

FILM 101: Introduction to Film Analysis

Trimester 3 2015

16 November to 18 December 2015

20 Points



Screen grab from *Fight Club* (David Fincher, 1999).

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 16 November to 18 December 2015

Last assessment item due: 17 December 2015

Withdrawal dates:

Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Screenings

Monday 3.10-6.00pm Hugh Mackenzie HMLT104

Tuesday 2.10-5.00pm Hugh Mackenzie HMLT104

Lectures

Tuesday 10.00-11.50am Hugh Mackenzie HMLT002

Wednesday 3.10-5.00pm Hugh Mackenzie HMLT002

Tutorials are held on Thursdays.

Tutorials begin in WEEK 1. Please register for tutorials via the FILM 101 site on Blackboard: go to “Tutorial Instructions” and follow the instructions carefully. Remember to record your tutorial time, day and room for future reference.

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Course coordinator and tutor:	Simin Littschwager
Email:	Simin.Littschwager@vuw.ac.nz
Room:	83 Fairlie Terrace, Room 205
Office Hours:	Wednesdays 1-2pm and by appointment

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information will be communicated in lectures, posted on Blackboard and distributed via Blackboard email notifications. If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, we strongly encourage you to set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use.

PRESCRIPTION

This course examines how cinema creates meaning through formal elements such as narrative, mise-en-scène, cinematography, sound and editing. It introduces students to key concepts and terms in Film Studies. It develops their textual analysis skills and explores different practices of interpretation.

COURSE CONTENT

This course comprises of two main areas of study:

During WEEK 1 and WEEK 2 we will explore technical concepts of film form (mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing, sound) and how they create meaning in the context of an individual film. From WEEK 3 through to WEEK 5 we will look at more encompassing critical concepts and theoretical issues, such as narrative, genre, authorship and documentary cinema.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

The aim of this course is to introduce you to the textual analysis of films, and to some of the critical concepts employed in Film Studies. Students who successfully complete this course should be able to:

1. perform the close textual analysis of films, including the application of correct terminology in a relevant and critical manner
2. demonstrate knowledge of Film Studies concepts such as genre, authorship, documentary,
3. analyse some of the social and cultural meanings of films

4. display enhanced critical, analytical and argumentative skills
5. communicate their ideas and arguments about cinema in a critical, creative, and scholarly manner

TEACHING FORMAT

This course is delivered over **5 weeks**. Each week, there are:

- 2 X 3-hour-screenings, preceded with a short introduction to the film
- 2 X 2-hour-lectures
- 1 X 2-hour-tutorial

Screenings allow students to watch key films that will be discussed in lectures and tutorials. Even if you have seen the films already, you are expected to attend the screenings, as we will be watching the films with a different emphasis. The films have been chosen for analysis, and the screenings will be preceded with a short introduction and essential information about specific elements to pay attention to. **Lectures** involve the presentation of important terms, concepts, and debates. **Tutorials** will provide a forum for discussing issues raised in the lectures, screenings and readings; give the opportunity to practice using the terminology and apply the concepts taught in this course; and prepare for assignments. Students will be encouraged to participate actively in both the lectures and the tutorials. In addition, you are expected to read the set **Readings** in advance of lectures and tutorials.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

- submit all assignments, on or by the specified dates, and sit the in-class test (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work)
- attend at least 3 out of 4 tutorials

Any student who is concerned that they have been (or might be) unable to meet any of these mandatory course requirements because of exceptional personal circumstances should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 20-point course is 200 hours over the trimester or 13 hours per teaching week. This Trimester 3 course is compressed into 5 weeks and the weekly workload is therefore much higher than the normal workload. You can expect to spend approximately 40 hours per week attending screenings, lectures, and tutorials; completing the set readings; reflecting on the course content; and working on assignments.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Clip analysis (650-800 words)	15%	1, 2, 4	25 Nov
2	Textual Analysis Essay (1500-1700 words)	30%	1, 3, 4, 5	4 Dec
3	Creative Group work and presentation	15%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	14/17Dec
4	In-Class test (2 hours)	40%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	16 Dec

Assignment #1 – Clip analysis (650-800 words)

Due Date: Wednesday, 25 November, midnight

Weighting: 15%

This assignment covers material from Week 1. It involves the close analysis of a clip in response to a particular question. Questions and clips will be available on Blackboard. Further details will be provided in Week 1.

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilment of the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner
- Quality and clarity of expression
- Correct application of Film Studies terminology and concepts
- Evidence of textual analysis skills
- Quality of argumentation and originality of ideas
- Accurate and complete referencing, including a bibliography and filmography

Relationship to Learning Objectives:

This assignment will develop your understanding and application of film terminology and encourage you to be a close and critical viewer. It will also help you to improve your ability to express your ideas in a scholarly way.

