

California Lutheran University

Bachelor's Degree for Professionals

Film Theory Comm 402

Spring 2016: February 29-May 12, 2016

Wednesday, 6-9:30 PM

Woodland Hills Center

Classroom: Room 114

Instructor: Dr. Aaron Heresco (please call me Aaron)

Email: aheresco@callutheran.edu

Phone: 814-889-5161

Office: Woodland Hills #103C

Office Hours: Monday: 4-6 PM

Wednesday: 2-4 PM

If you cannot make these times, let me know and I will find another time that works

Drop Date: March 14, 2016 – Last day to add; last day to drop (without a “W”)

Last day to drop without financial penalty (100% tuition charge for classes dropped after this date)

April 11, 2016 - Last day to withdraw without academic penalty (Responsible for 100% of tuition)

Course Description: An advanced study of film theory based on professional literature. The course teaches students to analyze and understand cinema in terms of classical film theories as well as structuralism, semiotics, narrative theory, cognitive theory, feminism, postmodernism and queer theory, among others. Course assignments include completion of a major research paper.

Textbook: Film: A Critical Introduction, **3rd Edition**

By Maria Pramaggiore and Tom Wallis

Other readings will be posted on the course Blackboard space

A Netflix account will also be required for the course

Course Outcomes: Students who successfully complete COMM 402 should:

- Gain field-specific knowledge and **information literacy**
- Practice **communication skills (written and oral)**
- Hone **creative and critical thinking** skills
- Foster **identity and values** through discussion of ethics and legal principles

Course Structure

Learning is more interesting, and more effective, when multiple modes of instruction are used. There will be short lectures, video clips, audio clips, Prezi slides, and (most important of all) discussion. With this in mind, your experience in this class will be largely what you make of it – the more effort you put in, the more you will get out of the course. The critical skills you develop in this course, specifically with regard to film analysis, will remain useful to you outside of the classroom. Our discussions and assignments may be viewed as an intellectual map; a way for you to grasp the concepts of the course and more fully develop your own thinking. It is my goal that the material and learning from this course do not stop at the classroom doors – consider and use this information to better understand the world around you.

As discussion will be a vital aspect of this class, it is understood that to meaningfully participate in these discussions, you will need to have completed the assigned readings and thought about the topic for that day. Challenging assumptions, preconceptions, and “common wisdom” will be a critical aspect of this course. As such, it is understood that all viewpoints will be treated with respect. I encourage disagreement (even with me), but be sure to do so agreeably.

A Note on Classroom Discussion

This class will regularly examine controversial topics and films. The discussion around these topics should always be professional and courteous. Learning to disagree agreeably is a hallmark of critical thinking, and disrespect inside the classroom will not be tolerated.

Assignments/Requirements/Course Schedule

Weekly Quizzes

At the beginning of each class there will be a brief quiz on the reading due that day. Each quiz will be worth 5 points, and there will be 10 quizzes during the term.

Film Discussions

Twice per semester students will be responsible for leading the class in a discussion about a film of their choice. The discussions should last between 10 and 15 minutes and are not speeches, but discussions. Students should instead seek to ask questions and discuss films using the materials and approaches we cover in class. To facilitate discussion, students can use presentations, Youtube clips, blog posts, or any other multimedia that is relevant. The instructor may also step in if there is a point of particular interest related to that day's topic. Each presentation will be worth 10 points.

Film Analysis Paper

The final project in this course will be an 10 page paper analyzing film(s) of your choice. We will work together on this project and I will ask you to submit drafts to ensure that no one has to scramble at the last minute to finish. The paper should analyze a film, or genre, in some detail

and use the material we have discussed in class. Clarity of writing and depth of analysis are very important components of this assignment.

Participation and Attendance

We each bring a different set of experiences to the classroom. Finding a way to use these experiences to either build new knowledge, or change preconceptions, is a large part of the learning process. This can only happen, however, if people contribute meaningfully to the classroom dialogue. Share your thoughts, show your knowledge, and help apply the concepts we will be discussing to everyday life. Beyond contributing to class, part of the participation process is arriving to class on time and paying attention for the duration. You cannot participate if you do not show up for class. You are allotted 1 “free” absence. After that, each additional absence will result in losing 3% points off your final grade. However, I do understand that school, home, and work responsibilities often overlap, so if you let me know in advance you cannot make it to class, we can work together to devise a make-up plan.

Course Grades: There will be 100 possible points in this class. The breakdown is as follows:

Weekly Quizzes	40 Points
Discussion Board Posts	20 Points
Film Analysis Paper	30 Points
Discussion Leading	10 Points

Late Assignments: Assignments will be accepted up to one week after their due date. I understand that “life happens” and sometimes deadlines cannot be met. However, work that is turned in late will be graded more harshly, and full credit will not be given.

