ENGLISH 110
INTRODUCTION TO FILM

Instructor: Terrance Millet
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Office Hours: Monday: 1-2 pm; T/R 11:00am-12:00pm at the Benton Center.

Time & Place: NSH 209; 2-4:40 pm.
CRN 24521
Web Page http://cf.linnbenton.edu/artcom/english/milletl/web.cfm?pgID=54
Web Site: www.wworton.com/web/movies
Prerequisites: • It is strongly recommended that you take WR 121 before you take this or any other Literature class. If you have not, see me.
• Computer skills; e-mail account; WEB navigation skills.¹

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Hello, and welcome to all of you. The goal of this class is to help you enjoy, interpret, and reflect on film. It will encompass film and its the techniques of both its making and its interpretation, but the class will be partly about humanity, psychology, and philosophy. And it’s a class about history and politics—about what it means to be a woman or a man living in society and what film might attempt to show about that experience.

Here are some other questions I’d like to look at with you: Is film helpful and relevant, or is it just a form of entertainment? How can we interpret a film so that we don’t spoil our enjoyment of it through “over-analyzing” it? How can we see the issues in our own lives reflected in the films we read, and, through an historical perspective, gain wisdom on how to live?

To begin, let’s start to think about issues that are relevant to you. While good films have something to say and can entertain us with their message—and with the skill with which they are assembled—an important question remains: do they really matter? Or do they address the same issues that we as men and women struggle with—that indeed humankind has always struggled with—: love, power, identity, ambition, spirituality, conformity, individual identity, fame, money, death, failure, politics, fear?

We’ll watch, discuss, and write about film, and come to understand its elements through becoming familiar its vocabulary—words such as genre, film noir, epic, lighting, and formalism.

¹ This is not a class that teaches computer skills. It is assumed the student has competency with computer, e-mail, and application skills already in place.
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS: Submit your essays electronically. E-mail them to me at terrancemillet1@comcast.net as attached documents in Microsoft WORD format only and in Courier 12 font. You will have the opportunity to demonstrate our learning outcomes by accomplishing the following tasks:

1. **Online Quizzes** (175 points [7 @ 30]): from the web site (www.wworton.com/web/movies) on the chapter of the week. These quizzes will be due each week on the assigned chapter for that week. E-mail me the tests and scores. Pick the 30-question tests unless unavailable.

2. **Screening Worksheets**: (175 points [7@50]): These exercises are available for downloading on the web site. After each film or clip indicated for study on the textbook’s web site, you will fill the screening worksheet out in detail and submit it for grading. One of these is due each week. (www.wworton.com/web/movies). One solid paragraph per answer.

3. **Timeline Summaries** for each chapter. Due each week (70 points; [7 @ 10]). Read these timelines on the web site and write a one-page piece on what surprised you the most about the Timeline information.

4. **Final Essay**: (200 points) Write a 7-page major essay on one of the topics listed in Appendix I below. You’ll find tips in the appendix on what to look for and how to structure your essay. Essays will be due Wednesday of week 10.

5. **Define the 7 critical approaches for analyzing film listed below** and send your definitions in for grading (50 points). Due at the end of week 1.

6. **One Summary Response** on Chapter 8, due at the end of week one. (Four pages @ 50 points)

FORMAT AND CITATION STYLE

We’ll be using the Chicago Manual of Style for all submitted work in this class. See http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/p04_c10_s1.html.

When communicating by email, you must use your Linn-Benton email account. College rules prevent me from replying to any other email address.

**Film Clips and Frame Sequence from the CD-ROM and website.** Check the inside of the front cover and follow the Chapter-by-Chapter examples of subject/visual material available for you on the CD-Rom and website—for class discussion.

Watch the films closely and intelligently and have something to say about them. Mark the pages in your texts. **Allow at least two hours of outside work for each “hour of class”**. This is a three-class a week course, so plan on a good six hours committed the class weekly. If you are not diligent about this, you will fall behind. Staying current with your viewing and your work is key to success. Please word-process and double-space your work, and include your name, the class time, the instructor’s name, and the assignment title and type at the top left of the first page of all tests and assignments.

