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REVISION APPROVAL COVER SHEET FOR CONTINUATION OF W-DESIGNATION

TYPE III PROFESSOR MAKES INDIVIDUAL COURSE APPLICATION

Professor Thomas Slater

Department English

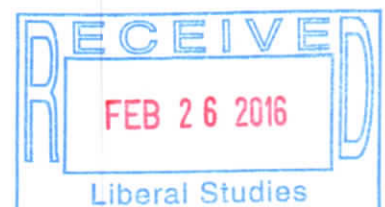
Email tslater@iup.edu

Course Number/Title engl 208 Intro to Film Studies

Please provide answers to these questions on the next page:

1. Specific Course: include the most recent syllabus for the Type III course.
2. Specific Professor: discuss what the writing activities are intended to accomplish in this course. You do not need to describe the amount of writing, frequency of assignments or fill out the summary chart for writing assignments.

Approvals:	Signature	Date
Professor (s)	<i>Thomas Slater</i>	2-22-16
Department Chair	<i>[Signature]</i>	2/24/16
College Dean	<i>[Signature]</i>	2/24/16
Director of Liberal Studies		
UWUCC Co-chair(s)		



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PROFESSOR Slater

DEPARTMENT English

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Writing activities are designed to help students focus on the essential knowledge presented in the class textbook, show active viewing of films used for study, show their knowledge of film techniques presented through textbook, worksheets, films, sample clips, and class discussion, and show their ability to study a film independently and write about its narrative structure, stylistic techniques, and themes on their own.

ENGL 208:W02 Intro to Film Studies (writing intensive)
Fall 2013
Tom Slater

Required Text: Bordwell & Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction*, 9th ed.

Course Goals: All of us know how to “respond” to a film. We watch it and then say whether or not we liked it and why. Most people prefer commercial cinema (popular releases that spend some time in theaters before going to dvd). That’s why they make the most money. But films that make the most money are generally not the most highly regarded. For example, huge box office successes frequently attract little attention from award givers at festivals or from the American Motion Picture Academy. The reason is that film is more than a commercial business. It is also and always has been an art form in which the artists choose from a certain range of alternatives (for example in costuming, setting, cinematography, and editing) in order to tell their stories (though not all films tell stories). In doing so, they may not make the choices we would expect and we wonder why? That’s a very important question. Why would the filmmakers not choose to do what would be most popular that audiences could most easily understand? When they don’t, they risk having critics and viewers condemn their movie. We can also ask why they do make the most popular and simplest choices. Does this mean they don’t have much imagination or many ideas? In any of these cases, we can gain a deeper appreciation of films by learning to recognize and define the choices filmmakers made. We can begin to understand their richness, complexity, and levels of fun better. By learning the art of the film, we can build on our initial responses and find film more fascinating.

We can break down this process of learning to appreciate film more into four smaller goals, which are

1) To learn to define and understand film as an artform; 2) To be able to recognize and define elements of narrative or non-narrative structure and elements from the four areas of style (mise-en-scene, cinematography, editing, sound); 3) To recognize how all film communicates through the relationship of structure and style; 4) To be able to explain the multiple levels of meaning on which *any* film communicates.

“Analyzing the illusory nature of film does not discredit it or diminish the pleasure of watching. Quite the contrary. The more you know about what you are and are not seeing, the richer the experience is, and the more reflective. It’s exciting to respond emotionally and intellectually to film; to feel the story and understand how that story is being constructed; to see through the images to the characters and their turmoil and at the same time observe and understand what the images themselves are doing. It’s possible and important to feel and understand, to synthesize and analyze” (Robert Kolker, *Film, form, and Culture*, 49).

Notice on Film Contents: Some of the films we study may include contents that some people might find “offensive” in terms of either violence, sexuality, or language. Such material is part of our culture, and our purpose as film students should be to neither simply praise it nor condemn it but to reach our own conclusions about how it is

functioning within the film and how the film is functioning within our culture. Therefore, I will expect every student to work with such material in a mature manner, and I will not allow students to either refuse to study films they find offensive or choose an alternative film for study.

Cell-phones and Pagers: Please turn these off before class begins and keep them off and out of sight until after class.

Assignments & Grade Values: 1) Preparation through worksheets and notes for discussing narrative and stylistic elements of films and then making the brief presentations. These aren't formal presentations made from the front of the class. This is just presenting a few points you will be responsible for. I'll provide more details when you need them. 10%.

2) Four short essays during the semester and a final exam assignment, 10 % each. Each essay will be approximately 4-5 pages and ask you to use our text book, your own observations of the film we've studied, materials I present, and materials from class discussion to clearly explain narrative and stylistic elements of film. No additional reading or research will be required for any of these assignments. What these essays must show is how your knowledge of the film of how the particular elements we are studying are present in the film and the logic behind how they are used. For this, you will need to know the terminology to define specific effects and techniques, and you'll need to explain them with detailed examples. In other words, don't just tell me that shallow focus, for example, is used in a specific scene and expect me to understand your reference. Make sure you describe the scene and how we can tell shallow focus was used. That's how I know you've learned the material.

