
Cinema and Society Syllabus 20-21

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Course Description

Students will explore the craft of filmmaking in this year-long course, with emphasis placed on connecting the themes and stories we explore to the world at large. We will focus on four key components of filmmaking: [Language of Film](#), [Historical and Cultural Contexts](#), [Production and Creative Expression](#), and [Aesthetic Value](#).

Course Content:

Language of Film

- Students will identify and define key terms in filmmaking as we explore the landmark short films that paved the way for the birth of the movie business.
[Key elements include](#): frame, shots, angles, scene, composition, key lighting, mise-en-scène, transitions, sequence
- Students will identify the elements of storytelling used in film.
[Key elements include](#): character, setting, conflict, rising action, climax, conflict, resolution, the three acts, exposition, montage

Historical and Cultural Context

- Students will analyze social issues presented through the medium of film and explore movies as cultural artifacts, connecting cinematic choices to cultural or social movements.
- Throughout the year, students will be asked to connect films that we view to the current cultural climate with emphasis placed on exploring films made by BIPOC directors, female movie makers, and movies highlighting issues in the LGBTQ community.
[Key elements include](#): setting, view, depiction, documentary, feature

Production and Creative Expression

- Students will demonstrate their understanding of the filmmaking production process by identifying the various roles of professionals in the movie industry. They will explore the practical elements of collaboration by working in groups to create a short film.
[Key elements include](#): directing, screenwriting, production design, cinematography, acting, editing,
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music composition, pre-production, production, post-production, visual design, style, set design, props, location, costuming, make up, auteur

Aesthetic Value

- As an ongoing component of this class, students will analyze and critique cinematic works, drawing on concepts learned in the course, and connecting themes presented to our society and culture.

Key elements include: genre, aesthetic, style

Course Materials

- Students will need access to their class journal and class notes for every lesson.

Course Expectations

1. **Presence:** Students are expected to attend every class, barring illness or family emergency. Much of our class time is spent watching films or clips that, due to copyright laws, will not be available to students outside of our lessons.
2. **Prepared:** Students are expected to complete all assignments by the due date. Should a student require an extension for any assignment, they need to speak with their instructor and arrange an alternate date.
3. **Participate:** Students are expected to engage in lessons by participating in small group or full class discussions. Students will be asked to form opinions and share these with classmates on a regular basis.
4. **Polite:** Students are expected to treat their fellow classmates, the instructor, the space, and the material with respect. Inevitably, there will be differing opinions about the films we watch. All points of view should be expressed in ways that support and place value on individuals whose opinions differ.

Grading Policy

Your grade in Cinema and Society will be determined by your performance in the following areas:

Creative Expression	40%	Film Projects
Writing	30%	Class Notes, Film Journal, Film Critiques
Effective Effort and Participation	30%	Homework Assignments, In-Class Activities, Class Discussions, Group Discussions, Audience Behavior

Every assignment will be given a point value and rubrics will be provided. Grades are assigned on a sliding scale:

A	< 94%	to 93%		C	< 77%	to 74%
A-	< 93%	to 90%		C-	< 74%	to 70%
B+	< 90%	to 87%		D+	< 70%	to 67%
B	< 87%	to 84%		D	< 67%	to 64%
B-	< 84%	to 80%		D-	< 64%	to 61%
C+	< 80%	to 77%		F	< 61%	to 0%

After-School Theatre Program

The extra-curricular theatre productions are separate from the Cinema and Society class and participation in those productions is not required as part of this class. To learn more about our theatre productions, please visit www.smhsdrama.org or look for audition announcements in the school bulletin! Students must maintain a GPA of 2.0 to participate in our productions.