University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

Curriculum Proposal Form #3

## New Course

**Effective Term:** 2141 (Spring 2014)

**Subject Area - Course Number: FILM 350**

(See Note #1 below)

**Course Title:** (Limited to 65 characters) Film Genre

**25-Character Abbreviation:** Film Genre

**Sponsor(s):** Holly Wilson

**Department(s):** Languages and Literatures

**College(s):** Letters and Sciences

# **Consultation took place**: NA Yes (see Film Studies proposal consultations)

**Programs Affected:** Languages and Literatures: Film Studies

**Is paperwork complete for those programs?** (Use "Form 2" for Catalog & Academic Report updates)

NA  Yes  will be at future meeting

**Prerequisites:** English 102, English 105, or English 162

**Grade Basis:**  Conventional Letter  S/NC or Pass/Fail

**Course will be offered:**  Part of Load  Above Load

On Campus  Off Campus - Location

**College:**  **Dept/Area(s):** Languages and Literatures

**Instructor:** Holly Wilson, Donald Jellerson

**Check if the Course is to Meet Any of the Following:**

Technological Literacy Requirement  Writing Requirement

Diversity  General Education Option: GH

**Credit/Contact Hours:** (per semester)

Total lab hours:       Total lecture hours: 48

Number of credits: 3 Total contact hours: 48

**Can course be taken more than once for credit? (Repeatability)**

No  Yes Repeatable with change of topic

**Note:** This course serves the proposed Film Studies minor, University general education requirements, and the College of Letters and Sciences BA degree requirements (upper level breadth requirement).

**Course justification:**

Film 350, *Film Genre*, will be an intermediate course in the new Film Studies minor currently proposed in Languages and Literatures. While Film 350 primarily serves those elements of the minor dedicated to students’ developing understanding and critical analysis of cinematic conventions and styles, it also augments students’ abilities to broadly position films and filmmakers in their appropriate historical, cultural, and theoretical contexts. In the attached “Auteur” syllabus, for example, students will investigate the particular visual vocabulary and style of auteur filmmaker David Lynch while simultaneously deepening their understanding of postmodernism and auteur and feminist film theory in general.

As a general education course, Film 350 exposes students to the specific conventions, development, and cultural contexts of film genres. Genre is a central organizing principle in the artistic and industrial production and marketing of films as well as their cultural influence. Thus, an understanding of cinematic genre in general is crucial to comprehending how cinema functions as an industry and as a cultural institution. This course is designed to provide students that understanding through in-depth study and analysis of a particular genre.

Topics will rotate each semester in order to explore the stylistic innovations, recurrent themes, and varying interpretations of specific film genres (noir, romantic comedy, sci-fi, westerns, etc.), enabling students of all majors to hone their analytical thinking and writing skills. Film viewings and class discussion will be supplemented with critical and theoretical texts to further assist students as they consider their genre as part of a larger American and world film canon.

**Budgetary impact:** The course will be taught by existing faculty members. Please see the Film Studies Minor proposal below (page 8) for the estimated expense of shifting faculty teaching loads.

**Short Course description:**

*Film Genre* examines the conventions, development, and cultural contexts of a rotating selection of film genres, with a focus on the stylistic innovations, recurrent themes, and varying interpretations of representative films and/or filmmakers. Repeatable with change of topic.

**Relationship to program learning objectives:**

FILM 350 will serve the proposed Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for the Film Studies minor.

FILM STUDIES MINOR

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs)

1. critically interpret films and clearly express those interpretations orally and in writing
2. demonstrate knowledge of the historical development and cultural impact of film as an art form
3. demonstrate a familiarity with the collaborative processes through which films are constructed
4. employ the specialized vocabularies and methodologies used by film studies scholars
5. engage with questions of ethics and social justice through representations of culture on film
6. analyze a range of cinematic visual styles, narrative conventions, and generic trends

**Specific Course objectives for FILM 350:**

—ability to analyze film *at* and *beyond* the level of “appreciation” or “entertainment” (SLO 1 & 6)

—understanding of stylistic innovations, recurrent themes, and varying interpretations of specific film genres (SLO 1 & 6)

—understanding of cinema as historically and culturally situated (SLO 2)

—understanding of how film appropriates and constructs gender, class, and race (SLO 5)

**Relationship to LEAP objectives:**

The ability to analyze film *at* and *beyond* the level of “appreciation” or “entertainment” (SLO 1 & 6) corresponds to LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs), including:

**Intellectual and Practical Skills, including**

* inquiry and analysis
* critical and creative thinking
* information literacy

**Integrative Learning**

* “synthesis across general and specialized skills”—understood as the ability to integrate and frame cultural awareness using the specialized skill sets and formal vocabulary employed in the interpretation and description of cinematic works that appropriate, reflect, and even create culture

