

The Art of Film

SCHOOL OF MEDIA STUDIES/BACHELOR'S PROGRAM FOR ADULTS AND TRANSFER STUDENTS
SCHOOLS OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT/THE NEW SCHOOL
Spring 2021

THE ART OF FILM

NFLM 3411 B, CRN 2644 (degree)

NFLM 0341 B, CRN 826 (non-credit/certificate)

Instructor: **Melissa Friedling** (friedlim@newschool.edu)

Mondays, 8:00-9:50 PM

Jan 25, 2021 - May 10, 2021

ONLINE SYNCHRONOUS

Available for consultation: Thursdays 4pm – 6pm EST by appointment.

Course Description

The Art of Film lays the foundation for understanding the practical techniques, specialized language, and unique aesthetics of motion pictures. We will explore the expressive range of cinematic language and the ways in which complex emotions and ideas are communicated to the viewer. Students analyze the basic elements of cinematic form as seen through essential properties of the medium including editing, cinematography, production design, and sound design and gain an appreciation of film history and for the impact of culture and technology on the development of the cinema. The filmmaking process and the impact of the “industry” on this collaborative art are also studied. While the work of the director is only one aspect studied, we discuss various films by directors including Michelangelo Antonioni, Alfred Hitchcock, Yasujiro Ozu, Agnès Varda, and Orson Welles among many others. Supplemented by readings, students acquire a general familiarity with the range of cinematic expression and become better prepared to form surer and sounder judgments about our own film experiences and to speak and write about those judgments with greater clarity and skill.

Learning Outcomes

By the successful completion of this course, students will possess the following abilities and knowledge:

1. An understanding of the communicative elements of the cinema and ability to identify and articulate constituent elements of both form and content.
2. Knowledge of filmmaking as a craft and a collaborative process.
3. A greater fluency in the communicative language of cinema and an ability to reflect critically and speak with confidence about a wide range of films.
4. An appreciation for the ways in which formal aspects of film are grounded within a cultural, historical and/or social context.
5. An appreciation for the technical apparatus of the cinema as well as the industrial complex that surrounds it.
6. An appreciation for modes and aesthetics of filmic expression beyond the conventional narrative.
7. Refined writing and oral presentations skills.

Class Requirements

Assessable Tasks

Each assignment will be graded based on how well the criteria of the assignment are met. These criteria will be distributed and discussed as assigned, but here are the basics:

- **Canvas Discussion Prompt Responses (X5)** **DUE @8pm on 2/8, 2/22, 3/29, 4/12, 5/3**
As indicated in the schedule, you are expected to respond to six discussion prompts in Canvas Discussion based on the assigned reading, film clips we've watched, video lessons, or other materials from the week.
- **Quiz 1** **DUE 2/23 @8pm**

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- Quiz will be multiple choice, covering readings and other assigned materials.

Annotated Scene Analysis

DUE 3/8 @8pm

- Students analyze a scene and comment directly into an online video clip using one of several annotation apps that either allows you to create popups or callouts in the video or add text and other media to tabs in the video timeline. You will be given instruction on how to do this. I will not ask you to purchase any software.

Quiz 2

DUE 4/13@8pm

- Quiz will be multiple choice, covering readings and other assigned materials.

Final Paper/Video Essay

DUE 5/10@8pm

- Either a 4-5 page written paper OR a 5-7 minute video essay that analyzes a cinematic work and/or topic related to material from the class. I will distribute a prompt listing potential films and topics, along with further guidelines. Students may consult with me during office hours to choose from the suggested films/videos/topics and discuss their approach or propose a new one.

Final Grade Calculation

Participation	20%
Canvas Discussion Prompts (5 points each) X5	25%
Quiz 1	10%
Annotated Scene Analysis	15%
Quiz 2	10%
Final Paper/Video Essay	20%

Certificate Students

Please note that this class fulfills a requirement of the Certificate in Film Production. Students wishing to count this course towards their Certificate must complete all assignments and do minimally the equivalent of "B" work for the class. Simply turning in a final project is not enough. Students interested in the Certificate should consult the website: <https://opencampus.newschool.edu/program/certificate-programs/media-writing/film-production>

Course Design

This is a synchronous online course. You are expected to complete work out of class in preparation for weekly zoom meetings. You will be invited to participate via chat, audio, or video. Every week, you will be watching a prepared video lecture and/or a film in addition to completing assigned readings. As indicated on syllabus, you will be completing quizzes, responding to discussion prompts, or preparing an analysis or essay outside of class. All required reading and viewing materials will be accessed via links on the course Canvas site.

