

INTRODUCTION TO FILM STUDIES

Film 1022—001

Western University 2023-2024

Screenings: Asynchronous weekly screenings—links posted on OWL

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Over its long and complex history, cinema has often been viewed as mere “entertainment.” Film viewing can be tense, exciting, and even terrifying, but ultimately, it’s supposed to be an enjoyable leisure activity. Thus, outside of certain circles (academia, cinephilia, fan communities), we seldom seek to analyze movies the way that we might examine a work of art or literature. And yet, along with a variety of other contemporary visual media, our film experiences often directly (or indirectly) shape our values, beliefs, and opinions about ourselves, about life, and about our society.

A year-long introduction to film studies, this course will explore the concepts of film form, film aesthetics, and film style, while remaining attentive to the various ways in which cinema always also involves an interaction with both specific audiences and larger social structures. Throughout the course, we will closely examine the construction of a variety of film forms and styles—including the classical Hollywood style, documentary cinema, experimental films, and contemporary independent and global cinemas. During the fall term, we will pay particular attention to the construction of film images, systems of film editing, film sound, and the varied modes of organizing these core elements. The second term of the course will introduce key theoretical perspectives in cinema studies as well as examine genre, authorship, non-narrative cinemas, transnational filmmaking, and

alternative/independent cinemas. Overall, the goal of the course is to help you develop a set of skills that will enable you both to experience and analyze all forms of cinema in newly exciting (and critical) ways.

Objectives: This course has been designed to provide students with a broad introduction to the study of film. In addition to teaching students the basic vocabulary of film studies, it is intended to provide a sampling of the variety of films that have been made and are being made, the different approaches to film (e.g. film as art, film as industry, film as communication practice), and specific ways of grouping films in critical practice (e.g. historically, by genre, nation, style, or by authorship). The course will also introduce students to critical methodologies for close analysis of filmic texts and to ways of writing about film.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the course, you will have a solid grounding in the study of cinema: you will have learned the basic vocabulary of the discipline and the elements of film form and style; you will have been introduced to key figures, films, movements, and theories of the Classical Hollywood and other cinemas, and you will have begun to learn to write critical film analyses.

COURSE TEXTS

Required:

1. Bordwell, David and Kristin Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction*. 12th ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 2020. [FA]
2. Additional readings from E-journals and book chapters posted on OWL [OWL]

Recommended:

1. A writing handbook is essential for all university students. Options include *The Canadian Writer's Handbook—Essentials Edition*, *The Bedford Handbook*, and *Checkmate*. Students planning to continue in Film Studies or English should also buy the *MLA Handbook* and Timothy Corrigan's *A Short Guide to Writing on Film*.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS and GRADING GUIDELINES

Fall Term: 35%

- Attendance and Participation (weekly) [5%]
- In-Class Exam #1 (Oct. 24) [15%]
- Mise-en-scène Analysis [~1000 words] (Due: Fri. Dec. 8) [15%]

Winter Term: 35%

- Attendance and Participation (weekly) [5%]
- In-Class Exam #2 (Jan. 23) [15%]
- Sequence Analysis—Shot Breakdown (Due: Thurs. March 14) [15%]

Final Exam: 30% (Date TBA, 3 hours)

Course Content: Course Assignments, Lecture slides, OWL readings, Tutorial Clips, and Streaming Links will be posted on the OWL site for the course: <http://owl.uwo.ca> Click on the **Resources** button to find the appropriate content. All course assignments must be submitted to OWL by the due dates listed on the syllabus. Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the OWL Help page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. <https://wts.uwo.ca/helpdesk/> **Note: Although I will send mass emails to the class through OWL, you should use my Western email account for any correspondence.*

Academic Integrity Tutorial: All students are required to enroll in and complete the Centre for Teaching and Learning's Academic Integrity Tutorial. To access the tutorial, please use the link provided in the Resource tab in the course OWL site. Once the tutorial has been completed, you will receive a downloadable certificate. You must upload the certificate and submit it through the course Assignments tab in order to complete this assignment. The tutorial must be completed by Friday in the second week of term. This tutorial is mandatory in order for you to complete and pass the course.

