation of a well known film scene as well as a short film chosen from original student-provided scripts. Details are as follows: (1) Individual or group filmmaking exercise based on assigned elements: shot -by-shot recreation of one minute of a scene from assigned films (10 points), upload on-time to Canvas in downloadable .mov or .mp4 format. (2) Individual or group filmmaking exercise based on assigned elements: 3-minute short film from an original script (15 points), upload on-time to Canvas in downloadable .mov or .mp4 format.

ONLINE OR IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS (20% OF OVERALL GRADE)

You will be required to give two presentations, either in-class or online. These assignments are intended to help you further explore subjects of personal interest and develop areas of specialization. You may also choose to work in small groups of three. Directions for the presentations will be available on Canvas prior to the class in which they are due. Upload on-time to Canvas in PowerPoint or Keynote format.

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER (20% OF OVERALL GRADE)

A detailed analysis of an assigned film, to include theoretical underpinnings and use of syntactical elements to convey the meaning of the film: form, content, cinematography, production design, performance, editing and sound design. 4-pages or 2,000 words, single-spaced with supporting research cited. Upload on-time to Canvas in .pdf format.

DIGITAL FILMS AND ONLINE FILM INFORMATION RESOURCES

Film titles may be available at the library or via various streaming platforms. We'll discuss access issues in the first class and film selections may be modified to ensure accessibility.

Internet Movie Database: www.imdb.com

Best Sundance Short Films: www.shortoftheweek.com/channels/sundance-films

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course is broken into distinct historical and technical modules. We will cover approximately one module or chapter per week. You will be expected to read the assigned material and watch a corresponding film each week, then provide a written analysis in response to the material or complete an in-class or online quiz. In-class or online lectures will provide an overview and/or clarification of the assigned weekly topics.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

All assigned readings are from the required text or from select in-class handouts. The assigned films may be available through university resources or online streaming platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, or YouTube

Week One: 01/13/21

Assigned Readings: *Looking at Movies* Ch. 1 - Please read before first class!

Topics: Exploring the work and assumptions of cinematic language; becoming a critical viewer; seeing film through the lens of a filmmaker

Screenings: A selection of excerpts from historic and popular films, followed by a discussion of technical elements

Assignments: Read *Looking at Movies* Ch. 2. Watch *The Matrix*, 1999, at home. Prepare for in-class quiz next week. (Assignment #1/Quiz)

Week Two: 01/18/21 & 01/20/21

Topics: Analyzing film in relation to form and content; verisimilitude; manipulation of time and space

Due: (Assignment #1/Quiz) In-class quiz on Wednesday 01/20 from 1:45-3:10PM. Bring computers to class!

Assignments: Read *Looking at Movies* Ch. 3. Watch *Alien*, 1979, at home. Prepare for in-class quiz next week (Assignment #2/Quiz)

Week Three: 01/25/21 & 01/27/21

Topics: Genres and elements of narrative; script format

Due: (Assignment #2/Quiz) In-class quiz on Monday 01/25 from 1:45-3:10PM. Bring computers to class!

Assignments: Read *Looking at Movies* Ch. 4. Watch *Memento*, 2000, at home. Write 3-page original short film script (Assignment #3/Script)

Week Four: 02/01/21 & 02/03/21

Topics: Exploring visual design; mise-en-scène; elements of design; composition & kinesics

Due: Short Film Script (Assignment #3)

Assignments: Read *Looking at Movies* Ch. 5. Watch *Black Panther*, 2018, at home. Prepare for in-class quiz next week (Assignment #4/Quiz)

Week Five: 02/08/21 & 02/10/21

Topics: Introduction to film equipment and techniques; how films are put together/shot sizes used — when and how/subject in frame/camera movement/blocking/in-class exercises to re-create scenes from screened films

Due: In-class quiz (Assignment #4/Quiz)

Assignments: Film Project #1. Individuals or student groups to discuss their production work after presenting edited scenes

Week Six: 02/15/21 & 02/17/21

Topics: Exploring cinematography; the relationship of people and things to one another in film; implied proximity; depth; camera angles and movement; speed and length of shot

Due: Film Project #1 (10% of Grade)