All essays must be typed, double-spaced, and use a 12-pt. font. You must make sure they are printed and ready to hand in at the start of the class period on the days they are due. Do not send them to me by email attachment with excuses about your printer not working.

3) Independent project. For this assignment, you may either select a film to study and focus on describing both the narrative and one stylistic element in depth. You will need to show me your notes from your study of the film and produce an essay of approximately 7 double-spaced pages (though it can be more if necessary). Please decide on the film you wish to study by spring break, but you may tell me at any time before then because my one restriction is that I don't allow duplication.

A second choice for this assignment is to make your own film. As parts of this assignment, you'll need to write about your goals and ideas for the film and keep a journal describing your preparations, actual work (problems and successes), and equipment and software used. 20%

4) Discussion of films viewed in class, plus at least two out of class events, 20%. For this requirement, just go to the IUP Center for Film Studies Facebook page and write and post at least one substantial paragraph. We have some great out-of-class events scheduled this semester which are open to anyone, so feel free to bring friends. All will be free. These include a couple of 6 O'Clock Series events on Monday nights, a Sunday night showing of the great Czech Oscar-winning film from 1965, *The Shop on Main Street*, which I will introduce and lead a discussion on; a showing of the documentary

The Invisible War on a Thursday night; and several films to be scheduled and hosted by IUP graduate and undergraduate English students on Wednesday nights (2 each month).

Final grade will be based on the following scale: 90% of total points possible or better=A; 80-89%=B; 70-79%=C; etc.

Cells, ipads, etc.: Please try to remember to turn these off before class, especially if we are scheduled to be watching a film. Please refrain from taking them out and looking at them at any time during class so we don't have to interrupt our work.

Plagiarism: If you try to pass off any work taken from another source as your own in any piece of writing whatsoever, you will receive a zero for that assignment. If it happens a second time, you may very well fail the course.

Attendance: Unexcused absences will cost points off your final grade total. So please make sure you let me know the reason for your absence either before it occurs or by the next class session afterwards. If you miss class for any reason, make sure you find out what you need to have prepared for the following class session. This is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY**. If you must have more than 3 excused absences during the semester, please make sure we get together to discuss how you will make up the work.

Where, When, and How to Contact Me: My office is Sutton 345. I plan to be there T, R, 10:00-10:45; M or W (depending on the week), 4:00-5:15. The office phone number is 724-357-4879. Email: tslater@iup.edu. Feel free to email at any time. If it's easier for you to meet with me after class or at some other time, please let me know.

Any student with a disability who may require an accommodation for this class should be sure to document their disability with the IUP Disability Support Services office (Advising & Testing Center, 216 Pratt Hall, 724-357-4067, advising-testing@iup.edu). Please request the Disability Support Services office to send me a letter, confirming your registration with their office and the accommodations you qualify for. Also, please schedule to meet or communicate with me as soon as possible, in order to discuss your accommodation needs for this class.

Assignments (All assignment dates are tentative as any portion of the course may take longer or shorter than planned.)

Jan 20 Intro to course.

Jan 22 **Contrasting Film as Spectacle with Narrative Film.** Films: Lumiere Brothers shorts (1895); *A Trip to the Moon* (Georges Melies, 1902). Reading: B & T, 461-69.

Understanding Narrative Choices

Jan 27 One-page writing on spectacle and narrative due. Film: *Musketeers of Pig Alley* (D. W. Griffith, 1911).

Jan 29 Worksheet due. Reading: B & T, Ch. 2. Film: *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, 1941).

Feb 3 Film: *Citizen Kane*, pt. 2.

Feb 5 Worksheet due. Reading: B & T, Ch. 3. Assign short essay #1.

Understanding Stylistic Choices (mise-en-scene, cinematography, editing, sound)

Sept 10 Worksheets due. Reading and discussion: B & T, Ch. 4. Film: *Clerks* (Kevin Smith, 1994). Short essay #1 due.

Sept 12 Finish *Clerks*. Discuss mise-en-scene in *Clerks*.

Sept 17 More mise-en-scene discussion if needed. Reading and discussion: B & T, Ch. 5. Worksheets due.

Sept 19 Film: *Ashes of Time Redux* (Wong Kar-Wai, 1994). Assign short essay #2. Notify me of the topic for your independent project.

Sept 24 Discuss cinematography in *Ashes*. Short essay #2 due.

Sept 26 Reading and discussion, B & T, Ch. 6. Film: *Mr. Hush* (David Lee Madison, 2011).

