Instructor: Stuart Voytilla  
Classroom & Meetings: M-245, 4:00-6:40 PM, MON  
Website: blackboard.sdsu.edu  
Office/Hours: COM-109 Tues, Wed 2:00-3:00pm, and by appointment.  
Email: SVoytilla@mail.sdsu.edu

Course Description: Critical approaches to the study of film, television, and new media. Analyses of media perspectives, to include ideology, semiotics, genre, gender, and spectatorship.

This course will provide an overview of the different approaches taken in media analysis and criticism. How do films, television programs, video games, and new media interfaces create meaning? How do audiences and consumers engage with media? What roles do film, television, and the Internet play in our broader media and consumer culture, and how is media culture continuing to change in the era of new media? And finally, what is the role of the media critic and media criticism in our contemporary culture?

We will look at media analyses from a variety of angles, including questions of narrative, ideology, structuralism, semiotics, genre, formalism versus realism, spectatorship, social audiences, and convergence. We will view a variety of screenings from film, television and new media. Major film and video theorists from various historical periods will be analyzed according to their contribution to the field.

Course Objectives: The purpose of this course is to expose students to important theories, concepts and contexts for understanding and manipulating media.

By the conclusion of this course, you will be able to

- Assess and analyze formal and thematic elements of media texts, drawing on tools such as semiotic and ideological theory
- Interrogate aspects of contemporary media (such as websites, videogames, and social media) that previously may have passed unnoticed
- Produce nuanced analyses of media engagement, spectatorship, and cultural identity
- Evaluate and contribute to debates on the social relevance and impact of media entertainment and media criticism

How We Get There:

Class meetings will be a combination of the following:
1) Lecture, 2) Class viewings of media texts, and class discussion of media texts and assigned reading, 3) Online responses and discussions to viewings and assigned readings (via Blackboard) 4) Three (3) written “flash” responses to in-class screenings, 5) Unannounced Quizzes, 6) Midterm, 7) Final Exam.
Required Texts:

TFM 310 Course Reader (CR) (available in Bookstore and Course Reserves in Library)

Online Required Reading (BB) (listed in Calendar and posted in Blackboard)

Corrigan, Timothy. *A Short Guide to Writing About Film* (7th or 8th Edition) (in bookstore)

*Note: Additional course reading (posted in BB) and outside viewing may be assigned depending upon the specific needs of the class.*

Recommended Texts:


Additional Material Costs:

Scantron Green Form and #2 Pencil are required for Midterm and Final Exam.

Tickets to two TTF Productions as follows:
   a. One evening of the TFM Film Festival
   b. One SDSU theatre production (your choice)

See Course Calendar and the TTF Website (in BB External Links) for schedule and ticket information. For credit, turn in your ticket stapled to your 1 page typed personal response. *Important: Responses are due by the beginning of class following the closing of your attended production.*

Assignments:

**Online Discussions:** Each of you has been assigned a discussion group (in Blackboard, select “My Groups” below the left menu), and each week you are responsible to check into your Group Discussion to address the online Forums. I will post the Forum after the week’s class session. The forums will be based on class material (including course readings) and outside personal screenings.

Your discussion participation is composed of two parts: one Response (target 250 words) to the week’s Forum topic (due by Sunday 11:59 pm before our next class meets), and one written Reaction (target 150 words) to one of your group members’ responses (due by the following evening, Monday 11:59 pm). Whenever possible, please respond to a student who hasn’t received a response. Your participation in each week’s discussion is worth 8 points. Please proofread your work for grammar and spelling, and avoid texting abbreviations/acronyms.

**“Flash” Responses:** You will be writing three (3) “flash” responses to in-class viewings, incorporating the course reading. These are unscheduled and will not be pre-announced. The media texts may not be available in the media center, so it’s important to attend class so that you don’t miss out on the screening and related class discussion. There are no make-ups for the “Flash” Responses. Responses are due the following week at the beginning of class.

Each “Flash” response will include a first draft and final revised draft. The first draft will not be graded but will help demonstrate that you took time and thought in the final revisions/proothing of your response. The final draft should be 1-2 pages (double-spaced) in length MAX, and reflect your understanding of the topic and course material, and your engagement with the media text(s) presented in class. Your responses (including first drafts) are to be typed, using 12 point Times New Roman. Your first drafts can include your handwritten editing notes. Staple your work with the revised draft in front. Each “Flash” Response is worth 10 points. Please proofread your work for grammar and spelling. Responses will be graded based on content and on form.

Reference your sources with full citation using MLA (Modern Language Association) formatting. MLA resources are available in Blackboard (Course Documents and External Links), and in the Corrigan textbook.
About the use of Wikipedia: For your written work, Wikipedia is not considered an appropriate scholarly source for citation. You are free to consult Wiki for general information about your topic, but not as a source for reference/citation.

Unannounced Quizzes:

Periodically throughout the semester, you will be given short quizzes that can be on any content related to the course (lectures, screenings, readings, etc.). These quizzes will be multiple choice, T/F and short answer essay. These quizzes are unannounced and cannot be made up.

