

# FILM STUDIES

## Course Syllabus

**Instructor:** Mr. Michael Eggers  
**Johnson County High School**  
**Classroom:** Little Theatre  
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### Course Description:

*Welcome to Film Studies!* As a student of this course, you will expand your understanding and appreciation of the art of cinema through a study of the historical, technical, literary, and sociological aspects of filmmaking. We will study the history of movies, cinematography, composition, editing, sound, special effects, film genre, screenwriting, acting, and directing. All concepts will be illustrated through film clips, comprising scenes from over 200 different movies. Throughout this process, we will view, analyze, and discuss a number of complete films, representing the highest achievement of the art form.

### Objectives:

- To understand how films are made
- To understand the choices the director, cinematographer, editor, and others have in creating a film
- To understand what makes a film bad or good, and what makes a film great
- To understand the effect technological advances have had on the development of movies
- To develop an appreciation for the collaborative nature of moviemaking
- To analyze films from a technical, literary, and aesthetic perspective
- To understand film's place as a unique narrative art form
- To understand the history of the movies, and major film movements of the twentieth century
- To understand the concept of film genre
- To write critically and analytically about film
- To develop public speaking and presentational skills

### Text:

There is no required text for the course. Any readings will be made available electronically.

### Films:

We will most likely view each of the following films in their entirety:

- *Modern Times*, dir. Charlie Chaplin (1936)
- *Singin' in the Rain*, dir. Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly (1952)
- *Psycho*, dir. Alfred Hitchcock (1960)
- *The Graduate*, dir. Mike Nichols (1967)
- *Raging Bull*, dir. Martin Scorsese (1980)
- *Brazil*, dir. Terry Gilliam (1985)
- *The Royal Tenenbaums*, dir. Wes Anderson (2001)

**Film Ratings:** While the films from which illustrative clips are derived range in their MPAA rating from G to R, rest assured that scenes portraying nudity or extreme violence will not be shown in class.

**Quizzes:** A short quiz will follow each major concept introduced in class. Students may re-take quizzes for an improved grade.

**Homework:** Due to the fact that students are typically carrying a difficult course load in addition to this elective class, most work will be completed during the class period each day. When there are homework

assignments, they will be announced in class and posted on my website. All completed assignments should be emailed to me at meggers@jocoed.net. Work should be identified with your name, my name, the course name, and the date. Work should be typed in black, double-spaced, with one inch margins, 12 point type, and a traditional font such as Times New Roman. Completed work should be sent as an email attachment in .pdf format.

**Final Project:** Students will be expected to complete a final project in which they analyze the work of a noted director over the course of three different films. This project includes a written paper and a class presentation, including film clips illustrating aspects of the director's style and especially effective shots/scenes. This is a significant part of each student's grade and, as a result, any plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course.

**Late Work:** Assignments will lose ten percent for each of the first five days they are late. After that point, they can be handed in at any time before the end of that marking quarter for 50% of what they would have originally received.

**Attendance:** You are expected to arrive to class on time each day, prepared with the necessary materials for that day's activities. In the event you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you have missed. It is your responsibility to obtain any notes, assignments, and handouts that you need, as well as to complete make-up work in a timely manner. Except in extraordinary circumstances, all work should be made up by the second day back, after which point you will be penalized 10% for each successive day (see "Late Work" above). If a student misses a test or quiz on the day of an absence, she or he must immediately schedule an appointment for a make-up. Failure to make-up a quiz or test will result in a zero for that assignment. If a quiz or test is not made up within 5 days of your return to school, you will earn only 50% of what you would have originally received.

**Academic Honesty:** With regard to written work, all words and ideas drawn from outside sources (except from class discussions) must be properly cited. Students may not share work or answers for assignments with one another. Violations of this policy will result in loss of credit for the exercise, as well as any additional sanctions the school administration may impose. If you plagiarize, you will most likely be caught, and the resulting grade of zero will have a serious impact upon your grade.

**Respect:** An atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation must be maintained in the classroom at all times. Calling out, interrupting a speaker, or making a negative comment about a student or teacher is unacceptable.

**Communication/Extra Help:** I will check and answer email on a daily basis and expect you to do so as well. I am also more than happy to meet with you individually to provide additional help.

**Evaluation:** Your grade will be determined as follows:

<i>Writing Assignments and Projects:</i>	<i>40%</i>
<i>Tests and Quizzes:</i>	<i>35%</i>
<i>Homework:</i>	<i>15%</i>
<i>Classwork and Participation:</i>	<i>10%</i>
<i>Total:</i>	<i>100%</i>

I hope you find this course to be informative, enjoyable, and useful. I also welcome any feedback you would like to share as to how it may be improved. Have a fantastic year!