Grade Scale

93 – 100	A
90 - 92.9	A-
87 – 89.9	B+
83 - 86.9	B
80 – 82.9	B-
77 – 79.9	C+
70 – 76.9	C
60 – 69.9	D
0 – 59.9	F

Course Evaluations Statement:

All course evaluations are conducted online. Your feedback is important to us. You will receive an email message reminding you when the website is open for your feedback. The link is: <http://courseval.callutheran.edu>

Disability Statement:

California Lutheran University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations in compliance with ADA of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to students with documented disabilities. If you are a student requesting accommodations for this course,

please contact your professor at the beginning of the semester and register with the Disability Support Services Coordinator, Wendy Jimenez, for the facilitation and verification of need. The Disability Support Services Coordinator is located in the Center for Student Success Office located at 3259 Pioneer Street, and can be contacted by calling 805.493.3260 or emailing wjimene@callutheran.edu

Statement on Academic Honesty:

The educational programs of California Lutheran University are designed and dedicated to achieve academic excellence, honesty and integrity at every level of student life. Part of CLU's dedication to academic excellence is our commitment to academic honesty. Students, faculty, staff and administration share the responsibility for maintaining high levels of scholarship on campus. Any behavior or act which might be defined as "deceitful" or "dishonest" will meet with appropriate disciplinary sanctions, including dismissal from the University, suspension, grade F in a course or various forms of academic probation. Policies and procedures regarding academic honesty are contained in the faculty and student handbooks.

Plagiarism, cheating, unethical computer use and facilitation of academic dishonest are examples of behavior which will result in disciplinary sanctions. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- word for word copying without using quotation marks or presenting the work as yours
- using the ideas or work of others without acknowledgement
- not citing quoted material. Students must cite sources for any information that is not either the result of original research or common knowledge.

Standards of Student Conduct Statements:

- [Student Life Handbook](#)
- [Academic Honesty Statement](#)

University Harassment Policy

Be civil to each other, both on- and offline. For information on the University's **student harassment policy and rights, please go to the following link:**
[Student Life Handbook](#)

Pearson Library

Pearson Library provides access to scholarly books, journals, ebooks, and databases of full text articles from scholarly journals. To begin using these materials, visit the library web page <http://www.callutheran.edu/library>

There are many ways to contact Pearson Library for research assistance, no matter where you are!

- Email Yvonne Wilber (Professionals liaison) at ywilber@callutheran.edu
- General Library email: CLUlibrary@callutheran.edu
- Library main phone: 805.493.3250
- Text us your question: 805.493.3867
- Get more help at: <http://www.callutheran.edu/library/help/>

CLU Writing Center

The Writing Center provides 1:1 writing consultations, in-person and online, with trained undergraduate and graduate writing consultants. We welcome all writing-related projects at any

stage of the writing process across the diverse disciplines of study at CLU. The Writing Center also hosts writing workshops, provides in-class visits, facilitates writing groups, and offers a writer's studio option for longer, sustained projects. Services suit writers of all levels, including traditional undergraduates, graduate students from all fields, all English language learners, and accomplished scholars alike. All members of the CLU community with an @callutheran.edu email address are welcome to make use of our services. For more information, please visit at www.callutheran.edu/writing_center or call 805-493-3257. Please schedule appointments online through MyCLU Blackboard with the yellow "The Writing Center" icon in "Tools," or stop by The Writing Center itself, located in the Darling Collaboration Suite of Pearson Library.

Sexual Misconduct

California Lutheran University does not tolerate any degree of sexual misconduct on or off-campus. We encourage you to report if you know of, or have been the victim of, sexual harassment, misconduct, and/or assault. If you report this to a faculty member, she or he must notify Cal Lutheran's Title IX Coordinator about the basic facts of the incident. More information about your options for reporting can be found at: <http://www.callutheran.edu/title-ix/>

Veterans Resources

If you are a veteran, military member, or a family member of a veteran or military member, please refer to Cal Lutheran's Veterans Resources webpage for important information: <http://www.callutheran.edu/veterans/> Also, if you are a veteran receiving benefits and you are struggling in a class, you most likely qualify for free tutoring. Please contact the Veterans Coordinator, Jenn Zimmerman, veterans@callutheran.edu or 805.493.3648, for more information.

Help Desk

Students may contact the Help Desk about telephone, network, wireless network, software questions password problems, hardware problems, and general consultation (i.e. you cannot log into your MyCLU portal, or you are having problems with Blackboard). Please click on the following link for more information http://www.callutheran.edu/iss/technology_services/helpdesk.php or call: 805.493.3698

Syllabus content is subject to change

Student Workload/Carnegie Hours:

The expectation for this course is that you will spend the equivalent of 4 hours per week in class (an hour is defined as 50 minutes), and you will spend approximately 9 hours per week studying and completing assignments for this course.

Activity	Instructor-Led Hours		Homework Hours		Remarks
	Weekly	Course	Weekly	Course	
Readings of required text			5	55	Over 11 weeks, uneven distribution
Weekly Classes	3 hr. 20 min.	36 hrs. 40 min.			Includes final exam

Paper Draft Process		5			Average, varies by student
Discussion Leading				5	Average, varies by student
Discussion Board (5)		10			1 Post and Response during Week 4 and 8
Weekly Quiz Prep			1	10	Average, varies by student
Final Paper Project				30	Average, varies by student
Total		50		100	

Final Note

This syllabus is subject to change. Every effort will be made to alert students to changes that occur in a timely manner.

Preliminary Course Schedule

Week 1 – Intro To Film Analysis
Chapters 1 and 2

Week 2 – Writing About Film
Chapter 3 and Web Readings

Week 3 – Narrative Form
Chapter 4

Week 4 – Mise en Scene
Chapter 5

Week 5 – Cinematography
Chapter 6

Week 6 – Editing
Chapter 7

Week 7 – Sound
Chapter 8

Week 8 – Documentary and Avant- Garde
Chapter 9

Week 9 – Film and Ideology
Chapter 10 and 11

Week 10 – Film Stardom and Genre
Chapter 12 and 13

Week 11 – Film Authorship and Industry
Chapter 14 and 15