Assignment #2 – Textual analysis essay (1500-1700 words)

Due Date: Friday, 4 December, 9pm

Weighting: 30%

This essay requires you to synthesize material from Week 1 and Week 2. It involves the close textual analysis of a sequence from a list of nominated films or an approved alternative. You will need to identify a theme in the film of your choice, select a key sequence and discuss how different elements of film form serve to express this theme. Further details will be provided in Week 2.

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilment of the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner
- Quality and clarity of expression
- Correct application of Film Studies terminology and concepts
- Evidence of textual analysis skills
- Quality of argumentation and originality of ideas
- Accurate and complete referencing, including a bibliography and filmography

Relationship to Learning Objectives:

This assignment will develop your understanding and application of film terminology and encourage you to be a close and critical viewer. It will also help you to improve your ability to express your ideas in a scholarly way.

Assignment #3 – Creative Group work and presentation

Due Date: Written statement: Monday, 14 December noon; Presentation: Thursday, 17 December in tutorials

Weighting: 15%

For this assignment, students will work together in small groups. The assignment covers material from Week 3 and 4.1.: narrative, genre, and authorship. Students will create either a fictional mash-up of two seemingly incompatible genres, or a fictional remake of an existing film by a prominent auteur. The completion of this assignment has two components: first, students need to submit one brief written statement (300-500 words) per group that contains theoretical considerations and reflects on their work process as group; second, students will present their film idea to their peers, including some visual aids. Each of these components will be group assessed. While each of the two components is relevant for the outcome of the assessment, the overall grade for this assignment will be awarded holistically.

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilment of the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner
- Quality and clarity of expression
- Critical and creative application of Film Studies terminology and concepts
- Creativity and originality in the conception of the idea
- Creativity and originality in the presentation, including visual communication skills
- Effective communication and teamwork

Relationship to Learning Objectives:

This assignment will enhance your understanding of critical concepts used in Film Studies. It will encourage you to think critically and creatively about the concepts of narrative, genre and authorship and discuss your ideas with your peers. It will also help you to improve your ability to communicate in a team and your oral communication skills.

Assignment #4 – In-class test (2 hours)

Due Date: Wednesday 16 December, during the lecture time (3-5pm)

Weighting: 40%

This assignment will cover material from the entire course (Week 1.1 – Week 5.1). This includes material discussed in lectures, tutorials, and introductions to screenings, as well as material from the required readings. Some emphasis will be given to material covered in Week 3 and 4. Students will need to give answers to two types of questions: first, short answers that will test your knowledge of the terms and concepts discussed throughout the course; second, longer essay-like responses that will require you to discuss a quote from one of the assigned readings and/or a brief clip screened during the test.

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilment of the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner
- Quality and clarity of expression
- Evidence of textual analysis skills
- Evidence of critical skills
- Correct understanding and application of Film Studies terminology and critical concepts
- Ability to provide clear, succinct and correct information about key terms and concepts used in Film Studies

Relationship to Learning Objectives:

This assignment will help you consolidate and test your understanding of key terms and concepts introduced in the course.

SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK

Work provided for assessment in this course will be checked for academic integrity by Turnitin. Follow the instructions provided in the “Assignments and Turnitin” section of Blackboard.

Electronic assignments are submitted as a MS Word file through Blackboard. How to name your file and step-by-step instructions can be found on Blackboard in the “Assignments and Turnitin” section.

Your marked assignment will be found on Blackboard in the same section.

Work will be returned within two weeks after being submitted. All work that has been submitted on time will be returned before Tuesday, 22 December 2015.

EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

Extensions

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted. To apply for an extension, email your Course Coordinator before the assignment is due. If granted, your Course Coordinator will inform you of the new due date. **No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after 10am Monday 21 December 2015.**

Penalties

Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per workday. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

SET TEXTS

Corrigan, Timothy and Patricia White, *The Film Experience: An Introduction*. 4th ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015.

PLEASE NOTE: While the 4th edition is the preferred edition for this course, the 3rd edition of the textbook from 2012 is an accepted alternative. Page numbers for the readings will be provided for both editions.

You can order textbooks online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz.

RECOMMENDED READING

Bordwell, David and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction*. 9th ed. Ohio: McGraw-Hill, 2009.

Available from vicbooks, Ground Floor Easterfield Building, Kelburn Parade.