Assignments: Read *Looking at Movies* Ch. 6. Watch *In the Mood for Love*, 2000, at home. Prepare for in-class quiz (Assignment #5/Quiz)

Week Seven: 02/22/21 & 02/24/21

Topics: Acting and aspects of performance; styles and influences

Due: In-class quiz (Assignment #5/Quiz)

Assignments: Read *Looking at Movies* Ch. 7. Watch *There Will be Blood*, 2007, at home. Prepare for upcoming In-class/Online Presentation #1

Week Eight: 03/01/21 & 03/03/21

Topic: Sound

Due: In-class discussion of screened film

Assigned Reading: *Looking at Movies* Ch. 9

Screenings: Watch *The Conversation*, 1974. Discuss relevant elements of film in next class.

Assignments: In-class/Online Presentation #1. Final Keynote or PowerPoint file uploaded on-time to Canvas

Week Nine: 03/08/21 & 03/10/21

Topics: Editing, and exploring sound and dialogue; juxtaposition and meaning, duration, pace and rhythm, transitions; the relationship of sound to image, diegetic vs. non-diegetic, recording techniques, sound design

Due: Online Presentation #1, this is a participation-based, mid-term project (10% of your overall grade)

Assigned Readings: *Looking at Movies* Ch. 8

Film screening: *Psycho*, 1960. Discuss relevant elements of film in next class. Free at: <https://vimeo.com/231413951>

Assignments: Watch the assigned film at home. Prepare for in-class quiz (Assignment #6/Quiz)

Week Ten: 03/15/21 & 03/17/21

Topics: Exploring film history; aesthetics, technology, economics and social history

Due: In-class quiz (Assignment #6/Quiz)

Assigned Readings: *Looking at Movies* Ch. 10

Screenings: Sundance Short Films. Discuss relevant elements of film in next class

Assignments: Watch *Citizen Kane*, 1941, at home. Prepare for in-class quiz (Assignment #7/Quiz)

Week Eleven: 03/22/21 & 03/24/21 (Spring Break)

Week Twelve: 03/29/21 & 03/31/21

Topics: Marketing and distribution; studios vs. independent production companies

Due: In-class Quiz (Assignment #7/Quiz)

Screenings: Sundance Short Films. Discuss relevant elements of film in class. Prepare for Film Project #2

Assignments: Final Research Paper due (20% of final grade). Upload on-time in .pdf format to Canvas on Sunday, Apr. 4

Week Thirteen: 04/05/21 & 04/07/21

Topics: The Relationship of the viewer to the film; audience demographics; film as moral, philosophical, or social statements; film as emotional or sensual experience

Due: Final Research Paper (20% of overall grade)

Assigned Readings: Handouts

Film screening: Sundance Short Films

Assignments: P#2 (10% of final grade) and Film Project #2 (15% of final grade)

- Presentation #2 (10-15 minutes, Keynote or PowerPoint file uploaded on-time to Canvas on Sunday, Apr. 11)
- Film Project #2 (Minimum 3-minute short film from an original script, uploaded on-time to Canvas on Sunday, Apr. 19)

Week Fourteen: 04/12/21 & 04/14/21

Due: In-class/Online Presentation #2 (10% of grade)

Week Fifteen: 04/19/21 & 04/21/21 (Last Class)

Topics: Continue In-class/Online Presentation #2 (10% of grade)

Due: Film Project #2 (15% of grade)

Assignments: Continue watching films with a critical eye :-)

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

The grade of assignments turned in late will be reduced by 5% for each day that it is late. If you are turning in something late, do NOT email me with an excuse. Just turn it in. No assignment will be accepted more than one week late without a legitimate excuse. I reserve the right to determine what is an acceptable excuse.

READ CAREFULLY!

You are hereby issued one "Get Out of Jail Free" card. You will have the opportunity to turn in one weekly assignment up to 3-days late during the semester, without penalty. This doesn't apply to film projects, group projects or your final project. Following this one-time exception the standard late assignment deductions apply.

GRADING

Please see the below grading rubric for details.