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You can also use terrance.millet@linnbenten.edu
Follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* (see handout or any handbook)

**Think about the following when you consider film:**

**TECHNICAL APPROACH:** Discuss the technical devices that are important to the overall impact of the film.
1. What is the technical quality of the film overall?
2. What filmmaking techniques are used, and what effects do they create? Use examples.
3. What are the strongest technical points, and what are the weakest?

**THE DIRECTORIAL APPROACH:** Discuss the creativity and style of the auteur of the film, its director.
1. How would you describe the director’s style based on this film and other films by him/her?
2. How do the various elements of the film reflect the director’s artistic or life philosophy?
3. How is this film similar and/or different from the director’s other films?
4. Does the film reflect a new direction for this director? If so, what?

**THE GENRE APPROACH:** This is the approach you will use with the genre films (combat, western, screwball comedy, and film noir).
1. In what ways does this film fit into the criteria associated with this genre? Add examples.
2. What are the variations on the standard formula in this film? Are these variations enough to make the film unique and interesting?
3. What values and beliefs are reflected in the film? Give examples of how these play out in this film. Are these beliefs still relevant?

**THE PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH:**
1. Do any of the characters possess universal qualities? If so, what qualities present themselves?
2. What aspect of human nature does the film help us understand?
3. Does the hero reflect the archetypal pattern of the hero’s quest or struggle to overcome adversity? Is the quest successful?
4. Examine the relationship between characters. What problems are explored? What insights are revealed about human relationships through the film?

**THE SOCIOLOGICAL/POLITICAL APPROACH:**
1. From what social class does the main character come? How is this class portrayed? How does this impact the film?
2. How do members of different social classes interact? Use examples. What does this say?
3. What seems to be important to the characters?
4. Does the film seem to support a traditional value system or does it question that view?

**FOCUS ON THE ACTOR**
1. How well suited is the actor to this role? How powerful is this performance in light of other work of this actor?
2. How is it similar or different to other roles played by this actor?
3. What new aspect of the actor is revealed for the first time in this film? Or is it a repeat of the type of role that this actor has played before?

OVERALL APPROACH:
1. How powerful is the star’s performance?
2. How does that film reflect this particular director?
3. How does the film work as an example of this genre?
4. What is the theme of the film? How important or creatively expressed is the theme?
5. Is the film emotionally effective? In what way?

Class Resources:
• My Web Page (http://cf.linnbenton.edu/artcom/english/milletl/web.cfm?pgID=54) has a list of resources, templates, syllabi, class outlines, and a host of etceteras.
• See pages 18-19 in the General Catalogue for a list of campus resources. The Writing Desk is an excellent place to get professional help with your essays.

Grades:
A—90-100
B—80-89
C—70-79
D—60-69
A = You perform consistent and excellent work on time. You come to class having read the material actively and thoughtfully. Your writing makes insightful connection between the material and the issues involved.
B = You show consistent work, but you may not have always understood the material and your writing might not express clarity all the time. Minor errors impede the writing.
C = Also means consistent work, but you have occasionally struggled with the reading and your writing shows recurring errors. You missed an occasional assignment.
D = You fall behind, miss an assignment, and attempt to turn in work late. You attend class irregularly and do not contribute to class or group work.
F = You complete less than 2/3rds of the work. Most students fail because they stop trying or don’t seek help before it’s too late.
Y = Means you complete so little work (less than 25%) that there is no basis for a grade.

NOTE: Submit your essays electronically. E-mail them to me at terrancemillet1@comcast.net as attached documents in Microsoft WORD format only and in Courier 12 font. Electronic submissions are due by midnight on the due dates. You will get them back sooner than written work (which is also due earlier, in class), and have the opportunity to get more feedback on them. Electronic submissions must be attached files that are named with your last name, the class days, and the assignment. For example: SmithTRwr121essay#1. You must use your Linn-Benton email address for returned replies.

Plagiarism Statement:
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Using someone else’s work as your own or using information or ideas without proper citations (which is called plagiarism) can lead to your failing the assignment of the class. Bibliographies (called Works Cited) AND in-text citation are required whenever you use outside sources, including Internet sources.

**Waitlist Policy:**
Students who are registered but not present for the first class, unless they have given the instructor prior notice, will be dropped from the class and their place assigned to students on the waitlist.