Expectations for Participation

To receive all 20 possible points for participation you must demonstrate proficiency in areas outlined below:

- Attendance:** Students who receive all 20 points will have perfect attendance. Their commitment to the class resembles that of the professor.
- Preparation:** Students who receive all 20 points are prepared for every class. They demonstrate that they have read/watched/listened to all the assigned materials and are prepared to contribute ideas or questions in Canvas Discussion as well as in live zoom meetings.
- Curiosity:** Students who receive all 20 points show interest in the class and in the subject. They look up information that they don't know and go beyond the material included in the syllabus and demonstrate that they are actively making discoveries.
- Classroom Conduct:** Students who receive all 20 points are active and enabling members of the classroom. This means formulating thoughtful and relevant responses in synchronous and Canvas Discussions and peer feedback. They contribute productively, providing comments to classmates that are focused, specific, and meaningful, and encouraging a dialogue with classmates by welcoming and asking questions.

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Attitude: Students who receive all 20 points have a mature attitude. They have both the self-discipline and the determination necessary for successful explorations and film art. They show initiative. While they ask questions when they don't understand, they also take responsibility for their own work and make every effort to problem solve.

Organization: Students who receive all 20 points will be organized. They make sure to stay on top of the schedule and plan ahead. They understand that success in an online class requires sticking to the schedule of engagement and logging in at regular intervals. All assignments are completed and submitted on time and demonstrative of assignment criteria.

Expectations for Discussion

Collaborative engagement in class discussions and activities as well as in Canvas Discussions are an essential ingredient in the development of reflective and critical academic skills. By engaging with one another, analyzing and considering different viewpoints and experiences, students will benefit themselves and others in a dynamic learning community. Contribution to weekly in-class and/or online Discussion will be critical and reflective.

During Zoom meeting students are expected to adhere to course agreements on Zoom protocols that will be shared at the beginning of every meeting. All students are responsible for material covered in zoom meetings. Recordings of these meetings will be shared.

Expectations for Attendance

One absence will not affect a student's grade. Two absences will result in a half letter grade reduction. Three absences will result in a full drop in a letter grade. Four absences and you will fail the class. Under extenuating circumstances, an absence may be excused such as for: hospitalization or visit to a physician (documentation required) a family emergency, e.g. serious illness (with written explanation) observance of a religious holiday.

Materials and Expenses

All required materials will be available and accessible through links provided in Canvas.

Minimum Technology Requirements

This course will require:

- Computer with current operating system
- Internet access sufficient for instructional tools like Canvas and [Zoom](#) (minimal internet access speeds of 800kbps upload and 1.0Mbps download are required).
- Headset (recommended)
- Webcam
- Microphone (computer or external)

Students should also consider that accessing the internet through a shared connection or wireless network (wi-fi) may affect connectivity and slow down internet speed. If possible, a wired connection is recommended.

Course Outline (subject to change)

WEEK	Date	Topics	Assignments
1	1/25	Introduction and Orientation So, will we go to the movies again? What we'll learn and how we'll be learning. Review syllabus	Read: Divika Girish, " I Think We're Alone Now ," <i>Film Comment</i> (May-June 2020). Watch: Intro video
2	2/1	Early mechanisms of the cinema Script to screen: Making the movie	Read: David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson, and Jeff Smith, <i>Film Art: An</i>