Rubric for Assignments, Projects, Presentations & Research Paper

Weekly Analyses: (7x) 5 Points Each = 35 Points or 35% of overall grade	Exceeds Expectations (4.5-5)	Meets Expectations (4.00-4.45)	Occasionally Meets Expectations (3.5-3.95)	Does Not Meet Expectations (3.0-3.45)	
Film Production Project #1 + In-Class & Online Presentations: (3x) 10 Points Each = 30 Points or 30% of overall grade	Exceeds Expectations (9-10)	Meets Expectations (8.0-8.9)	Occasionally Meets Expectations (7.0-7.9)	Does Not Meet Expectations (6.0-6.9)	
Final Research Paper (1x) 20 Points = 20 Points or 20% of overall grade	Exceeds Expectations (18-20)	Meets Expectations (16.0-17.8)	Occasionally Meets Expectations (14.0-15.8)	Does Not Meet Expectations (12-13.8)	
Film Project #2 (1x) 15 Points = 15 Points or 15% of overall grade	Exceeds Expectations (13.5-15)	Meets Expectations (12.0-13.35)	Occasionally Meets Expectations (10.5-11.85)	Does Not Meet Expectations (9-10.35)	
Demonstrates the ability to understand, analyze and apply critical and technical language associated with film analysis, historical analysis, context, theoretical underpinnings and syntactical elements	Demonstrates excellent ability to understand, analyze, and apply critical and technical language associated with film analysis	Demonstrates sufficient ability to understand, analyze, and apply critical and technical language associated with film analysis	Occasionally demonstrates ability to understand, analyze, and apply critical and technical language associated with film analysis	Rarely or never demonstrates ability to understand, analyze, and apply critical and technical language associated with film analysis	
Demonstrates the critical thinking and analytical skills appropriate to the discipline of film analysis	Demonstrates excellent critical thinking and analytical skills appropriate to the discipline of film analysis	Demonstrates sufficient critical thinking and analytical skills appropriate to the discipline of film analysis	Occasionally demonstrates critical thinking and analytical skills appropriate to the discipline of film analysis	Rarely or never demonstrates critical thinking and analytical skills appropriate to the discipline of film analysis	
Demonstrates the ability to complete a research project and apply appropriate print and non-print sources in the film analysis discipline	Demonstrates excellent ability to complete a research project and apply appropriate print and non-print sources in the film analysis discipline	Demonstrates sufficient ability to complete a research project and apply appropriate print and non-print sources in the film analysis discipline	Occasionally demonstrate ability to complete a research project and apply appropriate print and non-print sources in the film analysis discipline	Rarely or never demonstrates ability to complete a research project and apply appropriate print and non-print sources in the film analysis discipline	
Demonstrates the ability to articulate, through close reading and writing, their understanding of the required material	Demonstrates excellent ability to articulate, through close reading and writing, their understanding of the required material	Demonstrates sufficient ability to articulate, through close reading and writing, their understanding of the required material	Occasionally demonstrates the ability to articulate, through close reading and writing, their understanding of the required material	Rarely or never demonstrates the ability to articulate, through close reading and writing, their understanding of the required material	

Total	90-100	80-89	70-79	60-69	
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ACCOMMODATIONS

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with Disability Support Services DSS and the instructor, as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. Disability Support Services is located in 139 Daugette Hall or students can call or email at (256) 782.8380, dss@jsu.edu

MILITARY CONNECTED STUDENT STATEMENT

The Office of Veteran Services serves all active duty, guard, reserve, veteran, and dependent students at JSU. If you have any questions about Veteran Services, please contact (265) 782-8838, veterans@jsu.edu, or the physical location in the basement of Daugette Hall. If you are a student currently serving in the military (Active Duty, Guard, or Reserves) with the potential of being called to military service or training during the course of the semester, you are encouraged to contact your course instructor no later than the first week of class to discuss the class attendance policy. The instructor may make accommodations for this absence or suggest that you take the course at another time