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is *mandatory* in lectures and tutorials. In cases of excessive absenteeism (e.g. more than 9 unexcused hours for a half course, 18 for a full course), which are not accounted for by either academic consideration or accommodation, students may be debarred from taking the final examination, and will receive an official warning to this effect by or before the course drop date (see Senate policy). Students who do not *consistently* attend class will receive 0% for their course participation grade.

Your attendance and participation grade for the course (10% of your final grade) will be determined by your lecture attendance and your participation in tutorials. If you cannot attend one or more of your scheduled tutorial sessions, however, you may also participate asynchronously by responding to questions/clips that will be posted in the Forum section of OWL. Participation actively enhances your experience in any class and facilitates greater learning, and your final Attendance and Participation grade will be based on the quantity *and* quality of your participation in these tutorials and forums.

Only documented medical emergencies—verified through the Dean's office—will be considered for excessive absences, paper extensions, or exam rescheduling. Thoughtful participation is highly encouraged during tutorial sessions and will improve your final participation grade.

Screenings: You are required to view the weekly screenings before each tutorial. **All weekly film screenings will be available via streaming sources.** Links to the weekly screenings can be found in the Resources tab on OWL, and screening links will be posted by Friday afternoon the week before lecture/tutorial (if not earlier). There will also be

screening introductions and guiding questions posted each week in the OWL Forum section.

I encourage you to view the films on as large a screen as possible so that you can pay close attention to the visual style and formal construction of the films. Most screening links will also have optional subtitles/closed captions that you will be able to turn on (or off). Finally, you may also make an appointment to view any of the course films in the Film Study Center [UC-1126] by contacting the Film Library Assistant, Paul Cawston (pcawston@uwo.ca) (Phone: x85730).

Recordings: Participants in this course are *not* permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. You should also remember that the course lectures are *not* in the public domain but are each instructor's intellectual property. They should not be shared or distributed outside the course in any manner.

Lecture Outlines: Lecture slides will be posted each week on OWL. These slides will provide a brief overview of lecture topics for that week, but they will not contain all the relevant material from lecture and should not be seen as a substitute for weekly lectures. Be sure to download these lecture overviews before class to help you take notes during lecture periods.

Exams: There will be one 2-hour exam in each term and one 3-hour comprehensive final at the end of the course. The in-class exams will include multiple choice, short paragraph answer questions, and clip/image analyses. The final 3-hour exam will be comprehensive, but it will be somewhat weighted towards material from the Winter term. The final exam for the course will be scheduled during the Winter term exam period (time/date TBA). There will be no exam scheduled for the December exam period.

Paper Assignments: There will be two short written assignments for the course, a mise-en-scène analysis and a sequence analysis/shot breakdown. The assignments are meant to help you develop your skills of close film analysis and critical thinking. *Specific assignment requirements will be posted in the Assignments folder on OWL on the dates listed below.

Mise-en-scène Analysis: Students will complete a detailed close reading and write a short analysis (1000 words) of the mise-en-scène of a still from one of the films of the course. Detailed instructions will be posted on OWL.

Shot Breakdown and Sequence Analysis: Working in groups, students will prepare a shot breakdown of a given sequence from one of the films from the course. You will then provide an essay *analysis* of this sequence/shot breakdown as part of the final exam for the course. Detailed instructions will be posted on OWL.

*All properly submitted papers will be carefully marked according to the Grading Guidelines included the end of the syllabus. Review these guidelines carefully before writing your papers *and* after receiving your assignment mark and comments.

Assignment Length and Submission Policy:

Do your best to stay within the assigned word limit for each assignment. Work on editing (or expanding) your paper so that you are within 10% of the word limit. Excessively short (or long) essays will lose marks up to one full letter grade. Assignments 50% or more over the word limit may be returned to students for additional editing. Assignments that are 50% under the word limit will receive a failing grade.

Assignments must be submitted to OWL on the due date listed. Click on the **Assignments** link in the course page and follow the instructions to upload your assignment. Make sure you receive a confirmation that the assignment has been uploaded. Any assignments *emailed* without permission will *not* be accepted, and late penalties will apply until the assignment is submitted in OWL. Assignments handed in late without prior permission or accommodation will be returned with a grade only, no comments, and 3% per day late (including weekends) deducted from the grade assigned to your paper. Papers submitted after the assignment has been returned to the rest of the class will normally not be accepted.