Midterm/Final Exam:

Midterm and Final Exam will be multiple choice, T/F and short answer essay.

Grading:

Grading weights are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance to two SDSU Productions</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Flash” Responses (3 Responses, 10 points each)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Discussions (6 Discussions, 8 points each)</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unannounced Quizzes</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>52</td>
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**TOTAL: 200 points**

Your final grades are based as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>185-200</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>180-184</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>175-179</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>165-174</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>160-164</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>155-159</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>145-154</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>140-144</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>135-139</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>125-134</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>120-124</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-119</td>
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In-Class Media Screenings:

We learn from past accomplishments of “the masters” (and “the not-so-masterful”) in our field. I draw extensively from film, television, and other media (in part or whole) to supplement the lecture and reading material. These selections are as essential “texts” in providing theories and applications as the required texts (books) and will be treated with equal weight in material covered in course assignments.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Some of the films and film excerpts shown in class are rated R. These clips will be properly introduced and their context within the course material explained; however, if you have a problem with watching this type of material, please see the instructor immediately and we will work together to provide you with alternative examples.
Attendance:

Attendance will be critical for a student to have the best opportunity to understand the theories we will discuss. I will not formally take roll, but you need to be here and be on time for each session. Make-up assignments will only be allowed with a valid excuse of your absence.

Technology in Class:

Please set Cell Phones and Pagers to silent mode before each class – and put them away. Class isn’t a time for texting or checking in with your social media accounts. You are welcome to use laptops in class; however, I do not allow video or audio recording of lectures. Laptops need to be shut down during screenings. If I notice laptops being used for non-class activities, then the transgressor(s) will be asked to leave the class and the class laptop policy will be re-evaluated. Please, no talking during screenings.

Students with Disabilities:

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Improper Behavior:

Cheating on exams, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are completely unacceptable. The first incident will cause the student to fail that assignment. A second incident will cause the student to receive a failing grade for the entire course. All cheating will be reported to the dean of student affairs.

You must cite all your sources. Write with your own words. It is clear when a student borrows from another author; don’t take this risk. If you have any concern about how to integrate sources appropriately, please email or meet with me.

Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. If you are removed from the classroom, the incident will be reported and I reserve the right to drop you from the course.

IMPORTANT SDSU DATES:

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>February 2</td>
<td>Schedule Change Deadline</td>
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<td>March 28-April 1</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 5</td>
<td>Last Day of Classes before Final Exams</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 6-12</td>
<td>Final Examinations</td>
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FINAL EXAM: Monday, May 9th 4-6 pm (Bring Scantron Green and #2 Pencil)
TFM 310 COURSE SYLLABUS SPRING 2016/VOYTILLA

TFM 310 COURSE CALENDAR
SPRING 2016 – MONDAYS

The following schedule is subject to change depending upon the needs of the class and the events in the real reel world.

All readings/assignments are due by the date listed. The responses for your online group discussions are based on Sunday, Monday deadlines (see syllabus)

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THE SCHEDULE: The California Faculty Association is in the midst of a difficult contract dispute with management. It is possible that the faculty union will call a strike or other work stoppage this term. I will inform the class as soon as possible of any disruption to our class meeting schedule.

WEEK 1: (1/25) Introduction.

WEEK 2: (2/1) Narrative Theory: From Aristotle to Warner Bros. Television
Case Studies: Reality Television, Sitcoms

READING:
Voytilla, Stuart. “TFM 310 Course Syllabus” (read it carefully, and bring any questions you have to class)
Corrigan, Timothy. “Preface”, Chapter 1
Bordwell, David. “Studying Cinema” (BB, Assignments)

WRITING RESPONSES:
Visit Group Discussion in Blackboard for Posted Forum (in Blackboard, select ‘Groups’)

WEEK 3: (2/8) Narrative Theory: Joseph Campbell’s Hero’s Journey
Case Studies: Raiders of the Lost Ark, Titanic (Selections)

Student Home-Viewing Assignment: View a Pixar Feature (your choice).

READING:
Corrigan, Timothy. Chapter 2
Voytilla, Stuart. Hero’s Journey, Sample Charts. (BB, Course Documents)
Bunn, Austin. “Welcome to Pixar Planet” (BB, Assignments)
The 15 Minute Movie Method “Pixar Story Telling Secrets” (BB, Assignments)
“Pixar’s 22 Rules of Storytelling” (BB, Assignments)

WRITING RESPONSES:
Visit Group Discussion in Blackboard for Posted Forum

February 11-12. SDSU Film: Best of the Best Film Festival. Don Powell Theatre. You are required to attend one night. Turn in your ticket with 1-page personal response for credit. Check TTF website for Ticket information.
**WEEK 4: (2/15) Genre: Action/Adventure + Romance = the Adventure-Romance**  
Case Study: *The African Queen*

