Course Description:
This course provides an introduction to the study of film aesthetics, history, and criticism. It introduces an aesthetic vocabulary that students will use to analyze components of film form, such as mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing, and genre. The course approaches films as texts that indicate cultural attitudes and norms of their time and that can be understood through textual analysis. A number of critical methodologies are introduced to study cinema’s role in American culture, including issues of race, class, and gender. The course seeks to enhance the students’ understanding of film from a historical perspective, contextualizing film within the history of cinema technology and the movie industry.

Student Learning Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:
• Closely watch films to gather information relevant to conducting critical analyses.
• Apply critical approaches to the study of films.
• Speak about, write about, and analyze film form and content in historical and cultural context.
• Speak about, write about, and analyze film form and content using the vocabulary of film aesthetics.
• Discuss and debate perspectives on film form and content.

Required Materials:
» Any other readings will be available through the course Blackboard website.

Course Policies:
» Attendance is required – both physically and mentally. Unexcused absences will have a direct effect on your final grade for this course, with each one equaling a 25-point deduction (out of a possible total of 1000 points). Attendance will be taken starting exactly at 9:00 a.m. Arrivals after that time will be considered late. Late arrivals and departures prior to the finish of the class period will count as half-absences, meaning that two of either type will be counted as a full absence.
» You are allowed three fully excused absences throughout the semester. These are to be employed at your discretion but should be used to cover illness, religious holiday observance, or most any other event or circumstance that causes you to miss class. Only extreme hardship with back-up documentation (e.g., a doctor’s note) will allow for consideration of any additional absences being excused. Classes missed due to university-approved activities (athletic teams, student government, etc.) will also be considered excused. For those absences, please make me aware, and, in addition, I will need official TAMUCC documentation. If appropriate, you may arrange to make up quizzes or exams missed due to excused absences, but it will be your responsibility to get any information from a missed class lecture from one of your classmates.
» All absences not fitting into the excused categories described immediately above, will be considered unexcused. Any work missed due to an unexcused absence cannot be made up.
» Late work will be penalized by a deduction in points equaling ten-percent of the points possible for the assignment for each day it is late. Late work will not be accepted more than 4 days past the original due date.
» While in class, please make sure your cell phone is off and stowed away, even during screenings.
» A note on competing media devices: Laptops are permitted for note taking purposes during lecture only, but please do not abuse this privilege. While you may personally feel capable of multitasking during class while still paying attention to lecture and discussion, your surrounding classmates will more likely find your in-class extracurricular activities distracting, so please, for the sake of your peers, respect this restriction. No laptop use will be permitted during screenings.
» A note on film content: Various films screened for this course contain strong language, nudity, sexual situations, violence, controversial subjects, and complex philosophical ideas that might be disturbing to you. While I think there is great value to experiencing new (to you) media content with fresh eyes and ears, if you feel that you may be adversely impacted by certain types of content, it may be helpful to read story synopses available on the Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com), Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org), or other review websites in order to prepare yourself. If there are particularly acute reactions that you feel you may have, I encourage you to let me know so that I can advise you about any potential trouble spots and, if necessary, arrange for alternative screenings.
» Please remember to check your Islander email account regularly during the week and monitor the course Blackboard site for any course updates.
» If you would like to discuss any course readings, lectures, screenings, or assignments outside of class, you should feel free to contact me via email or by arranging to visit me during my office hours. If you need to schedule a time to meet outside of office hours, please let me know.
» All writing for this course must be composed using a standard, 12-point font size, and with standard 1” margins.

Academic Integrity
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism (please see below section on plagiarism). In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in, at the very least, no credit for assignment or test.
Plagiarism
Definition: In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. Plagiarism is a violation academic expectations, but it is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Often, students commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example), because they are unaware of the standards that apply. Plagiarism includes:

- Using the work of another as your own,
- Downloading or purchasing ready-made essays off the web and using them as your own,
- Using resource materials without correct documentation,
- Using the organization or language of a source without using quote marks and proper citation.
- Turning in a researched project without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.

When you are confused about citation of quotes or ideas, please visit the Writing Center or me to get help. Information on MLA documentation rules is available at Purdue University’s OWL: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/, and from our local Writing Center at CASA.

» For the purposes of citation, please follow Modern Language Association (MLA) Style Guide. For reference, see: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

Dropping a Class:
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. June 21, 2019, is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Classroom/Professional Behavior:
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Academic Advising:
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.
Notice to Students with Disabilities
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Grade Appeal Process:
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

Grade Scale:
A  900-1000 points
B  800-899 points
C  700-799 points
D  600-699 points
F  599 points and below

Grade Distribution:
» Blackboard Discussion (200 points): We will use the course Blackboard Discussion Forum to conduct conversations regarding content we are covering in the units. You will be asked to respond to specific questions or to post specific sorts of material with commentary. Initial posts for each unit’s forum should run 100-200 words, though grading emphasis will be placed on quality of posts (as defined by their corresponding rubrics) and interaction with classmates. There will be discussions worth up to 40 points each.
» Blackboard Film Journals (300 points total): In three units, you will be asked to write short essay responses to questions that ask you to analyze and evaluate films by synthesizing concepts covered in the course with your observations of these films. Due dates are listed throughout the course schedule below.
» Exams (500 points total): Two exams will be given via Blackboard on the dates specified in the course schedule.
Course Schedules:

**Schedule of Assignments:** Assignments are due by the end of the day (11:59pm) on the dates under which they are listed. The schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the professor. I will make you aware of any such changes by course announcements well before the due dates. **It is highly recommended that you print this page out to post somewhere as a reminder for yourself.**

**Wednesday, June 5**  
- Discussion Post 1 due

**Friday, June 7**  
- Film Journal Entry 1 due

**Monday, June 10**  
- Discussion Post 2 due

**Thursday, June 13**  
- Exam 1 made available at beginning of the day (12am)

**Friday, June 14**  
- Completed Exam 1 must be submitted by end of the day (11:59pm)

**Monday, June 17**  
- Discussion Post 3 due

**Friday, June 21**  
- Film Journal Entry 2 due

**Monday, June 24**  
- Discussion Post 4 due

**Friday, June 28**  
- Film Journal Entry 3 due

**Monday, July 1**  
- Discussion Post 5 due

**Tuesday, July 2**  
- Exam 2 made available at beginning of the day (12am)

**Wednesday, July 3**  
- Exam 2 must be submitted by end of the day (11:59pm)
Readings, Lecture Recordings, and Screenings: Listed readings, lecture recordings, and screenings are to be completed (read, listened to, watched, etc.) prior to noon on the dates under which they are listed. Readings will all be in EC and access to film screenings and lecture recordings will be provided through hyperlinks on the course Blackboard page in the “Screening Links” and “Lecture Links” areas. Some early supplemental material will also be available via the Yale Film Studies: Film Analysis Website. The overall schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the professor. I will make you aware of any such changes by course announcements well before the due dates.

Unit 1 (June 3-7) – Introduction to Studying Film & the Language of Film

Wednesday, June 5
Readings:
EC, Introduction and Chapter 1
Yale Film Studies: Film Analysis Web Site 2.0 sections 1-5 (https://filmanalysis.coursepress.yale.edu/)
Lecture Recording:
“An Introduction”
Screenings:
Inside Out (dir. Pete Docter, 2015, 102 min.)
Moonrise Kingdom (dir. Wes Anderson, 2012, 95 min.)
Discussion Post 1 due by end of day on Wednesday, June 5.

Friday, June 7
Lecture Recording:
“Recognizing and Appreciating Film Techniques”
Screenings:
We Need to Talk about Kevin (dir. Lynne Ramsay, 2011, 112 min.)
Film Journal Entry 1 must be submitted through Blackboard before the end of the day on Friday, June 7.

Unit 2 (June 8-14) – Analyzing Narrative, Documentary, and Experimental Films

Monday, June 10
Readings:
EC, Chapters 2 & 3
Lecture Recording:
“Representing Reality and Creating Experience”
Screenings:
Exit through the Gift Shop (dir. Banksy, 2010, 87 min.)
Free Radicals: A History of Experimental Film (dir. Pip Chodorov, 2012, 82 min.)
Un Chien Andalou (dir. Luis Buñuel, 1929, 17 min.)
Discussion Post 2 due by end of day on Monday, June 10.
Wednesday, June 12
Reading:
EC, Chapter 4
Lecture Recording:
“Storytelling in Film”
Screenings:
*Bicycle Thieves* a.k.a. *The Bicycle Thief* (dir. Vittorio de Sica, 1948, 89 min.)
Pulp Fiction (dir. Quentin Tarantino, 1994, 178 min.)

Exam 1 (June 13-14)

Unit 3 (June 15-21) – Approaches to Filmmaking: Industries, Cultures, Styles, and Genre

Monday, June 17
Readings:
EC, Chapters 5 & 6
Lecture Recording:
“Making Films as Products and as Cultural Expressions”
Screenings:
A Woman Under the Influence (dir. John Cassavetes, 1974, 155 min.)
Assassination Nation (dir. Sam Levinson, 2018, 107 min.)
The Return of the Five Deadly Venoms (dir. Chang Cheh, 1978, 107 min.)
Discussion Post 3 due by end of day on Monday, June 17.

Wednesday, June 19
Reading:
EC, Chapter 7
Lecture Recording:
“Understanding Film Genres”
Screenings:
Children of Men (dir. Alfonso Cuaron, 2006, 114 min.)

Film Journal Entry 2 must be submitted through Blackboard before the end of the day on Friday, June 21.

Unit 4 (June 22-28) – Ideology and Identity in Film

Monday, June 24
Reading:
EC, Chapter 8
Lecture Recording:
“Films Contending with our Beliefs and Values”
Screenings:
They Live (dir. John Carpenter, 1988, 94 min.)
American Psycho (dir. Mary Harron, 2000, 103 min.)
Discussion Post 4 due by end of day on Monday, June 24.
Wednesday, June 26
Required Reading:
EC, Chapter 9
Lecture Recording:
“Identity on Screen”
Screenings:
Black Girl (dir. Ousmane Sembene, 1966, 80 min.)
Crazy Rich Asians (dir. John M. Chu, 2018, 121 min.)

Film Journal Entry 3 must be submitted through Blackboard before the end of the day on Friday, June 28.

Unit 5 (June 29-July 5) – Gender and Sexuality in Film

Monday, July 1
Readings:
EC, Chapter 10 & 11
Lecture Recording:
“Gender Dynamics in Film”
Screenings:
Drive (dir. Nicholas Winding Refn, 2011, 95 min.)
Wonder Woman (dir. Patty Jenkins, 2017, 149 min.)
Moonlight (dir. Barry Jenkins, 2016, 115 min.)
Discussion Post 5 due by end of day on Monday, July 1.

Exam 2 (July 2-3)