All requests for extensions must be made through Academic Counselling in your home faculty. Students must make such requests well in advance of the due date and have a good reason for the extension. Extensions can only be granted *after* we have received confirmation of accommodation from your Academic Counsellor.

Returning Assignments:

We will do our very best to return assignments *within three weeks of the due date*. Assignments will be returned through OWL. If you wish to discuss the comments or grade you have received on an assignment or test with your instructor, *you must wait at least three days after the assignment has been returned to you*—no exceptions.

If you believe an assignment has been unfairly graded for whatever reason and you wish to make an appeal, you must follow the procedures prescribed by the university. See the “Undergraduate Student Academic Appeals” document posted on the University Secretariat’s “Rights and Responsibilities” webpage and in the Academic Calendar.

In short, you must first consult with the person who marked your paper. If a TA marked your paper and you are still not satisfied after they have reexamined the assignment, request *through your TA* a consultation with the professor. The professor will then verify with the TA that proper procedures have been followed, and if they have, the professor will then review the assignment and contact you with a decision. If you are still not satisfied after the professor has reexamined the assignment, you must make a request for academic relief in writing to the Chair of the English and Writing Studies department.

*All assignments worth more than 5% of your final grade, including the final exam, *must*

be completed: failure to do so will lead to an automatic F for the course. Your final grades are also released by the Registrar's Office, not your instructor.

Office Hours: I will be available to answer questions, clarify concepts/assignments, and assist you with your coursework during my weekly office hours. To accommodate all students individually during office hours, please email me in advance so that I can schedule a specific time for us to meet. Your TA will also have one office hour per week, which they will announce in tutorials. If you have an occasional conflict, you may contact us, and we can set up an alternative time to meet.

Email: We are happy to communicate with students via email, but please remember that we will typically only be available via email M-F from 9-5 and allow 48 hours for a response before sending a follow-up. You should also try to limit your emails to short questions about the course, schedule, or course content. Extended discussions about the course content should be done in person during office hours. In addition, be sure to carefully review the course syllabus if you have a question about the course. *We may choose not to respond to questions about the course that can be answered simply by reviewing the course syllabus.* Remember that your professor and your TAs are busy people with many other responsibilities.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Fall Term 2023

Section I: INTRO to FILM ART

Week 1—Sept. 11-13—Film Art and Filmmaking

Screening: *Gravity* (Alfonso Cuarón, USA/UK, 2013, 91 min.)

Reading: *Film Art* [FA]: Chapter 1 (pgs. 1-48) and Ch-8 (pgs. 323-324)
[OWL]: Smith, "It's Just a Movie"

Week 2—Sept. 18-20—Film Form and Meaning

Screening: *The Wizard of Oz* (Victor Fleming, USA, 1939, 101 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 2: 49-71 & Ch-9 (pgs. 344-348)

Week 3—Sept. 25-27—Classical Hollywood Narrative

Screening: *The Searchers* (John Ford, US, 1956, 119 min.)
& *The Great Train Robbery* (Edwin S. Porter, USA, 1903, 12 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 3 (pgs. 72-100) & Chapter 9 (pgs. 339-341)
& Chapter 12 (pgs. 454-465)

Section II: IMAGE COMPOSITION

Week 4—October 2-4—**Mise-en-Scène I (Sets, Costumes, Lighting)**

Screening: *All that Heaven Allows* (Douglas Sirk, USA, 1955, 89 min.)
 & *A Trip to the Moon [Le voyage dans la lune]*
 (Georges Méliès, France, 1902, 14 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 3 (pgs. 111-132)
 & [OWL]: Mercer and Shingler, *Melodrama* (excerpts)

Week 5—Oct. 9-11—**Mise-en-Scène II (Performance and Space)**

Screening: *The Florida Project* (Sean Baker, USA, 2017, 111 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 4 (pgs. 132-158)
 & [OWL]: Baker/Porton, “Life on the Margins”

