

English/Film Studies/Art History 111
Entertainment Arts: Film, Television, and the Internet

Fall 2016, Section 203

Online – 3 credits

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Office Hours: By appointment
(online or F2F)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed for people who wish to become literate and critical consumers of the media environment in which they have come of age. From cinema to cell phones, the multimedia context of contemporary life is rapidly changing. This course will examine some of those shifting and ubiquitous technologies and images. Entertainment Arts offers a general introduction to the critical study of film, television, and new media. Through readings, screenings, writings, and discussions, students will develop an understanding of media culture in terms of technical properties, industrial practices, representation, cultural theories, social responses, and more.

There are no prerequisites for this course and you are not expected to have any prior knowledge of film, television, or digital media studies. We will begin with the premise that film, television, and digital media offer more than ‘entertainment’ and, accordingly, we will engage critically and rigorously with the material.

COURSE TEXTS AND SCREENINGS

- All readings will be provided as PDFs on D2L.
- Screenings can be accessed on paid subscription sites like **Netflix** (\$10.55/mo) or **Hulu Plus** (\$7.99/mo). Some screenings can also be accessed through rental kiosks like Red Box, rental sites like Amazon or Google Play (\$2.99), or checked out for free at the Golda Meir Library and other public libraries.

****Content Advisory**** From time to time, we may watch and discuss screenings that feature objectionable language, sexual content, and other situations that some may find offensive. I expect all screenings to be treated with serious academic study and all discussion to maintain a tone of dispassionate courtesy.

TECHNOLOGY EXPECTATIONS

In order to succeed in this course, students should have the following minimum technical skills: creating documents in Microsoft Word, submitting files on D2L, logging into and utilizing UWM email, downloading and installing appropriate software (noted below), navigating D2L and downloading/opening files, and formatting papers using MLA (a style guide can be found [here](#)).

Students must be up-to-date with software and system requirements in order to stream screenings online. Software required include [Adobe Flash Player](#) 11.1 or above and [HTML5 player or Silverlight](#) to watch content on Netflix. Internet browsers (Internet Explorer 10+, Firefox 15.0+, Safari 5+, or Chrome) and computer systems (Microsoft Windows XP SP2, Mac OS X 10.6, or Linux) must be updated, and JavaScript and Cookies should be [enabled](#). Students must also have a strong Internet speed connection (I recommend 1.5 Mbps). You can test your speed [here](#). During the first week of class, I will ask students to test their technology capabilities to ensure they can stream the screenings smoothly and without interruption.

Students should also have Microsoft Office installed on their computer in order to submit assignments as .doc files. As a student with access to Office 365 through your UWM email, you are allowed to download Microsoft Office for free. Log in to your UWM email, click on Office 365 in the top left corner, and select “Install Now.”

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENT

This course meets the criteria for General Education Requirement Humanities credit at UWM by addressing “questions, issues and concepts basic to the formation of character and the establishment of values in a human context;...induc[ing] an organic study of letters and knowledge; [and providing] literary, aesthetic and intellectual experiences which enrich and enlighten human life,” as specified in UWM Faculty Document No. 1382. The course uses humanistic means of inquiry, including critical use of sources and evaluation of evidence, judgment and expression of ideas, and organizing, analyzing and using creatively substantial bodies of knowledge drawn from both primary and secondary sources. In addition to addressing other GER Humanities criteria, the course introduces substantial and coherent bodies of historical, cultural and literary knowledge to illuminate human events in their complexities and varieties, and enhances appreciation of literary and other arts by thoughtful, systematic analyses of language and artifacts such as novels, stories and films.

UWM seeks Essential Learning Outcomes throughout the undergraduate curriculum in four key areas: Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World; Intellectual and Practical Skills; Personal and Social Responsibility; and Integrative Learning. GER courses in particular contribute to these learning outcomes. Student work in GER courses is assessed individually for course-specific outcomes and goals, and holistically as part of departmental self-assessment of learning outcomes throughout the major.

GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

In English 111, students will demonstrate learning outcomes in “Knowledge of Human Cultures” and in “Intellectual and Practical Skills”: by engagement with key questions in film and other cultural artifacts, and by producing written film analysis that reflects thoughtful, informed engagement with source material and standards of evidence and argumentation in humanistic disciplines. This outcome will be assessed through review of papers written in the course, a requirement of all English GER courses, via the rubric that appears on the following page.