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		The communicative language of cinema	<i>Introduction</i> , 11th Edition (McGraw-Hill, 2017): 17-47. (henceforth FA) Watch: <i>This is Not a Film</i> (Jafar Panahi & Mojtaba Mirtahmasb, 2011) Watch: video lecture
3	2/8	Basics of the moving image Film/video systems Formats Aspect ratios Speed	Read: FA – 9-17, 164, 167-168, 181-185. Watch: <i>Daisies</i> (Vera Chytilova, 1966) Optional Read: Petra Hanáková, "Voices from Another World: Feminine Space and Masculine Intrusion in Sedmikrásky and Vražda ing. Čerta" in Anikó Imre (ed.), <i>East European Cinemas</i> (New York: Routledge, 2005), 63-80. Respond: Canvas discussion prompt
NO CLASSES FEBRUARY 15 – PRESIDENT'S DAY HOLIDAY			
4	2/15	Lenses Focal length Depth of field Exposure Tonality Perspective	Read: FA – 159-164, 168-174 Watch: <i>The Assassin</i> (Hou Hsiao-Hsien, 2015)
5	2/22	Framing Camera Distance Camera Movement Camera Angle	Read: FA – 177-178, 187-209, 209 -215 Complete: Quiz 1 (due 2/23) Watch: "Standby" (Charlotte Regan, 2016) + "Wind" (Marcell Iványi, 1996) Watch: video lectures A, B, C Respond: Canvas discussion prompt
6	3/1	Mise-en-scene Composition/Staging Setting/Art Direction Long take Costume and Makeup	Read: FA – 112-124, 140-141, 143-149, 150-154 Watch: <i>Hyènes</i> (Djibril Diop Mambéty, 1992)
7	3/8	Lighting - quality, direction, source, color, 3-point setup	Read: FA – 124-131 Complete: Annotated video analysis - DUE March 8 Watch: video lectures A + B
NO CLASSES MARCH 15 – 21 – SPRING BREAK			
8	3/22	Editing defined Montage Duration and perception Rhythmic, graphic controls	Read: FA – 216-230 Watch: <i>Le Bonheur</i> , (Agnès Varda, 1965)
9	3/29	Continuity editing Invisible editing POV, 180-degree rule, 30-degree rule, match action, eye lines, jump cuts, elliptical, discontinuity editing	Read: FA – 230 – 262 Watch: video lectures A, B, C Watch: "Cutaway" (dir. Kazik Radwanski, ed. Ajla Odobasic, 2014) Respond: Canvas discussion prompt
10	4/5	Sound design Psychoacoustics Dialogue Narration	Read: FA – 263-278, 285-302 Watch: <i>The Silence (Sokout)</i> (Mohsen Makhmalbaf, 1998)

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		The diegesis	Optional watch: "Listen" (Rungano Nyoni + Hamy Ramezan, 2014) https://vimeo.com/196593911
11	4/12	Sound Design Sound Effects Music	Read: FA – 278-285 Read: Michael Chion, "Projects of Sound on Image" and "The Three Listening Modes." <i>Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen</i> , 1994. Complete: Quiz 2 Due 4/13 Watch: "Hacked Circuit" (Deborah Stratman, 2014) Watch: video lectures A, B, C Respond: Canvas discussion prompt
12	4/19	Narrative form, genre, style	Read: FA – 72-99, 325-331, 334-349 Watch: <i>Orlando</i> (Sally Potter, 1992)
13	4/26	Documentary exposition, poetics, and reflexivity	Read: Bill Nichols, "How can we differentiate among documentary models and modes? What are the Poetic, expository, and reflexive modes?" <i>Introduction to Documentary</i> , 3 rd Edition, 2017) Watch: <i>Spit on the Broom</i> (Madeleine Hunt-Ehrlich, 2019)
14	5/3	Observational, participatory, and performative documentary	Read: Bill Nichols, "How can we describe the observational, participatory, and performative modes of Documentary film?" <i>Introduction to Documentary</i> , 3 rd Edition, 2017) Watch: video lectures Complete: online course ratings form (Course Evaluations) Respond: Canvas discussion prompt
15	5/10	Presentations Last class	Due: Final Essay

University, College/School, and Program Policies

Academic Integrity

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university.

Students are responsible for understanding the University's policy on academic honesty and integrity and must make use of proper citations of sources for writing papers, creating, presenting, and performing their work, taking examinations, and doing research. It is the responsibility of students to learn the procedures specific to their discipline for correctly and appropriately differentiating their own work from that of others. The full text of the policy, including adjudication procedures, is found at <http://www.newschool.edu/policies/>

Resources regarding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it can be found on the Learning Center's website: <http://www.newschool.edu/university-learning-center/student-resources/>

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Intellectual Property Rights: <http://www.newschool.edu/provost/accreditation-policies/>

Grading Policies: <http://www.newschool.edu/registrar/academic-policies/>

Participation/ Attendance/ Expectations for the Remote Learning Environment

Participation is an essential part of class and includes: keeping up with reading, viewing, and listening assignments, contributing meaningfully to class discussions, and attending synchronous sessions regularly and on time. If students are unable to join synchronous sessions, they will watch recorded session. Students are expected to keep up with class activities and requirements each week.

Course Policies + Procedures

Inclusion and Respect

Modified from The New School's Safe Zone declaration: We in this classroom are dedicated to creating a welcoming environment for all members of the university community inclusive of race, ethnicity, national origin, culture, language, gender and gender expression, sexuality, religious and political beliefs, age, and ability. We'll aim to celebrate our diversity and to respectfully negotiate differences in experience, understanding, and expression. We will stand against all forms of discrimination and oppression, whether directed against individuals or groups. We will also make an effort to respect one another's individuality in our forms of address, which includes learning one another's preferred names and pronouns.

