Instructor: Matt Hill
Classroom: Walker 134
Meeting Times: M 2:05-4:55 (viewings), W 2:05-3:45 (discussion & exams)
Office: Walker 313
Office Hours: M W 12 - 1, or by appointment
Phone: 487-3230 (o) 369-4455 (h)
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Why We're Here

The purpose of this course is to develop some basic terminology and conceptual tools for viewing films in a complex manner. Through understanding the production, cultural relevance, rhetorical, semiotic, and aesthetic properties that structure film, we can begin to create our own critical ways of looking at film while still retaining the pleasurable aspects of the medium.

As we move through the semester, remember that each film uses all the concepts and strategies in any given chapter (e.g., editing, lighting, sound, and so on). Most weeks, we will focus on a particular film strategy, but we will also keep in mind all the strategies at once while we are studying the films.

We do not have a theme per se for this class, but we will focus on contemporary films for our examples. We will discuss some bits of film history, but this class will mostly be about film technique and cultural implications.

Texts

- Films (Show up for them. Many of the films are not available in either local video store.)
- Film Art: An Introduction, 7th edition, by David Bordwell & Kristin Thompson

I also advise you to maintain a written journal in which you keep a list of key concepts and definitions that you learn from your readings. You should also use this journal to take notes during the films. In your papers and exams, I will ask you to write specifically about how each film makes use of the specific film techniques we have discussed and read about.

Americans with Disabilities Act

MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. For more information, please contact the Student Affairs office (487-2212).

http://www.bsu.mtu.edu/~mahill/courses/film/spring/film.html
Electronic devices such as cell phones and PDAs

Please turn 'em off

Attendance and discussion

I believe in self-directed learning, so I do not require attendance. However, I also believe that learning is enriched by classroom discussion, debate, and questioning. So, I will take attendance each class. If your attendance is perfect at the end of the term, I will bump up your grade by 3%.

home schedule assignments
The film viewings and subsequent discussions will be most beneficial if you complete all readings before watching the films.

€ = a writing assignment is due on Monday of that week.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Films</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 (1/12 &amp; 14)</td>
<td>chapter 1</td>
<td>Living in Oblivion Tom DiCillo</td>
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<td>2 (1/21)</td>
<td>chapter 2</td>
<td>Cabinet of Dr. Caligari Robert Wiene on Wednesday</td>
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<td>3 (1/26 &amp; 28)</td>
<td>chapter 3; pp 481 - 484</td>
<td>After Life Kore-dea Hirokazu</td>
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<td>4 (2/2 &amp; 2/4)</td>
<td>chapter 4</td>
<td>Raising Arizona Joel Coen</td>
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<td>5 (2/9 &amp; 11)</td>
<td>chapter 5.1</td>
<td>Life and Debt Stephanie Black</td>
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<td>6 (2/16 &amp; 18)</td>
<td>chapter 6</td>
<td>Minority Report Steven Spielberg</td>
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<td>7 (2/23 &amp; 25)</td>
<td>Test</td>
<td>In Praise of Love Jean-Luc Godard</td>
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<td>8 (3/8 &amp; 5)</td>
<td>hooks; chapter 7</td>
<td>Do the Right Thing Spike Lee</td>
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<td>9 (3/15 &amp; 17)</td>
<td>pp 428 - 433; chapter 8</td>
<td>Kandahar Mohsen Makhmalbaf</td>
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<td>10 (3/22 &amp; 24)</td>
<td>chapter 9</td>
<td>Rushmore Wes Anderson</td>
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<td>11 (3/29 &amp; 31)</td>
<td>pp 493 - 496; chapter 10</td>
<td>The Killer John Woo</td>
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<td>12 (4/5 &amp; 7)</td>
<td>chapter 5.2</td>
<td>Beyond Voluntary Control Cathy Cook</td>
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<td>13 (4/12 &amp; 14)</td>
<td>Groth</td>
<td>Daughters of the Dust Amy Dash</td>
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<td>14 (4/19 &amp; 21)</td>
<td>pp 489 - 493</td>
<td>gas, food, lodging Allison Anders</td>
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<td>15 (4/26 &amp; 28)</td>
<td>Test</td>
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<td>Finals Week</td>
<td>Test</td>
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Assignments

2 typed, 4 - 5 page critical film analyses (20% each)
1 mid-term exam 30%
1 final exam 30%

Neither exam is cumulative, but I will expect your final to be more developed than your mid-term.

I reserve the right to change this syllabus to meet the needs of the class.

Grading Scale

90 - 100 A
88 - 89 AB
80 - 87 B
78 - 79 BC
70 - 77 C
68 - 69 CD
60 - 67 D
59 - 0 F

Grading Criteria
To Exam 1 review
To Exam 2 Review

home schedule assignments

http://www.hu.mtu.edu/~mahill/courses/film/spring/assignment.html