

# **Communication 3530: Film Communication**

## **4 Credits – Spring '24**

**Time:** Tuesday/Thursday 12:30pm-1:45pm

Tuesday 7:00pm – Buzzard 1501

**Instructor:** Drew Britton

**E-Mail:** agbritton2@eiu.edu

**Office:** Buzzard 2535

**Office Hours:** Monday - 11:30-12:30, 2:15-3:15

Tuesday - 1:45-3:15.

Wednesday - 2:15-3:15

Thursday – 1:45-3:15

Or by appointment

**Teaching Assistant:** EJ Newton (ejnewton@eiu.edu)

### **Course Description & Objectives**

Film as the expression of the performers, producers, directors, writers, and technicians. Critical discussion of film theory, history, and criticism.

The course introduces students to the fundamentals of film analysis with an emphasis on the cinema's formal properties, narrative structures, and means of production, distribution, and exhibition. Through screenings, discussions, and essays, students will identify properties: mise-en-scene, cinematography, editing, sound, and genre. Theories regarding authorship, textuality, and spectatorship will be explored with an emphasis on particular historical movements both domestically and internationally.

This course is designed to introduce students to the analysis of film as a means of expression and communication. By the end of the semester students should be able to demonstrate:

- The ability to understand the concepts of film theory, criticism, and history and how they are used to analyze individual films and film groups.
- An understanding of the concepts of film genres, their formulas, and how to subvert them.

### **Current Text & Materials**

Friedman, L, Desser, D., Kozloff, S. et al. (2014). An introduction to film genres. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Readings in relation to each week's film will be posted in the D2L Content Section as we go along (as not to spoil the film).

### **Classroom Etiquette**

#### **Respect**

You must show respect to your fellow classmates when they are speaking. All students are required to treat one another with common courtesy when engaging in discussion. I highly encourage debates and difference of opinion but it should always be done in a respectful manner.

#### **No Cell Phones**

You are not permitted to use cell phones during class time. They are an enormous distraction for

not only yourself but your classmates as well. You will be deducted participation points (without notification) if you're caught using your phone. I also highly discourage the use of laptops when we are not working on in-class assignments.

### **Academic Integrity and Honesty**

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards. Consequences of academic dishonesty range from failing of the course to expulsion from the university. There is a zero tolerance policy of plagiarism in this course. In addition, students are not allowed to use advanced automated tools (artificial intelligence or machine learning tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, or Dall-E 2) on assignments. Each student is expected to complete each assignment without substantive assistance from others, including automated tools. Considering this, I will run all written assignments through A.I. detection services.

### **Late Work**

Because we cover material in the course sequentially, it is critical that you complete each assignment on time. All assignments should be turned in on the day it is due. If an assignment is not turned in at the start of the class it is due, it will be considered late. Five points will be deducted for each day an assignment is late. If you have any questions or are experiencing any difficulties with an assignment, please contact me before the assignment is due.

### **Students With Disabilities**

If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Accessibility & Accommodations (OAA). All accommodations must be approved through OAA. Please stop by McAfee Gym, Room 1272, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

### **Academic Support Center**

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Academic Support center ([www.eiu.edu/success](http://www.eiu.edu/success)) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to McAfee Gym, Room 2230.

### **Grading Scale**

100-90% = A  
89-80% = B  
79-70% = C  
69-60% = D  
59-0% = F

### **Assignments/Evaluation**

Detailed handouts will be provided prior to each assignment.

### **Class Attendance/Participation (30%)**

A large portion of your grade will be determined by your willingness to attend class, and actively participate in discussions. This is a very discussion heavy course that requires a lot of engagement. Therefore, be prepared to share your ideas and actively respond to the materials.

You will be allowed two absences; each absence thereafter will result in a 1% deduction from your attendance/participation grade if you are not present during a Tuesday/Thursday lecture. If you are not present during a Tuesday night screening, it will result in a 2% deduction. Additionally, every late arrival will count as a 0.5% deduction from your attendance/participation grade. If you are actively on your cellphone, I will not interrupt class. Instead, I will deduct 1% from your grade each time.

#### Film Screening Notes (15%)

During or after the Tuesday night screenings, take detailed notes in regards to your perception i.e. what sticks out to you, any particular shots, sound design, characters, story, structure etc. You can translate and upload a word document or take photos of your handwritten notes and upload the JPG. All entries must be submitted to the D2L Dropbox. Examples can be found in the D2L content section.