Week 6—Oct. 16-18—**Cinematography: The Shot**

Screening: *Rear Window* (Alfred Hitchcock, USA, 1954, 112 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 5 (pgs. 159-194)

Week 7—Oct. 24—**MIDTERM EXAM #1 (In-Class)**

****NO SCREENING or TUTORIALS this week**

Week 8—Oct. 30-Nov. 1—**READING WEEK**

Week 9—Nov. 6-8—**Cinematography: Camera Movement and Mobile Framing**

Screening: *The Silence of the Lambs* (Jonathan Demme, USA, 1991, 118 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 5 (pgs. 194-215)
 & [OWL]: Taubin, “*The Silence of the Lambs: A Hero of Our Time*”

*****Mise-en-scène Analysis Assignment Posted on OWL*****

Section III: COMBINING IMAGES

Week 10—Nov. 13-15—Continuity Editing

Screening: *Jaws* (Spielberg, US, 1975, 124 m.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 6 (pgs. 216-252)

Week 11—Nov. 20-22—Discontinuity Editing

Screening: *Bonnie and Clyde* (Arthur Penn, USA, 1967, 111 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 6 (pgs. 252-262) & Chapter 11 (pgs. 420-424)
& Chapter 12 (pgs. 472-476; 481-484)
& [OWL]: Cook, “Another Story: Myth and History in *Bonnie and Clyde*”

Section IV: FILM SOUND

Week 12—Nov. 27-29—Elements of Film Sound

Screening: *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, US, 1941, 119 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 3 (pgs. 100-110) & Chapter 7 (pgs. 263-281)
& Chapter 8 (pgs. 313-322) & Chapter 12 (pgs. 476-479)

Week 13—Dec. 4-6—Sound Design and the Act of Listening

Screening: *The Conversation* (Frances Ford Coppola, 1974, 113 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 7 (pgs. 281-302) & Chapter 12 (pgs. 484-490)

*****Mise-en-Scène Analysis Due to OWL by 5pm on Friday, Dec. 8*****

Winter Term 2024

Section V: KEY CONCEPTS in FILM THEORY and CRITICISM

Week 14—Jan. 8-10—Film Style: Realism

Screening: *Ladri di biciclette* [*Bicycle Thieves*]
Vittorio De Sica, Italy, 1948, 89 min.)
& *Killer of Sheep* (Charles Burnett, US, 1978, 80 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 8 (pgs. 303-313) & Chapter 12 (pgs. 479-481)
& [OWL]: Massood, “An Aesthetic Appropriate to Conditions”

Week 15—Jan. 15-17—Film Style: German Expressionism and Film Noir

Screening: *Nosferatu* (F.W. Murnau, Germany, 1922, 94 min.)
& *The Big Heat* (Fritz Lang, US, 1953, 90 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 12 (pgs. 465-468)
& [OWL]: Schrader, “Notes on Film Noir”

Week 16—Jan. 23—MIDTERM EXAM #2 (In-Class)

****NO SCREENING or TUTORIALS this week**

Week 17—Jan. 29-31—Psychoanalytic and Feminist Film Theory

Screening: *Vertigo* (Alfred Hitchcock, US, 1958, 128 min.)

Reading: [OWL]: Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema”
& Modleski, “Femininity by Design: *Vertigo*”

Week 18—Feb. 5-7—The Auteur Theory and Female Authorship

Screening: *Dance, Girl, Dance* (Dorothy Arzner, US, 1940, 90 min.)
& *The Piano* (Jane Campion, New Zealand, 1993, 117 min.)

Reading: [OWL]: Mayne, “Female Authorship Reconsidered”
& Klinger, “Contested Endings”

Week 19—Feb. 12-14—Genre Studies

Screening: *Halloween* (John Carpenter, US, 1978, 91 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 9 (pgs. 327-339; 341-344)
& [OWL]: Clover, “Her Body, Himself”

****Sequence Analysis/Shot Breakdown Assignment Posted on OWL****

Week 20—Feb. 19-21—READING WEEK

Section VI: NONFICTION and NON-NARRATIVE CINEMA

Week 21—Feb. 26-28—The “Truth” of Documentary

Screening: *Crisis: Behind a Presidential Commitment*
 (Robert Drew, US, 1963, 52 min.)
 & *The Black Cop* (Kent Garrett, US, 1969, 15 min.)
 & *Stories We Tell* (Sarah Polley, Canada, 2012, 109 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 10 (pgs. 352-371) & Chapter 11 (pgs. 434-443)