An understanding of stylistic innovations, recurrent themes, and varying interpretations of specific film genres (SLO 1 & 6) frames and extends learning in the above LEAP ELOs. A nuanced understanding of cinema as historically and culturally situated (SLO 2) also corresponds to the following LEAP ELOs:

**Knowledge of Human Cultures**

* e.g. through the study of social sciences, histories, and the arts

Film 350 will promote knowledge of human cultures through the way they are represented on film. That is, the course will feature instruction in how film appropriates and constructs cultural categories such as gender, class, and race (SLO 5), which, in turn enhances LEAP outcomes:

**Personal and Social Responsibility**

* civic knowledge and engagement, local and global
* intercultural knowledge and competence
* ethical reasoning and action
* foundations and skills for lifelong learning

**Relationship to General Education goals:**

1. Think critically and analytically integrate and synthesize knowledge, and draw conclusions from complex material
2. Make sound ethical and value judgments based on… an understanding of shared cultural heritage…
3. Understand and appreciate the culture diversity of the U.S. and other countries…
4. Acquire a base of knowledge common to educated persons and the capacity to expand that base over their lifetime
5. Communicate effectively in written, oral, and symbolic form
6. Understand the nature and physical world, the process by which scientific concepts are developed and modified
7. Appreciate the fine and performing arts.
8. Develop the mathematical and quantitative skills necessary of calculation, analysis and problem solving.
9. Understand the principles essential for continual mental and physical well-being.

As the description here suggests, Film 350 will promote many of the above general education goals, especially numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7.

* Film analysis demands critical thinking and knowledge synthesis (1).
* Analysis of how film reflects cultural moments, both assuming and challenging situated value systems, enhances students’ ability to make ethical judgments based on a “shared cultural heritage” (2).
* As a lens for culture, the critical study of film opens an important avenue for appreciating national and global diversity (3).
* The visual literacy acquired in Film 350 will enhance students’ ability to view cinema critically, an activity most will pursue throughout their lifetimes (4).
* Students in Film 350 will gain practice in both written and oral communication (5).
* Film selections will ensure that students are exposed to high quality cinematic works—which should be considered aesthetic productions that rival the best of “the fine and performing arts”—allowing students to refine their aesthetic judgment and enhance their appreciation of the art of filmmaking (7).

**Sample Syllabus:**

**Film 350: film genre**

**Auteur film**

***david lynch***



Dr. Holly Wilson

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Course Description: This course explores the stylistic innovations, recurrent themes, and varying interpretations of the work of auteur filmmaker David Lynch. It will include in-depth analysis of the structure and content of representative films spanning Lynch’s career, as well as discussions of Lynch’s more recent web-based projects. The course will provide you with the tools of critical film analysis, with an emphasis on Lynch’s visual vocabulary in the contexts of narrative structure; postmodernism; and gender, psychoanalytic, and auteur theory. Film viewings and class discussion will be supplemented with critical and theoretical texts to further assist you as you begin to position Lynch in the larger American film canon.

Texts:

*David Lynch.* Justus Nieland

*A Short Guide to Writing About Film*. Timothy Corrigan

“David Lynch: The Making of a Post-classical Auteur,” Anthony Todd

“Visual Pleasure in Narrative Cinema,” Laura Mulvey

“Blue Velvet,” Roger Ebert

“Double Talk in *Twin Peaks*,” Alice Kuzniar

“The Peaks and Valleys of Serial Creativity: What Happened to/on *Twin Peaks*,” Marc Dolan

*Eraserhead.* David Lynch (1977)

*The Elephant Man.* David Lynch (1980)

*Blue Velvet*. David Lynch (1986)

*Twin Peaks*, pilot-1.8. David Lynch et al. (1990)

*Wild at Heart*. David Lynch (1990)

*Mulholland Drive*. David Lynch (2001)

*Inland Empire*. David Lynch (2006)

Grade Breakdown:

Film Reviews 20% Midterm 20%

Auteur Analysis 30% Final Exam 20% Participation 10%

Grade Scale:

