PSYC 4390 - Psychology and Film
Summer I 2020 (June 1 – July 3)

Anthony Zoccolillo, Ph.D.
Email: Anthony.Zoccolillo@tamucc.edu
Phone: 361-825-2390
Class Location: Online
Website: Via WebEx thru Blackboard Shell
Office Hours (Virtual): T/Th 930-10, 12n-1230p

Course meeting note: This course will have regular synchronous lectures and discussions during the 10am-1155am through WebEx. Thus, it would be ideal to have a reliable internet connection, a computer with a microphone (and preferably a camera as well)

[WebEx is available via a cell phone/tablet app as well]

Course Description: Despite the fact that most people watch movies as a means of entertainment, there is no denying the influence popular culture has on the typical American citizen. Psychology and Film will explore the power of the entertainment media and understand its dynamic relationship with American culture through the eyes of psychological theory. Students will gain a broader understanding of the ways psychological principles are communicated to a mass audience as well as assist in provoking thought and analysis of psychological theory and research.

Disclaimer: Every attempt has been made to select films and film clips that minimize offensive content. If given the choice between two similar films, I have always chosen the one that would generally be found as least offensive. That said, the films, clips and images chosen may contain content that some people may find offensive and that content has not been edited out. Offensive features may include sensitive story lines, graphic language and/or images, violence, sexual themes, and drug/alcohol/illegal behavior portrayals or references. There are plenty of references available online for you to read up on the film prior to coming to class – the best of which is the Internet Movie Data Base (www.imdb.com) in the section they have for each film for Motion Picture Rating and Parents Guide. Please review the list of films I propose and decide whether or not you think your participation in this class will be impacted by the films selected. Your decision to not attend/view a particular film(s) will not excuse you for understanding how it fits in with the particular unit and every effort will be made to recommend a substitute film.

After completing this course students should be able to:

1. Identify examples of psychological principles in film
2. Critically analyze film for psychological content
3. Compare and contrast multiple portrayals of psychological content
4. Apply course materials both to both film scenarios as well as “real life”
Required Materials:

All required readings will be made available to you through Blackboard

Additionally – at least one of the films planned will not be able to be streamed through Blackboard. At the time of this writing it is only available to rent through Amazon ($3.99 to rent).

Recommended Materials:

While neither of these is required both are available cheap through Amazon and I draw heavily from both. If you desire additional readings in these two areas and would like to dive in a little deeper – both of these are highly recommended.


Your Grade:

Below is a list and a description of how you will be graded this semester. It is expected that all work is to be handed in ON the day they are due, and handed in during the class period. Late work will be subject to a significant penalty of ½ of a letter grade (5 points) per day for each day it is late. Your grade in this course will be the average of the following:

Attendance and Participation (20%):

Your attendance in the virtual classroom is vital. It is needed to discuss the topics, the readings and the films. Watching it on your own may give you access to the story but not to the rest of the experience. Additionally, the quality of this class is largely based on the quality of the discussions – which you are expected to participate in.

Quizzes/Assignments (20%):

These will be random quizzes given prior to the beginning of class designed to make sure you are doing the reading and/or independent viewing. Not coming to class prepared negatively impacts the quality of the discussions we are able to have, and much of the learning in this class comes from those discussions. These are not meant to be difficult and if you do the assignment you will have no problem getting full credit for this portion of your grade. These quizzes cannot be made up. Assignments will often be due on the days we do not “meet” and will consist of brief reflections on posted lecture material, videos, and films.

Reflection Essays (15%):

At three different points throughout the semester you will submit a written reflection regarding the films and topics discussed. These are expected to be around 2-3 pages each and give you the opportunity to synthesize each of the large topics we will be covering. A detailed prompt will be given to you at the start of each “unit” so that you can think about it as we review the material. At minimum it will be expected that you will include the films that we discussed, the relevant
readings, and other components of popular culture that you have identified as fitting the theme. More instructions will be given on the first day of class.

Midterm Reflection (20%):
Final Exam (25%): 

The midterm reflection and final exams will be based on content from the assigned readings, class discussions, and films/clips shown in class or viewed independently. It is recommended that you take notes as you do your readings.