If you experience anything in the classroom that undermines these values – or if there is anything I can do to better cultivate inclusivity and respect – please feel free to let me know. Likewise, if you are facing personal challenges inside or outside the classroom that are impacting your class performance, I'm happy to speak with you about strategies of accommodation, and to help you find the appropriate support resources at the university.

Changes to Syllabus

I make every effort to map out the entire semester before the semester begins, so we both know what we're in for. Yet we may need to make a few small alterations to our schedule: we might host a guest who's become available, I might decide to cut a swap a reading or substitute a film over the course of the semester, etc. Any changes will be noted, with plenty of advance notice on our class Canvas page, which will always be the most the most accurate, up-to-date "control center" for our class. And any revisions will only maintain or decrease, never increase, your workload.

Remote Learning Environment Expectations

Synchronous Learning Environment

- Download the Zoom application to your system prior to our first class for best performance (as opposed to using the Zoom website).
- Ensure your technology is ready ahead of time so as not to distract yourself or others as you login or troubleshoot. I recommend giving yourself a few extra minutes to login and "arrive" for class the first time you use Zoom.
- Do your very best to you have a reliable internet connection.
- Use headphones/earbuds to hear and be heard most clearly.
- Additional protocols and etiquette will be shared, but class agreements include:
 - All students indicate their name and preferred pronoun in Zoom video panel. You can change name by clicking on the dots in upper right of your video.
 - Using video is preferred when possible and, when used, care is taken with screen backgrounds to ensure they do not include flashing lights or other visuals that can make it hard for some people to participate. Participants are mindful as well of the background that appears behind them, keeping privacy considerations in mind.

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- Mute microphones during video sessions, unmuting when it's your time to speak.
- While in class, all participants concentrate exclusively on class conversation and activities.
- Students use the raised hand feature in Zoom to indicate they wish to speak.
- All participants are responsible for creating a safe, healthy, inclusive and belonging space.

Recording Synchronous Sessions

I will be recording our Zoom meetings and will make those recordings available to our class for the benefit of students who are unable to attend. The recordings will be shared only with this class and deleted after the semester ends. If any students has concerns about participating in recorded meetings, they are encouraged to reach out to me directly.

Responsibility

Students are responsible for all assignments, even if they are absent. Late papers, failure to complete the readings assigned for class discussion, and lack of preparedness for in-class discussions and presentations will jeopardize your successful completion of this course.

Delays

In rare instances (likely never), I may be delayed for synchronous sessions. If I have not joined by the time the session is scheduled to start, you must wait a minimum of thirty minutes for my arrival. In the event that I will miss a session entirely, an announcement will be made on Canvas indicating any work that should be completed before the next synchronous session.

Student Course Ratings (Course Evaluations)

During the last two weeks of the semester, students are asked to provide feedback for each of their courses through an online survey. They cannot view grades until providing feedback or officially declining to do so. Course evaluations are a vital space where students can speak about the learning experience. It is an important process which provides valuable data about the successful delivery and support of a course or topic to both the faculty and administrators. Instructors rely on course rating surveys for feedback on the course and teaching methods, so they can understand what aspects of the class are most successful in teaching students, and what aspects might be improved or changed in future. Without this information, it can be difficult for an instructor to reflect upon and improve teaching methods and course design. In addition, program/department chairs and other administrators review course surveys. Instructions are available online at <http://www.newschool.edu/provost/course-evaluations-student-instructions.pdf>.

Resources

The university provides many resources to help students achieve academic and artistic excellence. These resources include:

- University Libraries and Archives: <http://library.newschool.edu> (See also [Reserves](#))
- University Learning Center: <http://www.newschool.edu/learning-center>
- Student Disability Services: www.newschool.edu/student-disability-services/
If you are a student with a disability/disabled student, or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Student Disability Services (SDS) at studentdisability@newschool.edu, or 212-229-5626, to coordinate all reasonable accommodation requests.
- The New School Food Assistance: For more information on food assistance and additional resources, please click on the link below: <https://www.newschool.edu/student-support-crisis-management/student-food-pantry-faq/>
- Health and Wellness: For information about services and support available to New School students please click on the link below: <https://www.newschool.edu/campus-community/health-wellness-support/>