Intro to Film Studies

Prof. Shelley Stamp
stamp@ucsc.edu | 459-4462 | Communications 107
Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:00 – 4:00 pm & by appointment
Class Website: http://people.ucsc.edu/~stamp/20A

Lectures: Tues & Thurs 4:00 – 5:45 pm
Screenings: Tuesdays 6:30 – 9:30 pm
Oakes 105

Teaching Assistants
Michelle Aguilar | mieaguil@ucsc.edu | Sections A & B: Fri 9:30 am & 10:45 am | Comm 117
John Beatty | jfbeatty@ucsc.edu | Sections D & F: Fri 9:30 am & 10:45 am | Comm 121
Ben Schultz-Figueroa | baschult@ucsc.edu | Sections C & E: Fri 12:00 pm & 1:15 pm | Comm 117
Kerrie Welsh | kawelsh@ucsc.edu | Sections G & H: Fri 2:30 pm & 3:45 pm | Comm 117

Course Description

This class provides an introduction to the basic tools of film analysis. We will examine how elements like mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing and sound work together to create meaning in a range of films. We will also examine how these elements are put together in different types of films – narratives, documentaries and experimental cinema – and how films function in society to circulate ideas and ideologies. Intro to Film Studies is one of the gateway classes to the Film & Digital Media major, providing you with the skills to analyze film aesthetics, as well as the tremendously important role movies play in our culture.

Course Components

Lectures: Twice-weekly lectures will explore the topics for the week and will amplify and extend the issues raised in the reading material. Lectures will always include analysis and discussion of film clips and film stills. They are a key component of the course. Lecture notes, Power Point presentations, and film clips will not be posted online or given out to students. Be sure to attend all lectures!

Discussion Sections: Friday sections will allow for small-group discussion, close cinematic analysis, and indepth examination of the week’s topic. Attendance is mandatory. No more than two absences will be permitted from discussion sections; three or more absences will result in a grade of 0/10 for participation and attendance, significantly lowering your overall grade.

Readings: Plan on completing each week’s reading assignment prior to the lecture on Tuesday. Lectures and discussion sections will build on material introduced in the readings. New and used copies of the textbook are available at the Bay Tree Bookstore; and it is available on 2-hour reserve at McHenry Library: Corrigan & White, The Film Experience: An Introduction, 3rd edition (2012).

Screenings: Tuesday evening film screenings are mandatory. If for some unavoidable reason you miss a screening, it is your responsibility to locate and view the film(s) prior to Thursday’s class. Most of the films screened in the class are on reserve at the David Kirk Media Center in McHenry Library so that you may review them when preparing for papers and exams. Please be aware that these materials get heavy use and may not always be available. Also note: films marked with an asterisk (*) will be shown during lectures, not evening screenings. Clips shown during lectures will be listed on the class website under the clip blog, but not available for re-viewing outside class.
Assignments

Participation and Attendance (10%): You are required to attend all lectures, discussion sections and screenings. Discussion is also a critical component of this class. Active participation in class discussions and sections will count favorably in your final evaluation; repeated absences will negatively affect your grade. No more than two absences from discussion sections will be permitted during the quarter. Three or more absences from section will result in a grade of 0/10 for participation and attendance, significantly lowering your overall grade.

Sequence Analysis Essay (20%): You will write a 1,000 word essay analyzing how cinematic techniques create meaning in a chosen film sequence. As part of the assignment you will create and submit a shot log describing each shot in the sequence. Due in class Thursday, October 31.

Midterm Exam (20%): The midterm exam will consist of short answer questions covering films, lectures, discussions, and readings up to and including the unit on sound. You will also be asked to write a short essay analyzing a film sequence screened during the exam. Held in class Tuesday, November 5. No alternate exam times will be scheduled.

Film Analysis Essay (20%): You will write a 1,500 word essay analyzing how cinematic techniques work together to create meaning in a selected film. Due in class Thursday, December 5.

Final Exam (30%): The final exam will be a cumulative exam covering all lectures, screenings, readings and discussions from the first day of the quarter to the last. It will be an essay exam where you will demonstrate you ability to analyze and compare films shown in the class. Wednesday, Dec 11, 7:30 – 10:30 pm. No alternate exam times will be scheduled.

Class Policies

Disability Resources: If you qualify for classroom or exam accommodations because of a disability, be sure to get an Accommodation Authorization from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and submit it to Professor Stamp within the first two weeks of the quarter. Contact the DRC at 459-2089 (voice), 459-4806 (TTY) or http://drc.ucsc.edu for more information.

Laptop Policy: Computers are permitted for note-taking purposes only during lectures. All other electronic devices must be turned off during lectures, screenings, and discussion sections. Students caught texting, web surfing, talking on the phone, playing games or otherwise interfering with class will be asked to leave, marked as absent, and will have computer privileges suspended for the remainder of the quarter.