Week 22—March 4-6—Experimental Cinema

Screening:
Ballet Mécanique (Fernand Léger/ Dudley Murphy, France, 1924, 11 min.)
Un chien andalou (Buñuel, France, 1929, 16 min.)
Meshes of the Afternoon (Deren/Hammid, USA 1943, 14 min.)
Mothlight (Brakhage, USA, 1963, 4 min.)
Scorpio Rising (Kenneth Anger, USA, 1963, 28 min.)
Me and Rubyfruit (Sadie Benning, USA, 1990, 5 min.)
Home Stories (Müller, Germany, 1990, 6 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 10 (Pgs. 371-400) & Chapter 12 (pgs. 468-472)

Section VII: (TRANS)NATIONAL CINEMAS: Politics, Gender, Sexuality

Week 23—March 11-13—Third Cinema in Latin America

Screening: *Memorias del Subdesarrollo* [*Memories of Underdevelopment*]
 (Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, Cuba, 1968, 97 min.)

Reading: [OWL]: Stam, “Third World and Postcolonial Cinema”
 & Burton, “Memories of Underdevelopment”

****Shot Breakdown Due to OWL by 5pm on Thursday, March 14****

Week 24—March 18-20—Transnational Queer Cinema: Hong Kong & Ivory Coast

Screening: *Happy Together* (Wong Kar-wai, Hong Kong, 1997, 96 min.)
 & *Woubi Chéri* (Phillip Brooks and Laurent Bocahut,
 France/Ivory Coast, 1998, 62 min.)

Reading: [FA]: Chapter 11 (pgs. 430-434) & Chapter 12 (pgs. 490-494)
 & [OWL]: Brunette, excerpt from *Wong Kar-wai*
 & [OWL]: Migraine-George, “Beyond the ‘Internalist’ vs.
 ‘Externalist’ Debate”

Section VIII: REFRAMING HOLLYWOOD CONVENTIONS

Week 25—March 25-27—Race and Horror in American Cinema

Screening: *Get Out* (Jordan Peele, US, 2017, 104 min.)

Reading: Dyer, “White Death”
& Taylor, “Introduction” to *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*

Week 26—April 1-3—Marvel and the Global Hollywood Blockbuster

Screening: *Black Panther* (Ryan Coogler, USA, 2018, 134 min.)

Reading: [OWL]: Great, “Bury Me in the Ocean”

****See Winter Term Exam Schedule for Final Exam Date and Time****

POLICIES and REGULATIONS

This instructor respects and upholds University policies and regulations pertaining to the observation of religious holidays; assistance available to the physically disabled, visually and/or hearing impaired student; plagiarism; sexual harassment; and racial or ethnic discrimination. All students are advised to become familiar with the respective University regulations and are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns to the attention of the instructor. For Film Studies regulations governing Term Work, Exams, Faculty Office Hours, Academic Relief (appeals, petitions, complaints), and other matters, please consult “Information for Students” on our website at www.uwo.ca/film

Prerequisites: Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Intellectual Property/Copyright:

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students’ personal use within the course, and remain the instructor’s intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without

permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

ACCOMMODATION POLICIES

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Accommodation for Students on Medical Grounds:

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth (either alone or in combination) 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. *Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.*

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The Student Medical Certificate (SMC) can be found at

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

The full policy is set out here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Religious Accommodation:

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence:

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, here. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Academic Support & Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Mental Health: Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/>

ACADEMIC OFFENCES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

***Note on AI/ChatGPT:** Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized use of AI tools such as ChatGPT to create content that is submitted as one's own. AI tools may *only* be used for general information gathering and preliminary research purposes. In all submitted coursework, students are expected to critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop *their own* ideas, arguments, and perspectives. Students are thus required to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources and avoiding all forms of plagiarism. All course assignments and exams *must* reflect the student's own thoughts and independent written work.

