Film

Email us at:
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**Introduction and Objectives:**

Film Studies is the study of the production, aesthetics and history of the 20th century’s most important visual medium—the cinema. As storytelling device, as historical document, as expression of imagination, as artistic object, there is no form more capable of capturing our interest and provoking the senses. The cinema can create worlds of magic, fantasy and romance just as easily as it can expose the dim reality of actually lived life.

Student Learning Outcomes: This course will allow students to:

- To understand the nature and process of film production.
- To learn how to read and analyse film as you would a novel, a poem or a short story.
- To familiarize ourselves with certain theoretical ideas presented by major film theorists.
- To learn how to develop, write and revise workable screenplays.
- To explore the major aesthetic trends in the history of cinema.
- To work collaboratively with our peers to produce short films in a variety of different ways.
- TO GAIN A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF THE WAY ART WORKS—how it manipulates reality to make a thematic point (political, social, philosophical, sexual, aesthetic, etc.)

**Course Schedule**

**Introduction to Film Form:**

In this section of the course, we will learn the elements of film language, focusing mostly on the four most important elements: *mise-en-scene*, cinematography, *montage*, and sound. Some important questions are:

- What is the language in which cinema speaks?
- How do films create meaning? How does form reflect content?
- How can we read films more effectively?
- How does cinema create and use metaphors and symbolism?

**Screenwriting as Art:**

Next, we will turn our attention to the process of developing and writing our own original screenplays. We will spend two to three weeks coming up with ideas, figuring out characters and arcs, writing drafts, and revising. At the end of the unit, I will choose between the class’s screenplays to “green light” for production.

**Final Film Project**

Each student will participate in a collaborative project to plan, shoot and edit an 8-10 minute film that is based off an original screenplay. This project will be the culmination of our work, and you should be prepared! That means: GET EXCITED...but temper that excitement with a realistic sense of
what it will take. My sense is that to produce an excellent student film. Here are just some of the things you will have to do:

- Cast the film—find actors
- Find locations where you can shoot
- Amass props and costumes
- Storyboard each shot, scene and sequence
- Rehearse with your actors
- Acquire necessary technical equipment—from cameras to lighting to mobile gear to microphones to boom poles, etc. We will have some, but not all, of this equipment.
- Shoot the film (a much more complicated task than those three words imply)
- Reshoot shots or scenes that failed in the first try.
- Edit the shots together to create a coherent final cut. jj) Design the soundtrack so it includes music and sound effects.
- Create a coherent film style that is appropriate to the subject matter and story.

**Class Requirements and Expectations:**