Further recommended readings for each week are stated as part of the course programme below and/or will be announced in class and on Blackboard.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Previous student feedback for this course has been positive. No relevant changes have been made to this course as a result. Student feedback on University courses may be found at:

www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute:
www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz
- School website: www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms

COURSE PROGRAMME

NOTE: Changes to schedule and additional readings will be announced in class and on Blackboard.

Week 1	Date	Themes: Mise-en-scène AND cinematography
	16 Nov	Monday Screening: <i>Drive</i> (Nicolas Winding Refn, 2011)
	17 Nov	Tuesday lecture: Mise-en-scène
	17 Nov	Tuesday screening: <i>The White Ribbon</i> (Michael Haneke, 2009)
	18 Nov	Wednesday lecture: Cinematography
		Readings: Corrigan, Timothy and Patricia White. "Chapter Two. Mise-en-Scène: Exploring a Material World" (63-93 [3 rd ed.63-93]) AND "Chapter Three. Cinematography: Framing what we see" (95-131 [3 rd ed. 95-131]).
		Additional recommended reading: "Introduction: Studying Film: Culture and Experience" (2-17 [3 rd ed. 2-17]).
Week 2	Date	Themes: Editing AND Sound
	23 Nov	Monday Screening: <i>North by Northwest</i> (Alfred Hitchcock, 1959)
	24 Nov	Tuesday lecture: Editing
	24 Nov	Tuesday screening: <i>Fight Club</i> (David Fincher, 1999)
	25 Nov	Wednesday lecture: Sound
		Readings: Corrigan, Timothy and Patricia White. "Chapter Four. Editing: Relating Images" (133-173 [3 rd ed. 133-175]) AND "Chapter Five. Film Sound: Listening to the Cinema" (175-209 [3 rd ed. 177-211]).
	25 Nov	ASSIGNMENT #1 due Wednesday 25 Nov midnight
Week 3	Date	Themes: Narrative AND Genre
	30 Nov	Monday Screening: <i>Run Lola Run</i> (Tom Tykwer, 1998)
	01 Dec	Tuesday lecture: Narrative
	01 Dec	Tuesday screening: <i>Double Indemnity</i> (Billy Wilder, 1944)
	02 Dec	Wednesday lecture: Genre: Film <i>Noir</i>
		Readings:

Corrigan, Timothy and Patricia White. "Chapter Six. Narrative Film: Telling Stories" (213-251 [3rd ed. 212-253]) AND "Chapter Nine. Movie Genres: Conventions, Formulas, and Audience Expectations" (311-349 [3rd ed. 315-351]).

Schrader, Paul. "Notes on *Film Noir*." In: Alain Silver and James Ursini (eds.): *Film Noir Reader*. New York, Limelight 6th edition, 2000. 52-63.

Additional recommended readings:

Bordwell, David. "Film Futures." In: *SubStance* 31.1 (97), 2002. 88-104.

Borde, Raymond and Étienne Chaumeton. "Towards a Definition of *Film Noir*." In: Alain Silver and James Ursini (eds.): *Film Noir Reader*. New York, Limelight 6th edition, 2000. 16-25.

04 Dec **ASSIGNMENT #2** due Friday 4 Dec 9pm

Week 4 **Date** **Themes:** Authorship AND documentary cinema

07 Dec **Monday Screening:** *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* (Wes Anderson, 2004)

08 Dec **Tuesday lecture:** Authorship

08 Dec **Tuesday screening:** *This Way of Life* (Thomas Burstyn and Barbara Sumner-Burstyn, 2009)

09 Dec **Wednesday lecture:** Documentary cinema

Readings:

Sarris, Andrew. "Notes on the Auteur Theory in 1962." In: Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (eds.): *Film Theory and Criticism*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004. 561-564.

Corrigan, Timothy and Patricia White. "Chapter Seven. Documentary Films: Representing the Real" (253-281 [3rd ed. 255-283]).

Nichols, Bill. "Chapter One: How Can We Define Documentary Film?" In: *Introduction to Documentary*. 2nd ed. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2010. 1-41.

Week 5 **Date** **Themes:** Reflections and outlook on further issues in Film Studies

14 Dec **ASSIGNMENT #3** (written submission) due Monday 14 Dec noon

14 Dec **Monday Screening:** **TBC** *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* (Ana Lily Amirpour 2014)

15 Dec **Tuesday lecture:** Reflections and outlook on further issues in Film Studies

15 Dec **Tuesday screening:** TBA

16 Dec **Wednesday lecture:** in-class test (**ASSIGNMENT #4**)

Readings: TBA

17 Dec **ASSIGNMENT #3** (oral presentation) due in Thursday tutorials