Oct 1 Finish *Mr. Hush* and begin discussion of editing in it.

Oct 3 Discuss editing in *Mr. Hush*. Reading and discussion: B & T, Ch. 7.

Oct 8 Film: *Unforgiven* (Clint Eastwood, 1992).

Oct 10 Finish and begin discussing sound in *Unforgiven*.

Oct 15 Finish discussing sound in *Unforgiven*. Reading: B & T, 369-71. Film: *Meshes of the Afternoon* (Maya Deren, 1943). Assign short essay #3. Rough drafts and materials for final projects due.

Oct 17 Reading: B & T, 350-54, 362-64. Film: *After Stonewall* (John Scagliotti, 1999). Short essay #3 due.

Oct 22 Discuss *After Stonewall*.

Oct 24 Beginning on this date, I'd like to start focusing on films you select for us to study by the end of the semester. The selection will not be a popularity contest. Instead, please give me the titles of any films you'd like us to consider that are distinct from those

we've already studied as a class. They could be silent films, films from a different country, or of a different genre than what we've considered. Also, I won't include a film anyone is using for an independent study. At any time, feel free to write down or tell me a few titles of films you'd like to include at the end of the semester.

Other Important Dates:

Nov. 19 Rough drafts and viewing notes for independent study essays due. Please have them ready to hand in at the start of class. These do not need to be complete. They can be an outline, a full draft, or anything in between. But I can advise you that the more material you give me, the better for you. Often, people who only provide an outline don't produce a good final draft because their plans were too vague for me to respond to. The notes should be at least three pages from your film that focus on the stylistic element that you will mainly be studying for your essay.

Dec. 5 Last day of class. Independent projects due. Assignment for final short essay(s) given.

Dec 13 End of final exams week. Your final essay(s) must be submitted to me by hard copy or email attachment by 5:00 pm.

IUP/Jimmy Stewart Museum Writing Contest For High School, College, and Graduate Students

When: Fall 2013.

Topics: Any of the Jimmy Stewart films directed by Frank Capra (*You Can't Take it With You* [1937]; *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* [1939]; *It's a Wonderful Life* [1946]). The life of Jimmy Stewart. The Jimmy Stewart Museum.

Levels of Competition: High School; College (undergrad); Graduate School.

Categories: Poetry; Creative Prose; Essay; Research Essay.

Prizes for Each Category: 1st--\$150; 2nd--\$100; 3rd--\$50.

Entry submissions: Submit material at any time by email to Dr. Thomas Slater at tslater@iup.edu by 5 pm Friday, November 30. Writers may submit work in more than one category, but can not win prize money in more than one category.

Film Showings (each begins at 7 pm and will include audience discussion led by an IUP film studies scholar).

Admission: \$3.

Thursday, September 12, *You Can't Take it With You*

Thursday, October 10, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*

Thursday, November 14, *It's a Wonderful Life*

Thanks for support to the Jimmy Stewart Museum Board of Directors; IUP English Dept (chair, Dr. Gian Pagnucci; IUP College of Humanities and Social Sciences (dean, Dr. Yaw Asamoah)

Submission Guidelines for Jimmy Stewart Writing Contest

All prose entries must be typed in 12 pt. font and double spaced. Poetry must also be typed, but spacing is up to the poet.

Entries in any category can be inspired by any of the three Capra/Stewart films, by the three films as a group, by Stewart's life and career, or by the Museum or any specific items or exhibits in it.

Submit all entries as an email attachment to Dr. Thomas Slater at tslater@iup.edu. Do not have your name on the submission, only on the email message. The deadline is Friday, November 30, 2013 at 5 pm. You do not need to attend screenings of the film at the Jimmy Stewart Museum to submit entries. But the film screenings will include discussions that could provide writers with ideas. You can also ask questions and share thoughts about the movie at iupfilmstudies.com, the IUP film studies blog.

Poetry: Writers may submit up to five pages of poetry which may consist of a single poem or as many as five separate poems.

Creative Prose: High school writers should submit works of no less than two full pages. College and graduate students should submit no less than three full pages. These works

can be fictional, personal writings that focus on experiences and reactions, or contemplative.

Essays: These works should assert a specific argument about any of the relevant topics listed above which is supported by examples drawn from the films, materials at the museum, or discussion at the films or online. They should not use other published, internet, or film resources for support. High school writers should submit works of no less than three full pages. College and graduate students should submit no less than four full pages.

Research Papers: These works should assert a specific argument about any of the relevant topics listed above which is supported by examples drawn from the films, materials at the museum, or discussion at the films or online. They must also use other published, internet, or film resources for support. The total number of sources used in addition to the film or other directly accessible materials should be at least three. The sources should be clearly documented through either end notes or parenthetical citations and a Works Cited page. High school writers should submit works of no less than six full pages. College and graduate students should submit no less than eight full pages.