	Content	Organization	Mechanics & Editing	Other
A	Highly original. Clear thesis and argument. No factual or logical inaccuracies. Minimal summary; uses evidence, not opinion; represents secondary sources accurately.	Well-organized, even at paragraph level. Reader led through a logical sequence; paper stays on topic.	Accurate use of citation conventions. Virtually no mechanical or formatting errors.	Precise word choices; vivid, fresh language. Avoids wordiness. Informal language only when clearly appropriate. Establishes ethos strongly through knowledge of subject. Entertains, educates, and makes reader want to know more.
B	Less original; may have minor factual errors. May use secondary sources uncritically or with mild inaccuracy.	Well-organized, but structure sometimes disjointed. Goes off-topic on occasion.	Some awkwardly worded passages. Some errors, but not enough to distract the reader.	Language sometimes too general or less precise than the A writing. Enough errors to suggest the paper needs more polish and thought.

C	Relies more on summary than original interpretation or argument. Restates common or familiar arguments or interpretations uncritically. Secondary sources do not clearly contribute to or support the argument, or maybe presented inaccurately.	Basically well organized, though individual paragraphs may be disunified or misplaced. Logical and apparent plan overall.	More frequent awkwardness, with distracting errors, although meaning is clear. Citations improperly formatted or absent.	Language is competent but wordy, general, imprecise, or trite.
D	No original contribution; restatement of misstatement of the ideas of others. Doesn't interpret, but just repeats or reports.	Poor organization; reader has little sense of a plan even though a thesis or main point is recognizable.	Some sentences may be so confused that their meaning does not clearly emerge.	Words may be imprecise, incorrect, trite, or vague. In general, however, the paper is understandable.
F	Lacks clear thesis or point.	Language muddled and unclear in several spots.	Highly distracting mechanical errors.	Shows little care or attention to detail on the part of the author.

GER COURSE ASSESSMENT

All GER courses in the Film Studies Department require significant student writing, including papers of varying length. The Department samples GER courses in each semester, including primarily papers from English 111, evaluating them on a holistic scale, according to the following rubric:

1. Work does not meet disciplinary standards for critical analysis, evidence-based argument, and interpretation of film and cultural artifacts. Work does not meet expectations for clarity of thought and language, and for edited academic prose. Work does not show student awareness of conventions of analysis and expression.
2. Work shows some awareness of conventions for analysis and expression but may contain distracting errors. Work meets some disciplinary standards for critical analysis, evidence-based argument, and interpretation of film or cultural artifacts, but inconsistent in doing so. Work meets some expectations for clarity of thought and language, and for edited academic prose, but is inconsistent in doing so.
3. Work meets most or all expectations for analysis and interpretation, argues from evidence, and is written clearly and without significant mechanical errors, showing student awareness and achievement of the learning outcomes for the course.

Numeric scores are used to generate snapshots of how well GER courses meet the Department's stated learning outcomes and what, if anything, needs to be altered when the course is next offered.

COURSE READINGS

Weekly PDF readings are available through our D2L course site. Follow the link for D2L on the UWM homepage. Login to your account using your ePanther ID and password, and then choose the

ART/ENG/FILMSTD 111 course. Under the Content link at the top, you will find the readings organized by week. Students may choose to print these essays or read them on their computers. Other than these required readings, there is no textbook for this course.

COURSE SCREENINGS

Screenings will vary from films to television shows to digital media. You must have access to a television, computer or digital device with up-to-date Flash and the capability to view videos, websites, social media platforms, etc. with ease. Laptops and tablets can be checked out through the Golda Meir Library. As this is a media studies course, most weeks you will be viewing a film, television show, or digital media text to accompany the readings. The screenings will be listed as a module on D2L for the week it is assigned. Please make sure you review the screenings at the beginning of each section (film, TV, digital media) to be sure that you can access the film, program, or site.

Most of the screenings for the Film and TV units will need to be accessed through Netflix or Hulu. I will notify everyone each week on where you can find these screenings. Screenings can also be accessed through other means, like the Golda Meir Library, Milwaukee Public Libraries, DVD rental stores, or other streaming services. Ultimately, you are responsible for making time to acquire and view the required films or programs in time to do the week's work. Treat the screenings as you would any required text – take notes and use them to help you in your weekly responses and essays.