#### Director Analysis Presentation (15%)

#### Midterm Paper (20%)

#### Devil's Advocate Final Paper (20%)

## Course Schedule

### **Week 1 - Tuesday 1/9 & Thursday 1/11**

#### **Introduction**

Introduction To Course

Read: Essential Cinema - Chapter 1: Analyzing Movies

Analyzing Movies

### **Week 2 – Tuesday 1/16 & Thursday 1/18**

#### **Narrative Structure & Characters**

Read: Essential Cinema - Chapter 2.1: Narrative Structure

Read: Essential Cinema - Chapter 2.2: Characters

Tuesday Night Screening

Screening Notes Due Friday 1/19, 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox)

### **Week 3 – Tuesday 1/23 & Thursday 1/25**

#### **Cinematography**

Read: Essential Cinema - Chapter 4: Cinematography

Tuesday Night Screening

Screening Notes Due Friday 1/26, 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox)

### **Week 4 – Tuesday 1/30 & Thursday 2/1**

#### **Sound**

Read: Essential Cinema - Chapter 6: Sound

Tuesday Night Screening

Screening Notes Due Friday 2/2, 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox)

### **Week 5 – Tuesday 2/6 & Thursday 2/8**

#### **Mise-En-Scene & Atmosphere**

Read: Essential Cinema - Chapter 3: Mise-En-Scene

Tuesday Night Screening  
Screening Notes Due Friday 2/9, 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox)

**Week 6 – Tuesday 2/13 & Thursday 2/15**

**Editing**

Read: Essential Cinema - Chapter 5: Editing  
Tuesday Night Screening  
Screening Notes Due Friday 2/16, 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox)

**Week 7 – Tuesday 2/20 & Thursday 2/22**

**Genre: Romance**

Read: Film Genres - Romance  
Read: The Rom-Com Formula Explained (D2L)  
Tuesday Night Screening  
Screening Notes Due Friday 2/23, 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox)

**Week 8 – Tuesday 2/27 & Thursday 2/29**

**Genre: Horror**

Read: Essential Cinema - Chapter 2.3: Genre  
Read: Film Genres - The Horror Film  
Read: Film Genres - The Thriller  
Tuesday Night Screening  
Screening Notes Due Friday 3/1, 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox)

**Week 9 – Tuesday 3/5 & Thursday 3/7**

**Independent**

Read: Essential Cinema - Chapter 9.2: American Independents  
Tuesday Night Screening  
Screening Notes Due Friday 3/8, 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox)

**Week 10 – Tuesday 3/12 & Thursday 3/14**

**Genre: Science Fiction**

Read: Film Genres - Science Fiction  
Tuesday Night Screening  
Screening Notes Due Friday 3/15, 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox)

**Week 11 – Tuesday 3/19 & Thursday 3/21**

No Class – Spring Break

**Week 12 – Tuesday 3/26 & Thursday 3/28**

**Film Movements: Mumblecore**

Tuesday Night Screening  
Screening Notes Due Friday 3/29, 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox)

**Week 13 – Tuesday 4/2 & Thursday 4/4**

**Director Analysis Presentation**

Director Analysis Presentations Due Sunday 3/31, 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox)  
Director Analysis Presentations  
No Tuesday Night Screening

**Week 14 – Tuesday 4/9 & Thursday 4/11**

**International Cinema: South Korea**

Read: Essential Cinema - Chapter 9.4: Non-Western Film

Tuesday Night Screening

Screening Notes Due Friday 4/12, 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox)

**Week 15 – Tuesday 4/16 & Thursday 4/18**

**International Cinema: Hong Kong**

Tuesday Night Screening

Screening Notes Due Friday 4/19, 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox)

**Week 16 – Tuesday 4/23 & Thursday 4/25**

**Genre: Documentary**

Read: Essential Cinema - Chapter 8.1: Documentary

Tuesday Night Screening

Film Rankings

Screening Notes Due Friday 4/26, 11:59pm (D2L Dropbox)

Devil's Advocate Final Paper Due Monday, 4/29, 11:59pm In The D2L Dropbox.