

**80431 ENGL 380-1
Fall 20017**

Professor:

Email and phone

Office and hours

ST: Philosophy of Humanities in Film [3]

Tuesdays 4-6:45

June Sylvester Saraceno

jsaraceno@sierranevada.edu ext 7514, or 775- 881-7514

PL 201, T/Th 2:00-3:30 and by appointment

Special Accommodations:

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, SNC can accommodate most special needs. Students with a documented physical or learning disability may request accommodations by contacting the Director of Academic Support Services, Henry Conover, at (775) 831 1314 x7534 or hconover@sierranevada.edu. Documentation should be filed during the first week of the semester.

Required Texts:

Various films will be used as texts for this class. Students will be given film lists to choose from and are required to access these films on their own. Some options may be available through the SNC library.

Course Description:

This course looks critically at the motion picture as art and literature with an emphasis on exploring how the medium helps us understand what it means to be human. Students will be introduced to basics of film history, genres, terminology, and evolution, while focusing on enduring questions of humanity as represented in film.

Student Outcomes:

On successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:

1. Examine and evaluate films critically
2. Employ film terminology appropriately
3. Identify films by genre
4. Respond to, evaluate and compare themes verbally and in writing
5. Analyze philosophical stances on the human condition

Methods of Assessing Student Outcomes:

Student outcomes will be assessed using the following:

1. Discussions, presentations, oral reports
2. Written responses to student-selected films
3. Individual midterm project comparing films
4. Final project

Instructional Strategies:

This class is heavily discussion-oriented. Students are expected to have read or viewed all assigned material and be able to respond in class discussions. Often we will view films in class as examples and as basis for discussion. Other methods include group work, peer editing, filled out evaluation forms and film viewing outside of class.

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend for the duration of the class and be on time for every class. Please limit exiting and re-entering the class to absolute need, as it is disruptive, particularly during film viewing. If you know you need to be absent, please let me know in advance so we can make arrangements to keep you current with the class. More than one absence will adversely affect your grade.

Class Requirements:

Students are required to view a significant number of movies, most of which will be outside of class time. For every movie viewed, students are required to fill out an evaluation form (I will distribute these on the first day of class). Late evaluations, if accepted at all (at my discretion), will receive reduced credit. Students are expected to participate by sharing ideas and contributing significant commentary. Respect for classmates is also expected (listen when others speak, respond respectfully, engage in thoughtful discussions). Beverages are permitted (nonalcoholic of course) and non-distracting food is acceptable (ie: don't bring in MacDonald's and make everyone crave those fries, or crunch away on a bag of potato chips – non-noisy, non-smelly food we can all politely ignore).

Midterm Project Requirements:

Students will present a comparative analysis of two films to the class. The two films will be thematically linked (such as two coming of age stories, two versions of the same literary work, or two films based on the same historical event); style and perspective on human conflicts/concerns will be compared. Students are expected to use film terminology in this analysis.

Final Project Requirements:

The final project brings together a culminating view of humanities in film as interpreted by the individual student. This may take the form of a student produced movie, a detailed written analysis of the evolution of a particular viewpoint on the human condition in one of the film genres, a student written script, a parody of a famous film/its interpretation of humanity, a collage of video clips exploring a particular theme, or other alternatives. There are many options, which we will discuss in class. Students will submit a plan for the final project before presentations begin.

Faculty/Student Honor Code:

SNC students and faculty share the responsibility for maintaining an environment of academic honesty. Thus, all are responsible for knowing and abiding by the SNC Faculty/Student Honor Code published in the current SNC Catalog. Faculty are responsible for presenting the honor code and consequences for violating it to students at the start of their classes AND for reporting all incidences of academic dishonesty to the Provost. Students are responsible for knowing what constitutes CHEATING, PLAGIARISM, and FABRICATION and refraining from these and other forms of academic dishonesty. Violations of the honor code become part of a student's academic record.

[FYI: I read online movie blurbs and reviews regularly and generally can spot them immediately – so don't cut and paste material into your movie evaluations. I'll fail the entire evaluation.]

SNC's Disciplinary Sanctions for Honor Code Violations:

- 1st Offense: Student receives a zero for assignment/exam and counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.
- 2nd Offense: Student fails course and receives counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.
- 3rd Offense: Student is expelled.

Grading Policy:

Grades are based on the accumulation of points during the semester in the following ways:

- 200 points attendance and participation
- 200 points skits, group work
- 200 points film evaluation forms and reviews
- 200 points midterm presentation
- 200 points final project

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| 1,000-900 | A |
| 899-800 | B |
| 799-700 | C |
| 699-600 | D |
| Below 600 | F |

Class Schedule

| class | in class work | homework |
|-------|--|---|
| 8/22 | intro to class, film history video | |
| 8/29 | Some film basics, early moving pictures, comedy, <i>The Gold Rush</i> | view a comedy from the film list and complete an evaluation |
| 9/5 | Eval due, more on film evolution, <i>Citizen Kane</i> | view <i>Kane</i> documentary on reserve, evaluation on <i>Kane</i> |
| 9/12 | <i>Kane</i> eval due, review film terminology, complete discussion of <i>Citizen Kane</i> , noir intro – <i>Bringing Darkness to Light</i> | view a film noir from the list, write eval |
| 9/19 | evals due, film narrative and film noir, <i>Double Indemnity</i> , group work | groups rehearse noir skits |
| 9/26 | student noir performances, light and dark as visual metaphor | work on midterm presentation |
| 10/3 | the west as identity, <i>Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid</i> | view and evaluate film from the list, work on midterm presentation |
| 10/10 | evals due, begin midterm presentations | work on midterm presentations |
| 10/17 | complete midterm presentations, musical genre, selected video | view and evaluate a musical |
| 10/24 | evals due, science fiction and fantasy, genre and projection | view and evaluate a fantasy or sci fi from the list |
| 10/31 | evals due, horror movies, selections from various versions of Dracula, selected video | view and evaluate a horror movie |
| 11/7 | evals due, the epic genre, selected video, students submit plan for final | view and evaluate an epic, work on final presentation |
| 11/14 | evals, due, international films, selected viewing | view and evaluate a non-U.S. film, work on final presentation |
| 11/21 | Thanksgiving break | gobble gobble gobble |
| 11/28 | evals due, contemporary forms: anime, mockumentary, “indie” films, selected viewing | view and evaluate anime or mockumentary, work on final presentation |
| 12/5 | evals due, student-led review, peer critiques / feedback of final presentations | work on final presentation |
| TBA | FINAL PRESENTATIONS based on final exam schedule | |

* The schedule is not carved in stone and may change slightly. In particular, student presentations often impact planned daily work. Please be prepared to be flexible. Everything listed on the syllabus will be covered; dates may be altered.