**Late Work Policy:**
Late work will not be accepted unless critical circumstances justify an exception.

**Disability statement:**
If you have emergency medical information for your instructor, need special arrangements to evacuate campus, or have a documented disability, please meet with your instructor, by appointment, no later than the first week of the term, to discuss your needs and present your ODS accommodation letter. If you have a documented disability that will impact you at college and you have yet to seek accommodations, contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) for intake and to document your disability with LBCC. Only students who document a disability and present an accommodation letter to an instructor are entitled to academic accommodation. Each term, when you register for classes, and at least 2-3 weeks prior to the start of the term, submit your “Request for Accommodations” form to ODS. During Week 1, pick up letter for your instructors and deliver in person to each instructor during office hours or by appointment. Instructors may need time to arrange your accommodations. ODS may be reached from any LBCC campus/center by email to ODS@linnbenton.edu or by calling 917-4789. Letter pickup is available at each LBCC campus/center. Additional instructional services beyond classroom instruction and instructor consultations are available for all students at the Learning Center and the Support Lab at HO-114.
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Schedule
(Subject to revision, with notice)

Overview: Each chapter will entail discussion of the topics as they relate to films or clips you will watch. Be ready to discuss the films you’ve enjoyed and what made them worthwhile for you in terms of the chapter themes. By using group emailing, you can inspire one another with these talks and instill the desire to watch and appreciate your favorite films.

Here is the list of films you will select from for your final essay. The LBCC library has most of these, as does DVD World in Corvallis (and Philomath). Try the OSU Library as well. (Please use DVD World as your commercial source. You will want to watch entire films, especially the foreign ones, and commercial outlets edit some DVD’s for content. Public Libraries are especially guilty of selecting DVD’s that have been edited for content and language. You will actually hear blanks where strong language has been cut. Is this ethical? It’s a good topic for consideration).

1. Red; White; Blue
2. Richard III (Ian McClellan); check the play for screenplay.
3. King Lear; Ran
4. Les Miserables (French) [a two-tape edition]; Les Miserables (U.S.)
5. Solaris (Russian, 1976); Solaris (U.S. 2002)
6. Smoke Signals

Week 1: Chapter 8: Writing About Movies.
1. Introductions, course outline. We’ll set the protocols for the class.
2. Due: Friday: Summary Response #1 on Chapter 8 due at the beginning of class. The S/R template will be handed out, and copies are always available online. This Summary Response is to be a detailed review of the chapter and should be 4 pages in length. (50 points)
3. Due Friday: Define the 7 critical approaches for analyzing film listed below and send your definitions in for grading (50 points).

Week 2: Chapter 1: What is a Movie? Fundamental Principles
1. Quiz #1 due on Chapter 1.
2. Film: Saving Private Ryan. Complete the Screening Worksheet and submit it for grading on Friday.7 One good paragraph per answer.
3. Timeline Summary4 for chapter 1. See web site. Due Friday (10 points). Read the Timeline write-up on the chapter web site and write a one-page piece on what surprised you the most about the information.

3 Screening Worksheets: (175 points [7@50]): These exercises are available for downloading on the web site. After each film or clip indicated for study on the textbook’s web site, you will fill the screening worksheet out in detail and submit it for grading. One of these is due each week.

4 Timeline Summaries for each chapter. Due each week (70 points; [7 @ 10]). Read this timelines on the web site and write a one-page piece on what surprised you the most about the Timeline information.
Week 3: Chapter 2: Form and Narrative
1. Quiz #2 due on Chapter 2.
2. **Film:** Bonnie and Clyde. Complete the Screening Worksheet and submit it for grading on Friday.
3. **Timeline Summary** for chapter 2. See web site. Due Friday (10 points). Read the Timeline write-up on the chapter web site and write a one-paragraph piece on what surprised you the most about the information.

Week 4: Chapters 3: Mis-en-Scene and Design
1. Quiz #3 due on Chapter 3
2. **Film:** Cast Away. Complete the Screening Worksheet and submit it for grading on Friday.
3. **Timeline Summary** for chapter 3. See web site. Due Friday (10 points). Read the Timeline write-up on the chapter web site and write a one-paragraph piece on what surprised you the most about the information.