**Student Home-Viewing Assignment:** View a Pixar Feature (if you haven’t completed this yet)

**READING:**  
Corrigan, Timothy. Chapter 3, Chapter 4

**WRITING RESPONSES:**  
Visit Group Discussion in Blackboard for Posted Forum  
Responses Due for SDSU Film: Best of the Best Film Festival

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**WEEK 5: (2/22) Foundations of Film Art and Film Theory**  
Case Studies: Selections

**READING:**  
Pudovkin, V.I. “The Plastic Material” (CR)  
Eisenstein, Sergei. “Collision of Ideas” (CR)  

**WRITING RESPONSES:**  
Visit Group Discussion in Blackboard for Posted Forum

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**WEEK 6: (2/29) Formalism versus Realism: Montage and Mise-en-scene**  
Case Studies: Selections from *The Godfather, Close Encounters of the Third Kind*

**READING:**  
Bazin, Andre “The Evolution of the Language of Cinema” (CR)  
Arnheim, Rudolf. “Film and Reality,” “The Making of a Film” (CR)  
Kracauer, Siegfried. “Basic Concepts” (CR)

**WRITING RESPONSES:**  
Visit Group Discussion in Blackboard for Posted Forum

*March 4-13. TTF Theatre Production The Drowsy Chaperone, Don Powell Theatre. (Attend 1 Theatre Production. Turn in your ticket with 1-page personal response for credit.) Check TTF website for Times, Ticket information.*

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**WEEK 7: (3/7) Explorations in Realism**  
Case Study: TBA

**READING:**  
Maysles Films "The Documentary" (BB)  
Corrigan, Timothy. Chapter 5, Chapter 6

**WRITING RESPONSES:**  
Visit Group Discussion in Blackboard for Posted Forum

*March 4-13. TTF Theatre Production The Drowsy Chaperone, Don Powell Theatre. (Attend 1 Theatre Production. Turn in your ticket with 1-page personal response for credit.) Check TTF website for Times, Ticket information.*

ASSIGNMENT: PREPARE FOR MIDTERM

WRITING RESPONSES:
Final Day to Turn in Responses for TTF Production *The Drowsy Chaperone*

WEEK 9: (3/21) Semiotics/Structuralism

Case Study: Hitchcock’s *The Birds* (sequence)

READING:
Wollen, Peter. “The Semiology of the Cinema” (CR)
Seiter, Ellen. “Semiotics, Structuralism, and Television” (CR)

WRITING RESPONSES:
Visit Group Discussion in Blackboard for Posted Forum

ASSIGNMENT: Bring a Magazine Print Advertisement to class.

SPRING BREAK: 3/28-4/1 NO CLASSES

WEEK 11: (4/4) The Gaze, Hegemony and Music Videos

Case Studies: *Dreamworlds 3* (selections), Music Video selections.

READING:
“Dreamworlds 3” Presskit (BB)

WRITING RESPONSES:
Visit Group Discussion in Blackboard for Posted Forum

WEEK 12: (4/11) Ideology and Genre

Case Study: TBA

READING:
Althusser, Louis. “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)” (CR)
Altman, Rick. “A Semantic/Syntactic Approach to Film Genre” (CR)
Additional Reading… TBA (BB)

WRITING RESPONSES:
Visit Group Discussion in Blackboard for Posted Forum
WEEK 13: (4/18) Auteur Theory
Case Studies: Joss Whedon (selections)

READING:
Corrigan, Timothy. Chapter 7
Sarris, Andrew. “Notes on the Auteur Theory in 1962” (CR)
Kael, Pauline, “Circles and Squares” (BB)
Duckworth, A.R. “A Couple of Squared Circles, Sarris and Kael -- Part II” (BB)
Jenkins, Henry. “Transmedia Storytelling 101” (BB)
Pomeranz, Dorothy. “The Web Auteur: Joss Whedon is teaching Hollywood to stop worrying and love the Internet” (BB)

WRITING RESPONSES:
Visit Group Discussion in Blackboard for Posted Forum

April 22-May 1. TTF Theatre Production, The BFG (Big Friendly Giant), Don Powell Theatre. (Attend 1 Theatre Production. Turn in your ticket with 1-page personal response for credit.) Check TTF website for Times, Ticket information.

WEEK 14: (4/25) Spectatorship and the Audience Eye
Case Study: Selections

WRITING RESPONSES:
Visit Group Discussion in Blackboard for Posted Forum

April 22-May 1. TTF Theatre Production, The BFG (Big Friendly Giant), Don Powell Theatre. (Attend 1 Theatre Production. Turn in your ticket with 1-page personal response for credit.) Check TTF website for Times, Ticket information.

WEEK 15: (5/2) Bringing it all together. Review for the Final.
Case Study: A “Mystery” Film (required for final exam)

WRITING RESPONSES:
Visit Group Discussion in Blackboard for Posted Forum
Final Day to Turn in Responses for TTF Production The BFG (Big Friendly Giant)

FINAL EXAM: (Bring Scantron Green and #2 Pencil)
Monday, May 9th 4-6 pm