Changes to screening links will be made by the Sunday of each new week, so be sure to check D2L for any news or recent updates.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Discussion Posts (20%) and Participation (5%)

Students are expected to participate in the online discussion board and respond to posts. There will be a discussion prompt that will help you compose your initial post (usually 1-2 paragraphs); you are then required to respond thoughtfully to at least TWO posts from your classmates for participation credit. Your initial post will be due by 11:59pm Thursday and your 2 responses to classmates will be due by 11:59pm Saturday. Because successful discussion depends on the timeliness of posts, **NO LATE POSTS OR RESPONSES WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

Assessment: I will assess your posts (length requirement on the discussion board) each week and assign them an overall grade (1-4 points). At the beginning of the semester, I may give you more specific feedback on your posts and comments so that you have a sense of what's expected. Generally, though, I will try to keep out of the discussion. This does not mean I'm not reading your posts but that I want you to engage in discussion with each other.

The 1-4 Scale is as follows:

- 1 – did not meet all requirements, or response was off topic
- 2 – did meet all requirements, but at a minimal level
- 3 – did meet all requirements, but could develop thoughts further
- 4 – did meet all requirements and demonstrated critical thinking and use of terminology

Tone: As you post, remember that this is a classroom, so the tone of your writing should be appropriate to an academic environment. Because this is also an English class, I do expect you to write clearly and to keep an eye on spelling and grammar. Essentially, discussion posts, responses, and emails resembling Facebook posts, tweets, and text messages will not be accepted.

Participation: As an online course, this class relies heavily on the active participation of all students. Each week, most of our time will be spent discussing the readings and screenings. To fully participate in the course and to get the most out of it, you must take the time to read through all posts and comments (just FYI, D2L lets

me see who does and does not read each post). Regularly reading and responding will help you with the course material. Just as importantly, your contributions will allow you to help others in the class, as all of you work together to flesh out an idea or hammer through a challenging question.

Screen Journal (15%)

Students will provide notes and are expected to do some background knowledge building about the screenings. Through a provided worksheet, students will type their screening notes and responses and upload them on D2L in the appropriate Dropbox folder. These are due in the Dropbox folder by 11:59pm each Wednesday. Up to TWO screen journals will be accepted late without grade penalty, but they must be submitted no later than a week after the due date; otherwise, a zero will be received. No feedback will be given to late work. The assignment is credit/no credit, which means that you should pay attention to hitting all the key components of the form provided and strive to submit it on time to get full points.

Exam One* (20%)

The midterm essay exam will assess students' knowledge of the material covered in the Film Studies unit.

Exam Two* (20%)

The midterm essay exam will assess students' knowledge of the material covered in the Television Studies unit.

Final Exam* (20%)

The final essay exam will assess students' knowledge of the material covered in the Digital Media Studies unit.

* Students will write three short essays this semester, one for each of the three study units (film, TV, digital media). These essays should be 4-5 pages long, double-spaced, have a standard sized font, and follow MLA style of citation and formatting. The essays will assess your understanding of the theories, methods, trends, histories, and styles that will be presented to you through online lectures, readings, and screenings. LATE ESSAYS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. More information about the essays will be provided during exam time.

CONTACTING ME

For any questions or concerns, I can be reached by email (johnst84@uwm.edu). If you wish to meet with me in person (Curtin 483) or via Skype (username: je_johnston), email me and we can set up an appointment. Otherwise, I'm usually very prompt when responding to emails; still, please give me up to 24 hours to reply. I will also be emailing everyone each week to update you on your progress, so you may use that opportunity to communicate with me. When emailing me, please include your full name and the class you're emailing me about. You can also just address me as Jessica (not Professor or Dr. – I'm only a PhD student at the moment).

OTHER COURSE POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Plagiarism: All work in this class must be your own. Any material or ideas taken from another person must be appropriately cited and contextualized. Failure to do these things will be considered an act of plagiarism and will lead to failure in the class. Be warned, plagiarism is a serious offence under UWM's code of ethics and has serious consequences. For more information and additional university policies, go here: <http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf>.

Technical Problems: If you encounter technical problems with D2L or screenings, you should notify me right away – not after a deadline has passed. I may not always be able to help with technical problems. Your best option is to contact the IT Help Desk at <http://www4.uwm.edu/technology/help/campus/gettechhelp.cfm> or (414) 229-4040.

Interested in a Film Studies Major or Minor?

Well, there are many ways to get more details! For information on the L&S Film Studies program, see the “Film Studies Fact Sheet” under the “Course Documents” tab, visit <http://www4.uwm.edu/lets/filmstudies/>, or contact Ben Schneider (advisor for the Film Studies program) at terrapin@uwm.edu.