Week 5: Chapter 4: Cinematography
1. Quiz #4 due on chapter 4.
2. **Film:** The Birds. Complete the Screening Worksheet and submit it for grading on Friday.
3. **Timeline Summary** for chapter 4. See web site. Due Friday (10 points). Read the Timeline write-up on the chapter web site and write a one-paragraph piece on what surprised you the most about the information.

Week 6: Chapter 5: Acting
1. Quiz #5 due on Chapter 5
2. **Film:** The Passion of Joan of Arc. Complete the Screening Worksheet and submit it for grading on Friday.
3. **Timeline Summary** for chapter 5. See web site. Due Friday (10 points). Read the Timeline write-up on the chapter web site and write a one-paragraph piece on what surprised you the most about the information.

Week 7: Chapter 6: Editing
1. Quiz #6 due on Chapter 6
2. **Film:** A Space Odyssey. Complete the Screening Worksheet and submit it for grading on Friday.
3. **Timeline Summary** for chapter 6. See web site. Due Friday (10 points). Read the Timeline write-up on the chapter web site and write a one-paragraph piece on what surprised you the most about the information.

Week 8: Chapter 7: Sound
1. Quiz #7 due on chapter 7
2. **Film:** A Space Odyssey. Complete the Screening Worksheet and submit it for grading on Friday. Yes, it’s the same film as last week. This will help with your
3. **Timeline Summary** for chapter 1. See web site. Due Friday (10 points). Read the Timeline
write-up on the chapter web site and write a one-paragraph piece on what surprised you the most about the information.

Week 9: Conferences, Catch-up, and Research
1. I’ll be available for scheduled conferences and consultations.
2. We’ll research and write our final, 200-point essay this week. (Topics are given in the Appendix). This is a 7-10-page essay, and will require all the skills and knowledge you’ve acquired over the course.
   It also entails procuring the films; get them early and return them promptly so that we will all have a timely chance to view and study them for the essay. Use the libraries and video stores as resources.
   We’ll use the classroom on Monday (usual time and place) to meet and brainstorm, collaborate, and utilize resources.

Week 10: Essays are due by Wednesday, midnight. Missing work that you have permission to submit late is also due on Wednesday.
   Again, we’ll use the classroom time and place to meet and collaborate.
APPENDIX I

Essay Topics
Say something intelligent, insightful, and profound about one of the following topics:

1. The difference (discrepancy?) between the treatments of the topic in the 1976 Russian version of Solaris and the American 2002 version with George Clooney. Take a look at what these differences say about technique, socio-political values, cultural values, intelligence, etc. Is the best sci-fi a vehicle for interior landscapes? Can this be said of most good film?

2. The difference between the treatments of the topic in the French version of Les Misérables and the U.S. version with Leam Neeson. Take a look at what these differences say about technique, socio-political values, cultural values, intelligence, etc.

3. An exploration of lighting, intent, mood, technique, etc. comparing the three French films Red, White, and Blue.

4. The social/cultural insights revealed by contrasting film such as Smoke Signals and the generic “Cowboy” film of the 1940-1960’s.

5. A comparison of the films
   a. King Lear (English) and Ran (Japanese) or
   b. a traditional Richard III and the version with Ian McClellan. What does the modern film say about politics that might be missed in the traditional performances?
APPENDIX II

LEARNING OUTCOMES: When you’ve successfully completed ENG 110, you should be able to:
• Recognize how film helps in understanding the human condition
• Interpret film through critical evaluation
• Demonstrate how film enhances personal awareness and creativity
• Write and speak confidently about your own and others’ ideas.

COURSE THEMES AND CONCEPTS: To demonstrate our learning outcomes, you’ll need to understand these Themes and Concepts:
• Theme
• Director’s intent
• Audience
• The use of devices such as lighting, editing, theme, allusion, and mood in film
• The role of structure or design in crafting the film
• Genre and form

SKILLS: To reach our learning outcomes, you’ll need to master the following skills:
• “Reading” film critically
• Analyzing film using the above themes and concepts in writing responses
• Researching sources and the use of citation standards
• Working collaboratively
• Connecting film to our own lives and sharing these connections in discussion and writing
• Understanding structure and meaning of film
• Appreciating form, process, and genre