

MRTS 4470/5702

Scene Analysis

Instructor: Associate Professor Eugene Martin

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Course Delivery: Remote

Virtual office hours by appointment

Course Description

The class will study and analyze scenes from 26 feature films. Scenes will be studied and analyzed from the perspective of the Screenwriter, the Director, the Cinematographer, the Actor, and the Editor. Students will write a 1500 word mid-term essay, a Final 10-page essay paper, and write weekly journal essays about each film. The course will make extensive use of Canvas and the UNT Media Library for streaming films. It is your responsibility to regularly check the Canvas site for updates and to upload your assignments as directed by the professor in the Modules.

Course Objectives

1. acquire skills about the art and craft of analyzing scenes in narrative cinema
2. break down how a director builds and crafts a scene from a screenplay or other media (storyboards, photos, outline, or pitchdeck)
3. examine how an editor constructs a scene from dailies
4. illustrate how a cinematographer blocks out a scene for shooting
5. investigate how a screenwriter outlines a scene for the first draft
6. estimate how an actor builds an internal performance arc in a scene
7. dissect concepts that lead to a deep understanding about cinematic time
8. differentiate various directing techniques for working with a moving camera
9. diagram editing techniques for compressing and/or expanding time
10. identify how actors pace themselves through scenes
11. examine how to break down a script to prepare for filming – how to create a shot list and follow continuity as it applies to matched action and screen

Required Text:

Storytelling for Film and Television: From First Word to Last Frame, Ken Dancyger

- Hardcover: 198 pages Publisher: Routledge; 1 edition (May 8, 2019)

Course Organization and Projects

Assignments: First Project: Write a 3-minute scene with 2 people.

Second Project: Midterm 1500 word Scene Analysis essay

13 Journal Essays on the screenings

Final Essay paper: Write a 10 page essay comparing two feature films.

Evaluation:

Grading: Screenplay Project	90 pts.
Midterm 3-page paper	100 pts.
Weekly Journal Essays	13 x 20 pts. = 260 points
10-page Essay paper	150 pts.
Total 600 pts.	

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Course Calendar Summer Session 5W1 2021

Module 1 – Discussion: What is a film scene? Examine visual writing and cinematic language.

Review screenplay format and introduce the assignment, Write a 3 page scene with two characters

Films – [Fruitvale Station \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and [Black Panther \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Journal Essays 1](#)

[3 page Screenplay](#)

Module 2 – Discussion: The Screenwriters’ perspective; Script to screen and how to consider the construction of the cinematic point of view of a singular protagonist Reading – *Storytelling for Film and Television*, Chapters 1 and 2

Films – [Il Posto \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and [Moonlight \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
[\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Short Screenplay due

[Journal Essays 2](#)

Module 3 – First screenplay due Discussion: The Actors’ perspective

Reading – Uta Hagen, *Respect for Acting*, Chapters 1-3, on digital reserve Films – [La Haine \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and [City of God \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Journal Essays 3](#)

Module 4 – Discussion: The Cinematographers’ perspective and the “long take” Reading – *Storytelling for Film and Television*, Chapters 3,4,5

Films - [Children of Men \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and [1917 \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Journal Essays 4](#)

Module 5 – Discussion: The Directors’ perspective and using black and white cinematography

[*Ida* \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and [*The 400 Blows* \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Reading – *Storytelling for Film and Television*, Chapters 6 and 7

[Journal Essays 5](#)

Module 6 – Reading – Continue the Director's perspective

[*The Dark Knight* \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and [*Booksmart* \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Storytelling for Film and Television, Chapters 8 and 9

[Journal Essays 6](#)

Module 7 – Discussion: Cinema as a form essay

Reading – The Essay Film

Films – [*Stories We Tell* \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and [*I Am Not Your Negro* \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Reading – *Storytelling for Film and Television*, Chapters 10 and 11

[Journal Essays 7](#)

Module 8 – [Midterm paper due, 3 pages](#)

Module 9 – Discussion: Cinema as poetry Films –

Reading – *Storytelling for Film and Television*, Chapters 12 and 13

[Wings of Desire \(Links to an external site.\) \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Journal Essays 9](#)

Module 10 – Discussion: The Editors’ perspective, “Shot, Counter Shot” Films –

[Joker \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Reading – *Storytelling for Film and Television*, Chapters 14, 15, 16, and 17

[Journal Essays 10](#)

Module 11 – Essay paper draft due Discussion: Director as auteur

Films – [Pans Labyrinth \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and *Do The Right Thing*

[Journal Essays 11](#)

Module 12 – Voice over in Cinema

[Blade Runner \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and [Wild Strawberries \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Journal Essays 12](#)

Module 13 – Representation and the Cinema of the Now

The Farewell and [Queen and Slim \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Journal Essays 13](#)

Module 14 – The Cinema of Improvisation

[*Secrets and Lies* \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and [A Woman Under the Influence \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Journal Essays 14](#)

Final Week - [Final Essay due](#)