

CMST 2012: Introduction to Film

Department of Communication Studies | College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Spring 2018

151 Coates (Studio 151)

T/Th 1:30 – 2:50 PM

Screenings T 6:00 – 8:50 PM



Instructor: **Greg Langner**
Email: **glangn1@lsu.edu**

Office: **321 Coates**
Office Hours: **T/Th 12:00 – 1:20 PM**

Required Course Materials:

Giannetti, Louis. *Understanding Movies*. 14th edition, Pearson: 2018.

Bang, Molly. *Picture This: How Pictures Work*, Hachette: updated edition, 2016.

Additional materials will be posted on Moodle throughout the semester.

Course Overview and Outcomes:

Per the university catalogue, this course covers the *nature and function of film as a mode of communication; film theory and criticism; historical and technological development of the film industry; and selected films screened and studied*. This course will also involve *filmmaking practices*.

As a result of this course, students should:

1. Gain a deeper understanding of how moving images communicate meaning.
2. Gain an understanding of the various languages of film and the vocabulary of terms used in filmmaking and film studies.
3. Develop an appreciative and critical capacity for watching films and analyzing how they communicate.
4. Gain confidence and experience working with digital video technology.
5. Develop the ability to communicate with moving images and sound through effective execution of course projects.

Film and Media Arts & Communication-Intensive Status

This course is on the permanent electives list for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences' Film and Media Arts (FMA) Program. You can major in FMA (by majoring in Liberal Arts with an *FMA concentration*); you can minor in FMA; many students successfully combine a Communication Studies (CMST) major with an FMA minor.

This is a certified Communication-Intensive course, which meets all 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 a feedback loops process for learning;
- Practice of ethical and professional work standards;
- 40% of the course grade rooted in communication-based work.

COURSE POLICIES

SPECIAL NEEDS ACCOMMODATION

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 of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations can be arranged. After you receive the accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations.

ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION, & LATE WORK

If you are absent, you will not be allowed to turn in assignments that were due in class or make up any quizzes, exams, or other assignments (including in-class projects/activities). The only possible exception is if you have a *documented* excused absence or a *prior* arrangement made with the instructor (which are *never guaranteed*). Notify the instructor in advance via email if you are going to miss class, and the reason for your absence. Work-related absences, work in other classes, oversleeping, or meetings with other instructors are not considered excused absences. Unless otherwise announced, *all assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date*.

CLASSROOM RESPECT

Do not talk when others are speaking or when films/clips are being screened. Give your full attention during class discussions/screenings, and when your fellow students are presenting. Arrive to class on time. Communicate with your instructor via email regularly, and as needed.

TECHNOLOGY & EMAIL

Do not have your phone out during class; keep your phone on silent or vibrate. If you use your phone during another student's presentation you will *automatically lose 10%* of your grade on that same presentation. Laptops and tablets are not permitted in this class *unless otherwise confirmed* by the instructor.

Always use your campus email when emailing the instructor; always state your first and last name, and the title and section number of the class in the *subject line* of the email. When the instructor replies via email, *always respond to confirm*.

PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. If you plagiarize even a portion of any assignment, you will receive an automatic 'F' in the class. If you cheat during an exam, quiz, or the equivalent, you will receive an automatic 'F' on that assignment; you may also receive an automatic 'F' in the class, at the instructor's discretion.

EXTRA CREDIT

Extra credit *may* be offered at some point in the semester. There is *no guarantee* for any extra credit opportunities.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADES

FILM PROJECTS

40% of your total grade.

You will work in teams to create four short video projects (10% each). Prompts detailing expectations and parameters for each assignment will be distributed in class, via email, or via Moodle. The video you create as a group, *as well as the process* (storyboards, shot lists, etc.) for creating your video, will be graded as part of the assignment.

EXAMS

20% of your total grade.

You will have four exams (5% each) throughout this course based on the reading materials. All exams will occur "pop-quiz" style—that is, without notice.

SCREENING RESPONSES

20% of your total grade.

For most film screenings you will be required to write a short response, which will follow a specific prompt given before the screening.

PARTICIPATION & ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

20% of your total grade.

You are expected to engage in class discussions, lectures, and activities. Failing to do so will result in a poor participation grade.

You will also be assigned a *Storyboard Cutout Assignment* (worth 5% of your total grade). There are two stages to this assignment, a prompt for which will be distributed in class.

A+ (97% - 100%)

B+ (87% - 89%)

C+ (77% - 79%)

D+ (67% - 69%)

F (0% - 59%)

A (93% - 96%)

B (83% - 86%)

C (73% - 76%)

D (63% - 66%)

A- (90% - 92%)

B- (80% - 82%)

C- (70% - 72%)

D- (60% - 62%)

TENTATIVE COURSE & SCREENING SCHEDULE

Week	Day	Class Topic(s) & Weekly Screenings	Material Due
1	T 1/11	Introductions & Syllabus Review	N/A.
2	T 1/16	Screening: <i>Rear Window</i> .	<i>Picture This</i> .
	Th 1/18		Storyboard Cutout, part 1 due.
3	T 1/23	Screening: <i>The Imitation Game</i> .	Giannett, Ch. 1: Photography.
	Th 1/25		Storyboard Cutout, part 2 due.
4	T 1/30	Screening: <i>TBA</i> .	Giannett, Ch. 2: Mise en scene.
	Th 2/1	Project screenings and discussions.	Screening Response due. Project 1 due.
5	T 2/6	Screening: <i>Mad Max: Fury Road</i> .	Giannett, Ch. 3: Movement.
	Th 2/8		Screening Response due.
6	T 2/13	Screening: <i>Star Wars: A New Hope</i> .	Giannett, Ch. 4: Editing.
	Th 2/15		Screening Response due.
7	T 2/20	Screening: <i>Singin' in the Rain</i> .	Giannett, Ch. 5: Sound.
	Th 2/22	Project screenings and discussions.	Screening Response due. Project 2 due.
8	T 2/27	Screening: <i>Picture Bride</i> .	Giannett, Ch. 6: Acting.
	Th 3/1		Screening Response due.
9	T 3/6	Screening: <i>Scott Pilgrim vs. the World</i> .	Giannett, Ch. 7: Dramatization.
	Th 3/8		Screening Response due.
10	T 3/13	Screening: <i>The Iron Giant</i> .	Giannett, Ch. 8: Story.
	Th 3/15		Screening Response due.
11	T 3/20	Screening: <i>The Perks of Being a Wallflower</i> .	Giannett, Ch. 9: Writing.
	Th 3/22	Project screenings and discussions.	Screening Response due. Project 3 due.
Spring Break!			
12	T 4/3	Screening: <i>Antonia's Line</i> .	Giannett, Ch. 10: Ideology.
	Th 4/5	NO CLASS — INSTRUCTOR AT CONFERENCE.	
13	T 4/10	Screening: <i>Jurassic Park</i> .	Giannett, Ch. 11: Critique.
	Th 4/12		Screening Response due.
14	T 4/17	Screening: <i>TBA</i> .	Giannett, Ch. 12: Synthesis.
	Th 4/19	In-class workshop for final projects.	Screening Response due.
15	T 4/24	Group meetings with instructor <i>at screening time.</i>	~_(ツ)_/~
	Th 4/26	FINAL PROJECT SCREENINGS.	Project 4 due.
Final	M 4/30	3:00 – 5:00 PM	~_(ツ)_/~