

Film Appreciation Syllabus

Instructor: Jeff Haltom

Course Description

Film Appreciation will introduce students to the film industry and history of cinema through a study of classic and contemporary films. Emphasis will be placed on exposing the class to a wide variety of styles and genres as well as formulating and justifying criticisms of the works. Hands-on projects, written scene and whole film analyses, and participation in class discussions will be required for successful completion of the course.

Our driving question this year will be: “Where do today’s films come from?”

Supplies

- Pen or pencil. EVERY DAY....NO EXCEPTIONS
- A notebook, journal, or folder dedicated to this class. Must be brought to class everyday.
- A library card, streaming service (Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Instant Video or Prime, or similar video on demand account is not required, but recommended for makeup screenings or further film exploration at home. In the event you miss a day or more of a screening in class, it is YOUR responsibility to watch that part of the film on YOUR time.
- Written journal observations will be kept in your notebook and will be taken up for a grade periodically.
- At the end of each unit of study, students will respond to a writing prompt, possibly through Google Classroom.
- Various tests will be given throughout each unit of study which introduces the student to the academic vocabulary to be utilized in writing and in class.
- A comprehensive exam will be given at the end of the trimester.
- A film project may be created in lieu of the final exam. If the students wish to do this, they must form a team where each member has a clearly delineated role and let me know as soon as possible.

Attendance

Attendance is required in order to fully participate in the class discussions and analyses. If you are absent FOR ANY REASON on a screening day, you will be required to complete an alternative assignment to receive credit for that film’s screening. The assignment is as follows:

Roger Ebert was one of the most respected and popular film critics in the history of cinema. His reviews usually go beyond descriptions of the plot and his opinions of whether an audience should go and see the movie or not. To make up your grade, I would like for you to access Roger Ebert's review database (link is provided below) and read his

review of the film you missed. After you have read his entire review, you must write a 1/2 - 1 page essay that includes three paragraphs minimum. These paragraphs should include:

- A description of Mr. Ebert's opinion of the film. Whether he enjoyed it or not, what reasons did he give for having his view? If his review was mixed, what aspects did he like/not like?

- Based on your knowledge of the film from our discussion and the portions you saw, do you agree with Roger Ebert's review? What specific things did he call attention to that you felt were spot on or missed the mark? How do your opinions align and differ?

- Give a short review of the film that expresses your opinion in your own words. You must include one specific example from the film that supports your opinion (a plot point, acting performance, art design, etc.)

www.rogerebert.com

(search for film once you reach the site)

The Film Appreciation class encompasses many different film genres and covers the history of film from the 1800's until today. Part of the requirements for this class involves screening different films (both full length reviews and scene analysis). I have tried to utilize films that do not have excessive profanity, but, unfortunately, most films will have objectionable dialogue and situations. I have a dvd player that screens out language, but some movies will be viewed on streaming services that do not filter language. There will be no nudity or graphic violence viewed. Some of the movies we will view are:

Raising Arizona

O Brother, Where Art Thou?

No Country for Old Men

Citizen Kane

Forrest Gump

Psycho

2001: A Space Odyssey

If you do not wish for your child to view these movies, please check the appropriate space below and return signed. Thank you.

_____ Yes, my child can view these movies

_____ No, I do not wish for child to view these movies

Signature

Date