Stanford | Syllabus

Return to syllabi search

FILMEDIA 4S: Language of Film (Hank Gerba)

LANGUAGE OF FILM

Instructor: Hank Gerba (they/them), hankg@stanford.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Zoom for when absent: https://stanford.zoom.us/j/93316955714?pwd=U0huMG9EUjcyYVp3dXJPWHExOUd0Zz09

Passcode: 695639

(https://stanford.zoom.us/j/93462279733?pwd=RDkydjd2R1hQK1Q5NDRlS1ZzZU4ydz09) (https://stanford.zoom.us/j/93462279733?pwd=RDkydjd2R1hQK1Q5NDRlS1ZzZU4ydz09)

CLASS SCHEDULE

In-Person Class: Friday 10:30AM-1PM, McMurtry 007

Screenings: Films are available on Box, or at the Bowes Art Library

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course familiarizes students with various elements of film language (cinematography, editing, sound, etc.) and introduces them to a range of approaches to cinematic analysis (authorship, genre, close formal reading, socio-historical considerations). Different types of films (narrative, documentary, and experimental) will be surveyed. Classical narrative cinema will be compared with alternative modes of storytelling.

REQUIRED TEXTS

David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson, Jeff Smith, *Film Art: An Introduction*, 12th edition, McGraw Hill, 2017. (https://stanford.app.box.com/folder/166094998925)

COURSE REQUIRMENTS:

1. Regular attendance and preparation for class. Irregular attendance will negatively affect your grade. Arrive to class each week having done the assigned readings and watched any assigned films. The class will be discussion based, so it is important that you are prepared. When possible, it is helpful for me to know if you have a planned absence. We will work together to determine whether or not, and what type, of make-up work should be done to cover absences.
2. We are still dealing with a global pandemic. Please familiarize yourself with the following guidelines for the Summer Institute: https://summer.stanford.edu/covid-policies-and-procedures (https://summer.stanford.edu/covid-policies-and-procedures). Testing will be available throughout the summer, and you are encouraged to test yourself if you feel ill. You are not obliged to tell me if you have COVID-19, but you will be isolating for up to 10 days. I am, of course, more than happy to figure out a way for you to continue your coursework during that period to the extent of your ability.
3. There are three main assignments: weekly discussion posts, a mid-quarter scene analysis, and a final paper.
   1. Weekly discussion posts: The class will be divided into two groups, A and B. Each week, one group will write a short discussion post on Canvas about that week's film (~300 words). This will be due the Tuesday before class at midnight. The

other group will then have two days to write a short response to whichever discussion post they like. Groups A and B will alternate each week, pausing for the week of the mid-quarter scene analysis and final.

2. <u>Mid-Quarter Scene Analysis</u>: The entire class will perform a shot-by-shot scene analysis of a clip from one of the films we have watched together. This is a relatively standardized practice that we will learn and practice together. **Due August 5 at midnight.**

3. <u>Final paper</u>: The final paper will consist two parts: a scene analysis and a written analysis. For this assignment you will be free to choose any film of your choice. The details of this assignment will be provided as we approach it. **Due August 20th at midnight.**

GRADING:

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

20% Class participation and preparation

20% Scene Analysis

30% Week Discussion Posts/Responses

30% Final Paper

STUDENTS WITH DOCUMENTED DISABILITIES:

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: http://oae.stanford.edu) (http://oae.stanford.edu)).

Weekly Schedule:

Week 1 (June 24)

Film Form

Screening: *Rear Window (https://stanford.app.box.com/folder/166094998925)* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1954)

Readings: FA Ch.1 and 2

Week 2 (July 1)

Genre

Screening: *Shin Godzilla* (2016)

Readings: FA Ch. 9, Rick Altman, "A Semantic/Syntactic Approach to Film Genre" (see files on Canvas)

Week 3 (July 8)

Narrative

Screening: *Citizen Kane* (Orson Wells, 1941)

Readings: FA Ch.3, FA: "Style in Citizen Kane" 313-322

Week 4 (July 15)

Mise-en-scène / Cinematography

Screening: *Do the Right Thing* (Spike Lee, 1989)

Readings: FA Ch.4 and 5

Week 5 (July 22)

Editing: Continuity

Screening: *The Birds* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1963)

Readings: FA Ch. 6, 216-252, Raymond Bellour, "System of a Fragment (on *The Birds*)" (see files)

Week 6 (July 29)

Editing: Discontinuity

Screening: *Battleship Potemkin* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925)

Readings: FA "Alternatives to Continuity Editing," 252-259, "Discontinuity Editing in October," 259-262, "Soviet Montage," 472-475, Sergei Eisenstein. The Dramaturgy of Film Form, 161-1180 (see files)

DUE AUGUST 5: Mid-Quarter Scene Analaysis

Week 7 (August 5)

TBA

Screening: *TBA*

Readings: *TBA*

Week 8 (August 12)

TBA

Screening: *TBA*

Readings: *TBA*

DUE AUGUST 20: Final Paper

Return to syllabi search

Stanford University
(https://www.stanford.edu)

Stanford Home
(https://www.stanford.edu)

Maps & Directions
(https://visit.stanford.edu/plan/)

Search Stanford
(https://www.stanford.edu/search/)

Emergency Info
(https://emergency.stanford.edu)

Terms of Use
(https://www.stanford.edu/site/terms/)

Privacy
(https://www.stanford.edu/site/privacy/)

Copyright
(https://uit.stanford.edu/security/copyright-infringement)

Trademarks
(https://adminguide.stanford.edu/chapter-1/subchapter-5/policy-1-5-4)

Non-Discrimination
(http://exploredegrees.stanford.edu/nonacademicregulations/nond

Accessibility
(https://www.stanford.edu/site/accessibility)