25% Final Exam = _____*.25
20% Midterm Reflection = _____*.20
15% Reflection Essays (3) = _____*.15
20% Assignments/Quizzes = _____*.20
20% Attendance/Participation = _____*.20

100% Total

Grading Scale:

90-100% = A 
80 – 89% = B 
70 – 79% = C 
60 – 69% = D 
less than 60% = F

Expectations

We will decide on a meeting schedule on the first day of class. You are expected to be available to meet in an online classroom two times per week between 10a-1155am. For the days we do not meet you will work independently on the readings, reflections, films and assignments I will give you.

Class will start on time every day, and you should expect it to run the full period. Please avoid disturbing other students and practice the good online classroom etiquette that we will discuss on the first day of class.

I expect students to make every effort to attend each class. Should you find it necessary to miss class, please note that you will be held responsible for all material covered during the missed class. It will be your responsibility to speak with a classmate about the course content you missed. Daily powerpoint slides (when used) will be made available after class each day.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/PLAGIARISM

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. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a zero for the assignment or exam.
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.

Friday, June 19th is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

STATEMENT OF CIVILITY

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.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

STATEMENT OF ACADEMIC CONTINUITY

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

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.
DISABILITY SERVICES

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, Room #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 APPEALS PROCESS

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, 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.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>June 1</th>
<th>Introduction to Film and Psychology/Using Film as Text*</th>
<th>Shelton (2008) – The CSI Effect, Harris and Sanborn (2014) Chapter 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 2</td>
<td>Beyond the Story – Psychological Aspects of Film</td>
<td>Anderson (2003); Domino (1983); <em>Psycho</em> (1960)[RECOMMENDED] One Flew Over the Cuckoos Nest (1975)</td>
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<td>June 8</td>
<td>Film and Audience</td>
<td>Reflection Essay #1 Due Mares, Oliver, &amp; Cantor (2008); Tesser, Millar &amp; Wu (1988); Simonton, Graham, &amp; Kaufman (2012)</td>
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<td>June 9</td>
<td>Film and Reception*</td>
<td>Till, et al. (2011)</td>
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<td>June 10</td>
<td>Film and Gender</td>
<td>Harris and Sanborn (2014) Chapter 10 <em>The Snake Pit</em> (1948)</td>
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<td>June 16</td>
<td>Understanding Film and Ethnic Culture through Hong Kong Cinema /Film and Ethnic Culture*</td>
<td>Rumble in the Bronx (1985); OR The Killer (1989); OR An Autumn Tale (1987) [RECOMMENDED]</td>
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<td>June 17</td>
<td>Film and Ethnic Culture</td>
<td><em>Vanilla Sky</em> (2001)</td>
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<td>June 18</td>
<td>Discussion of ALO/VS* Assign and Explain Midterm Reflection</td>
<td><em>Abre Los Ojos</em> (1997) Midterm Due Sunday June 21st by 1159pm Last Day to Drop – Friday June 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Readings:</td>
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<td>June 22</td>
<td>Popular Culture and Intersectionality</td>
<td>Readings: Crenshaw (2016, 2018)</td>
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<td><strong>Crazy Rich Asians (2018)</strong></td>
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<td>June 23</td>
<td>Popular Culture and Intersectionality*</td>
<td><strong>Reflection Essay #2 Due</strong></td>
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<td>Langley (2015) – Chapter 1</td>
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<td>June 24</td>
<td>Introduction to Pandemic Psychology/Psychology of Uncertainty*</td>
<td><strong>Shaun of the Dead (2002)</strong></td>
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<td>Readings TBD</td>
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<td>June 29</td>
<td>Pandemic Psychology (con’t)/How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Zombie Apocalypse*</td>
<td><strong>Children of Men (2006)</strong></td>
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<td>June 30</td>
<td>Zombie Apocalypse (con’t); Film and Dystopian Societies</td>
<td><strong>Reflection Essay #3 Due</strong></td>
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<td>July 1</td>
<td>Film and Dystopian Societies*</td>
<td><strong>Children of Men (2006)</strong></td>
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<td>July 2</td>
<td>Wrap Up and Final Exam Review*</td>
<td><strong>Reflection Essay #3 Due</strong></td>
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<td>July 3</td>
<td><strong>Final Exam</strong></td>
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*Denotes days where we will have our online class meeting (10a-1155a)*