Note regarding the Digital Arts and Culture Certificate

This course fulfills one of the requirements for the Digital Arts and Culture certificate. The DAC certificate combines courses in the areas of arts, humanities, social sciences, and information studies, and it provides a noticeable complement to your academic and career goals. DAC students become part of a networked community of students, artists, scholars, and practitioners who share an interest in imagining the future by studying and shaping emerging media forms. For more information on the DAC program, please visit <http://dac.uwm.edu>.

These policies are subject to change with due notice. English Department policies on Academic Dishonesty and Grievances are posted on a bulletin board in the west corridor of Curtin 433 and on the department homepage (<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/English/>).

Entertainment Arts Course Schedule

A Typical Week

Sunday-Wednesday: Prep days

- Allotted time for readings and screenings, as well as the review of lecture/reading notes and discussion questions.
- Screening journal due by 11:59pm on Wednesday.

Wednesday-Saturday: Discussion

- Initial post due by 11:59 pm Thursday.
- Two response posts due by 11:59 pm Saturday.

You are welcome to work at your own pace as long as you are meeting the deadlines. In other words, if you prefer to do your discussion posts early or to do your reading at 2am, that's fine. Because we want to encourage good discussion, you will have to check in every week; this is not the type of online class for which you can do the semester's work all at once at your leisure.

****All screenings are subject to change****

Unit One: Film Studies

Week	Lecture Topic	Reading	Screening
1 – Sept. 6-10	Photography	Course Introduction and Syllabus Giannetti, "Photography"	<i>A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night</i> (2014), dir. Ana Lily Amirpour
2 – Sept. 11-17	Mise-en-scène	Giannetti, "Mise-en-scène"	<i>Moonrise Kingdom</i> (2012), dir. Wes Anderson
3 – Sept. 18-24 [Sept. 19 - last day to add/change a class]	Story	Giannetti, "Story"	<i>Somewhere</i> (2010), dir. Sofia Coppola
4 – Sept. 26-Oct. 1	Editing	Giannetti, "Editing"	<i>American Beauty</i> (1999), dir. Sam Mendes
5 – Oct. 2-8 [Oct. 3- last day to drop w/o a W]	Ideology	Giannetti, "Ideology"	<i>Do the Right Thing</i> (1989), dir. Spike Lee
6 – Oct. 9-15	Exam 1 (Film Studies) Due: Saturday, October 15 @ 11:59pm	No Reading	No Screening

Unit Two: TV Studies

Week	Lecture Topic	Reading	Screening
7 – Oct. 16-22	Television Eras	Mittell, “Intro,” “Chapter 1,” and “Chapter 2”	<i>Father Knows Best, The Brady Bunch, In the House, Modern Family</i>
8 – Oct. 23-29 [Oct. 28 – last day to withdraw]	TV’s Flow & Modes of Meanint	Butler, “Television’s Ebb and Flow in the Postnetwork Era” Mittell, “Chapter 5,” “Chapter 6,”	<i>Bob’s Burgers, Parenthood, Fresh Off the Boat</i> Watch 1 hour of “live” TV
9 – Oct. 30-Nov. 5	Cultural Forums on TV	Mittell, “Chapter 7”	<i>I Am Jazz, Black-ish, Master of None</i>
10 – Nov. 6-12	Exam 2 (TV Studies) Due: Saturday, November 12 @ 11:59pm	No Reading	No Screening

Unit Three: Digital Media

Week	Lecture Topic	Reading	Screening
11 – Nov. 13-19	Digital Gaming	Murray, “From Game Story to Cyberdrama”	Watch <i>Stanley Parable</i> walk-through <i>Play Onomastic, Goat Frenzy Simulator</i> , and game of choice
12 – Nov. 20-26	Thanksgiving Break	No Reading	No Screening
13 – Nov. 27-Dec. 3	Social Media and Networked Publics	boyd, “Social Network Sites and Networked Publics”	Create a profile on a social media site and explore it
14 – Dec. 4-10	Intertextuality, Convergence, and Microcasting	Marshall, “The New Intertextual Commodity” Jenkins, “Convergence? I Diverge”	<i>South Park, Mis-Adventures of Awkward Black Girl</i> , YouTube clips
15 – Dec. 11-17	Final Exam (Digital Media) Due: Monday, December 19 @ 11:59pm	No Reading	No Screening