

The Movies

—Session 3: January 13, 2020 - March 5, 2020

Weekly Schedule:

Thursdays: Class, Waterloo Center, 5:30-10pm

Fridays: Discussion Post/Activity/Assignment available by 12pm (noon)

Wednesdays: Response to discussion post due by 12pm (noon)

Instructor: Kim Groninga, email: groningak@faculty.uiu.edu

Required Textbook: Giannetti, L. (2018). *Understanding Movies* (14th ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc. ISBN 13: 978-0-13-449208-7

Course Schedule:

Week 1 (January 16): *The Great Gatsby* (USA, 2013)

Read: Understanding Movies (UM): “POV” and “Literary Adaptations” (396-405)

NOTE: All readings must be completed prior to class. Films will be viewed in class.

Week 2 (January 23): *Life is Beautiful* (Italy, 1998)

Read UM: Photography (Chapter 1)

Read: Two articles (handouts from Kim)

Week 3 (January 30): *Big Fish* (USA, 2003)

Read UM: Mise en scène and Movement (Chapters 2 and 3)

Week 4 (February 6): *Singin' in the Rain* (USA, 1952)

Read UM: Sound and Acting (Chapter 5 and 6)

Week 5 (February 13): *Song of the Sea* (Ireland, 2014)

Childhood Film Essays Due

Week 6 (February 20): *What Dreams May Come* (USA, 1998)

Read UM: Ideology (Chapter 10)

Week 7 (February 27): *12 Years a Slave* (USA, 2013)

Read UM: “Nonfictional Narratives” (348-352)

Film Shot Presentations Due

Week 8 (March 5): *The Great Dictator* (USA, 1940, Charlie Chaplin)

Film Journals due

Final Exam

ASSIGNMENTS:

Childhood Film Essay (100 points) — Choose a film you remember viewing when you were young (age toddlerhood to teenager. Do not choose a film you have memorized word-for-word or even one you have seen more than once or twice.) Once you have chosen a film, the FIRST thing you must do is grab some scratch paper and freewrite everything you remember about the film. Then watch it. (Find on YouTube, Netflix, Amazon, the public library...) While you are watching, keep some scratch paper nearby. Write down anything which catches you by surprise and any connections you easily draw as an adult which you didn't notice or understand when you were young. (It will be helpful to also record the time stamp corresponding to your thoughts/ideas/notes as you go.) Finally, write an essay connecting

the film to what was happening historically and in society at the time the film was released. What were the biggest headlines? What seemed to be valued the most by the public? What was society afraid of at the time? Does the film quietly comment on those things? Does it starkly contrast those hallmarks of the time? What if the film were released today? How might it be written, filmed, or received differently? It will not be enough to simply write a review or paraphrase of your chosen film. Instead, carefully analyze your film, draw conclusions, and provide support for those conclusions. Please use the entire writing process to craft your paper.

Still-Shot Project & Presentation (150 points) — Students must (carefully) choose an object. They must take 15 photos of this object effectively demonstrating 15 different shot types. (Ways shots vary: angles, distance, lighting, placement, focus, mise-en-scene...) You must use the same object for all 15 shots. All shots must be stills. (No moving shots.) Gather the photographs into a powerpoint presentation and label each slide with the type of shot you are attempting. Be prepared to show and explain your powerpoint to the class. Creativity encouraged within your photographs and choice of object. Powerpoint, however, should be a straightforward collection of the 15 shots.

Film Journal (80 points, 10/entry) — The film journal (typed) must contain one entry for each film listed in the syllabus and should explore the student's reflections and personal connections discovered through the viewing and discussion of each film. Journals will be collected on the final night of class. Each entry must be at least one full single-spaced page.

Final Exam (200 points) — The final exam will cover all films and readings from the term and will be in essay format.

PARTICIPATION

Participation in Person (160 points, 20/class) — Participation is graded on in-class activities, active contributions to discussion, and attentive listening/viewing.

Participation Online (140 points, 20/week) — Each Friday by noon, Kim will post a discussion prompt in our class on UIU Learn. Students have until noon the following Wednesday to follow the instructions and participate in the discussion board. The prompt may ask you to read an additional article, watch a video, or find and post a link. ****Late participation will not be counted. ****There will be no post week eight.

Course Policies

- If you miss class, it is your responsibility to view the film listed for the night. (All films will appear on the final exam.)
- The final exam cannot be made up unless a medical emergency can be documented.
- Work turned in late will lose 10% of its grade for each week past the due date.
- If class is canceled for any reason, an alternate assignment will be required. Students will receive instructions via email and are responsible for completing the work by the next class period.
- Discussion board posts will not be accepted late.

Please note: This is the brief version of the syllabus for this class.
The entire syllabus is available on our class website at uiuLearn.