A = 93–100 A- = 90–92 B+ = 87–89 B = 83–86 B- = 80–82

C+ = 77–79 C = 73–76 C- = 70–72 D = 60–69 F = < 60

Attendance

Missing more than two days of class will drop your final grade by a half letter for each day over two missed. For example: 3 absences: a B goes to a B-; 4 absences: a B goes to a C+. Being tardy three times counts as an absence. Missing more than four classes is grounds for automatic failure. This means that you have two “free” absences to use however you see fit. Except in the case of significant emergencies, I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. **Use your free absences wisely.**

tentative schedule:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week 1** | | |
| 1/23 | Introduction & Syllabus  Film: *Eraserhead* | |
| **Week 2** | | |
| 1/30 | | Film: *Eraserhead*  Todd, “David Lynch: The Making of a Post-classical Auteur,” D2L  Nieland, “Bad Plumbing: *Eraserhead*” |
| **Week 3** | | |
| 2/6 | Film: *The Elephant Man*  Nieland, “Inhuman Windows: *The Elephant Man*”  ***Eraserhead* review due** | |
| **Week 4** | | |
| 2/13 | Film: *The Elephant Man*  Nieland, “Interior Design” | |
| **Week 5** | | |
| 2/20 | Film: *Blue Velvet*  Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure in Narrative Cinema,” D2L  Ebert, “*Blue Velvet*” D2L  ***The Elephant Man* review due** | |

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| **Week 6** | |
| 2/27 | Film: *Blue Velvet*  Mulvey cont’d.  Nieland, “Sexy Tchotchke: *Blue Velvet*” |
| **Week 7** | |
| 3/5 | Film: *Twin Peaks*  **Midterm**  ***Blue Velvet* review due** |
| **Week 8** | |
| 3/12 | Film: *Twin Peaks*  Kuzniar, “Double Talk in *Twin Peaks,*” D2L |
| **Week 9** | |
| 3/19 | Film: *Twin Peaks*  Dolan, “The Peaks and Valleys of Serial Creativity: What Happened to/on *Twin Peaks*,” D2L |
| Spring Break | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Week 11** | |
| 4/2 | Film: *Wild at Heart*  Corrigan, Chapters 1 & 4  ***Twin Peaks* review due** |
| **Week 12** | |
| 4/9 | Film: *Wild at Heart*  Nieland, “Radio-Affectivity: *Wild at Heart*” |
| **Week 13** | |
| 4/16 | Film: *Mulholland Drive*  Nieland, “Moving Impersonality: *Muhollannd Drive*”  ***Wild at Heart* review due** |
| **Week 14** | |
| 4/23 | Film: *Mulholland Drive*  mulholland-drive.net |
| **Week 15** | |
| 4/30 | Film: *Inland Empire*  Recent work  Discussion, conclusions, and review  **Auteur Analysis due** |

University policy:

The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater is dedicated to a safe, supportive and non-discriminatory learning environment. It is the responsibility of all undergraduate and graduate students to familiarize themselves with University policies regarding [Special Accommodations](http://www.uww.edu/StdRsces/csd/academic_index.php), [Academic Misconduct](http://www.uww.edu/Catalog/02-04/Legal/legal1.html#Misconduct), [Religious Beliefs Accommodation](http://www.uww.edu/Catalog/02-04/Legal/legal5.html), [Discrimination](http://www.uww.edu/Catalog/02-04/Legal/legal6.html) and [Absence for University Sponsored Events](http://www.uww.edu/Catalog/02-04/Legal/legal1.html#Misconduct) (for details please refer to the Schedule of Classes; the [“](file:///C:\Documents%20and%20Settings\jellersd\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\robinsol\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.IE5\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\AppData\Roaming\www.uww.edu\Catalog\02-04\Legal\Legal1.html)[Rights and Responsibilities](http://www.uww.edu/Catalog/02-04/Legal/Legal1.html)[”](file:///C:\Documents%20and%20Settings\jellersd\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\robinsol\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.IE5\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\AppData\Roaming\www.uww.edu\Catalog\02-04\Legal\Legal1.html) section of the [Undergraduate Catalog](http://www.uww.edu/Catalog); [the Academic Requirements](http://www.uww.edu/gradstudies/catalog0608/Gradpolicies.php#academicinformation) and Policies and the [Facilities and Services](http://www.uww.edu/gradstudies/catalog0608/Gradpolicies.php#facilitiesandservices) sections of the [Graduate Catalog](http://www.uww.edu/gradstudies/catalog0608/gradcat0608.php); and the “[Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures](http://www.uww.edu/stdhdbk/uwsystem.html) (UWS Chapter 14); and the “[Student Nonacademic Disciplinary Procedures](http://www.uww.edu/stdhdbk/uwsystem.html)" (UWS Chapter 17).

**Bibliography:**

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Mactaggart, Allister. *The Film Paintings of David Lynch: Challenging Film Theory*. Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2010.

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Todd, Anthony. *Authorship and the Films of David Lynch: Aesthetic Receptions in Contemporary Hollywood*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2012.