Lateness Policy: All papers are due in hard copy at the beginning of class on the dates indicated above. Extensions can only be granted in exceptional circumstances and only with the prior permission of your TA. Essays submitted late without an extension will be accepted only at the discretion of your TA; if accepted, they will be subject to a penalty of one grade step per day (ie, a B paper would become a B- if submitted one day late, a C+ if submitted two days late, and a C if submitted three days late).

Unauthorized Sale of Course Notes: Please be aware that UCSC policy stipulates that students may be disciplined for selling, preparing, or distributing course lecture notes for any commercial purpose.

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. Students caught plagiarizing the work of others, submitting identical papers, cheating on exams or committing any other act of academic misconduct will be referred to their College Provost for disciplinary action and will automatically receive an “F” in FILM 20A. See UCSC’s Academic Integrity Policy: http://www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity/undergraduate_students/

✧ Any act of academic misconduct will result in failure of the class ✧
# Class Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 26</td>
<td>Introduction to the Class</td>
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<td><strong>Screening:</strong> <em>Al-Kompars / The Extras</em> (Nabil Maleh, Syria 1993) 100 mins</td>
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<td>← Guest lectures this week by Prof. Peter Limbrick.</td>
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<td>Oct 8 &amp; 10</td>
<td>The Shot: Framing, Cinematography, Movement</td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> Corrigan &amp; White, Chp. 3, “Framing What We See: Cinematography”</td>
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<td><strong>Screening:</strong> <em>Chungking Express</em> (Wong Kar-wai, Hong Kong 1994) 102 mins</td>
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<td>Oct 15 &amp; 17</td>
<td>Editing: Space, Time &amp; Relations Between Shots</td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> Corrigan &amp; White, Chp. 4, “Relating Images: Editing,” part 1 (pp. 133-154)</td>
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<td><strong>Screening:</strong> <em>Shadow of a Doubt</em> (Alfred Hitchcock, US 1943) 108 mins</td>
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<td>Oct 22 &amp; 24</td>
<td>Editing: Montage &amp; Discontinuity</td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> Corrigan &amp; White, Chp. 4 “Relating Images Editing,” part 2 (pp. 155-175)</td>
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<td><strong>Screening:</strong> <em>Memories of Underdevelopment</em> (Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, Cuba 1968) 96 mins</td>
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<td>Oct 29 &amp; 31</td>
<td>Sound: Cinema’s Audioscape</td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> Corrigan &amp; White, Chp. 5, “Listening to the Cinema: Film Sound”</td>
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<td><strong>Screening:</strong> <em>The Conversation</em> (Francis Ford Coppola, US 1974) 113 mins</td>
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**Sequence Analysis due in class: Thurs, Oct 31**

| Nov 5 & 7 | Narrative and Narration                   | **Reading:** Corrigan & White, Chp. 6, “Telling Stories: Narrative Films” |
|          |                                            | **Screening:** *Vagabond* (Agnès Varda, France 1985) 105 mins |

**Midterm Exam held in class: Tues, Nov 5**
Nov 12 & 14  Documentary and Experimental Cinema

Readings:
Corrigan & White, Chp. 7, “Representing the Real: Documentary Films”
Chp. 8, “Challenging Form: Experimental Film and New Media”

Screenings:
High School (Fredrick Wiseman, US, 1968) 75 mins
The Devil Never Sleeps (Lourdes Portillo, US/Mexico, 1994) 82 mins
Meshes of the Afternoon (Maya Deren, US 1943) 14 mins*
A Movie (Bruce Conner, US 1958) 12 mins*
Mothlight (Stan Brakhage, US 1963) 3 mins*
Bottoms (Yoko Ono, US 1966) 5 mins*
[*Screened in class Thurs, Nov 14]*

Nov 19 & 21  Film Genre and Ideology: Horror

Reading:
Corrigan & White, Chp. 9, “Rituals, Conventions, Archetypes, and Formulas: Movie Genres”

Screening:
Let the Right One In (Tomas Alfredson, Sweden 2009) 115 mins

Nov 26  Films in Historical Context: Film Noir

Reading:
Corrigan & White, Chp. 12, “Writing a Film Essay: Observations, Arguments, Research and Analysis”

Screening:
Double Indemnity (Billy Wilder, US 1944) 107 mins

Class canceled Thurs, Nov 28 for Thanksgiving

Dec 3 & 5  Race and Gender on Screen

Reading:
Corrigan & White, Chp. 10 [excerpt], “The Lost and Found of Film History,” pp. 380-397

Screenings:
Lip (Tracey Moffatt, Australia 1999) 10 mins* [*Screened in class Tues, Nov 29]
Chan Is Missing (Wayne Wang, US 1982) 80 mins
Sink or Swim (Su Friedrich, US 1990) 48 mins

Film Analysis Essay due in class: Thurs, Dec 5

Final Exam
Wed, Dec 11, 7:30 – 10:30 pm