Complaints: If students have a complaint concerning a course in which they are enrolled, they must first discuss the matter with the instructor of the course. If students are still not satisfied, they should then take the complaint to the English Department chair. These regulations are in place because a failure to follow these procedures creates the potential for injustices of various kinds affecting either the instructor or the students themselves, or both parties. Concerns should not be allowed to fester but should be raised with the instructor in a timely manner, so that they can be addressed in time to make a difference to the course.

GRADING CRITERIA

A+ (90-100):

Argument: Clear development of a specific, challenging and original thesis. The writer has taken significant risks successfully; in the resulting piece, distinctive ideas and content have discovered their necessary distinctive form. Detailed reference to appropriate texts, with evidence of individual response. Ability not only to expound subject but to see it around—subtleties and ambiguities, qualifications and concessions, relations to other subjects, etc.

Presentation, structure: Quotations well integrated into text. Proper paragraphs. Almost no typographical errors.

Language Skills: Sentence structure correct, with full range of sentence types (compound, complex, and compound-complex), with full range of punctuation (including semicolons, colons, dashes, parentheses). Graceful style, neither pompous nor breezy, and few errors.

Research/scholarship: Evidence of effective, extensive and independent research, with proper documentation of sources. Quotations used appropriately and purposively.

A (80 to 89):

Argument: The writer has taken risks and most of them succeed. Clear development of a specific and challenging thesis, with proper paragraphs. Detailed reference to appropriate texts, with evidence of individual response. Ability not only to expound subject but to see it around—subtleties and ambiguities, qualifications and concessions, relations to other subjects, etc.

Presentation, structure: Quotations well integrated into text. Proper paragraphs. Almost no typographical errors.

Language Skills: Sentence structure correct, with full range of sentence types (compound, complex, and compound-complex), with full range of punctuation (including semicolons, colons, dashes, parentheses). Graceful style, neither pompous nor breezy, and few errors.

Research/scholarship: Evidence of effective and independent research, with proper documentation of sources. Quotations used appropriately and purposively.

B (70 to 79):

Argument: Clear development of a specific thesis, with proper paragraphs. Adequately detailed reference to texts. Ability to expound reasonably sophisticated ideas with clarity.

Presentation/structure: Quotations well integrated into text. Proper paragraphs. A few typographical errors.

Language Skills: Sentence structure correct, with reasonable range of sentence types and full range of punctuation. Style not too wordy, with errors relatively few and minor.

Research Scholarship: Evidence of adequate research, with proper documentation of sources.

C (60 to 69):

Argument: Reasonably clear development of a thesis, with proper paragraphs. Basic ability to expound ideas, whose development might be rather thin. Effort to support points with references to the text. Tendency to replace analysis with descriptive retelling of plot.

Presentation/structure: Presentation showing lapses in tidiness and/or proofreading. Poor use of paragraphs.

Language Skills: Sentence structure correct, but perhaps overly simple, with tendency to avoid punctuation besides period and comma. Errors relatively few, but occasionally serious, with evident misunderstanding of some point of elementary grammar (comma splices, fragments, semicolon errors, subject-verb disagreements, poorly integrated quotations)

Research/Scholarship: reasonable effort at documentation, but rather thin.

D (50 to 59):

Argument: Difficulty with paragraphing or consecutive thought. Ideas inchoate but clouded by weak expression. Overgeneralization with inadequate support, or examples that run to lengthy paraphrase, with little or no analysis.

Presentation/Structure: Very poor to non-existent use of paragraphs. Inadequate and inaccurate documentation. Multiple typographical errors.

Language Skills: Errors of grammar or diction frequent enough to interfere with understanding.

Research/Scholarship: Little serious effort to research the topic.

F (49 and below):

Argument: Ideas too simple for level of course. Argument completely incoherent. Erroneous content showing little or no understanding of subject.

Presentation/Structure: Very sloppy proof-reading. Documentation virtually non-existent.

Language Skills: writing frequently ungrammatical.

Research/Scholarship: Non-existent. Content largely “borrowed” from sources with no individual distillation, but no apparent attempt to deceive. Failure to follow the course assignment and guidelines.

0 (Report to Department)

Plagiarism with intent to deceive.