Title IX

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination based on sex in any educational institution that receives federal funding. Jacksonville State University does not tolerate sex discrimination of any kind including: sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, domestic violence, stalking or other conduct that is addressed in the university’s “Title IX Gender-Based and Sexual Misconduct Policy.” This type of conduct may interfere with or limit an individual’s ability to benefit from or participate in JSU’s educational programs or activities. Anyone with knowledge of this type of conduct is asked to immediately report such incidents to the University Police Department at (256) 782-5050 or the Title IX Coordinator at (256) 782-5769. These incidents may also be reported to an instructor, faculty or staff member, who are required to notify the Title IX Coordinator. If a student wishes to keep the information confidential, the student may speak with a counselor at the Counseling Services office at (256) 782-5475 or a medical provider at Student Health Services (256) 782-5310. For more information about Title IX, please visit the JSU Title IX webpage at www.jsu.edu/titleix. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination based on sex in any educational institution that receives federal funding. Jacksonville State University does not tolerate sex discrimination of any kind including: sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, domestic violence, stalking or other conduct that is addressed in the university’s “Title IX Gender-Based and Sexual Misconduct Policy.” This type of conduct may interfere with or limit an individual’s ability to benefit from or participate in JSU’s educational programs or activities. Anyone with knowledge of this type of conduct is asked to immediately report such incidents to the University Police Department at (256) 782-5050 or the Title IX Coordinator at (256) 782-5769. These incidents may also be reported to an instructor, faculty or staff member, who are required to notify the Title IX Coordinator. If a student wishes to keep the information confidential, the student may speak with a counselor at the Counseling Services office at (256) 782-5475 or a medical provider at Student Health Services (256) 782-5310. For more information about Title IX, please visit the JSU Title IX webpage at www.jsu.edu/titleix

ACADEMIC HONESTY

In a University community, true knowledge can be gained only through honest means. All academic dishonesty is expressly prohibited. This policy is applicable for campus and distance learning activities. Students who violate this Academic Honesty Policy will be subject to disciplinary actions which could range

from a zero on an assignment to failure of the course; repeated offenses can result in dismissal from the university. Violations include BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO, the following:

- A. The use of unauthorized materials or the receipt of unauthorized assistance during an examination or in the completion of any other assignment, exercise, experiment, or project for academic credit. Unauthorized materials may include, but are not limited to, notes, textbooks, previous examinations, exhibits, experiments, papers, or other supplementary items.
- B. Copying or utilizing information from a paper of another student during an examination.
- C. Rendering unauthorized assistance to another student by knowingly permitting him or her to copy an examination, project, paper, assignment, exhibit, exercise, or other material to be submitted for academic credit.
- D. Illegally obtaining or attempting to obtain unauthorized prior knowledge of an examination or test materials.
- E. Selling or giving to another student unauthorized copies of tests or examinations or research assignments.
- F. The use of a commercially prepared term paper or research project or the submission of a paper, project, or experiment completed by someone other than the student submitting any of the above for academic credit.
- G. Falsifying class attendance.
- H. Falsifying reasons why a student did not attend a required class or take a scheduled examination.
- I. Taking an examination in the place of another student.
- J. Making an unauthorized change in any reported grade or on an official academic report form.
- K. Unauthorized collaboration between two students on an examination, paper, or project.
- L. Plagiarism, which is the deliberate act of copying, writing, or presenting as one's own the information, ideas, or phrasing of another person without proper acknowledgment of their true source.
- M. Making use of computing facilities in an academically dishonest manner.

POLICIES/ITEMS OF NOTE

Since this course has many online elements, it is expected that you have at least a basic proficiency in computing skills such as online research, email and digital communication. I also assume that you are willing to learn how to operate within the Canvas LMS as a student and that you can turn in assignments via links. If you are lacking in any of this knowledge or need assistance please let me know and I will point you in the right direction to learn how to complete these actions.

You may be asked to do some more complicated digital tasks, such as record and post a video, find and submit photos or other still images and submit scanned or photographed artwork or drawing. It is important that when an assignment is given that you read the directions and find out if there are any items that you feel unsure of your ability to complete so that you can ask for help early. Remember, it is your duty to understand and complete all assignments in a timely manner. If you are unclear on the instructions, dates or any other aspect of the course, please ask!

CONTENT WARNING

Please be aware that we will be watching films and reading scripts that may contain offensive language or situations.