



University of North Texas
College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
Media Arts Department

MRTS 4415: Affect, Emotion, and the Movies

RTFP 184 – Thursdays, 9:30am – 1:20pm

3 Credit Hours

Instructor: Mr. Travis Sutton

Office Location: RTFP 229

Office Hours: Thursdays, 1:30 – 4:30pm

Email: Travis.Sutton@unt.edu

Teaching Assistant: Jen Cardenas (JenCardenas@my.unt.edu)

Course Pre-requisites and Other Restrictions

A student must have completed MRTS 3610 and be registered as an MRTS/CBCM major, with the major's GPA requirement, to enroll in this course.

Course Description

This course will explore the ways movies might work to generate audience engagement on an emotional level. Class time will be devoted to discussing not only the formal choices of filmmakers but also the broader place of feeling and emotion in cultural discourse and activity. Students will be introduced to affect theory, in its various manifestations across several disciplines, with the purpose of affect theory becoming the primary approach that will be taken to discuss the films screened in class. Course readings will be selected from noted writers and thinkers in psychology, film and media studies, literary studies, and cultural studies.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, every student should be able to

- Define affect theory and how it can be used to think about the production and consumption of movies
- Identify how a movie might emotionally engage with audiences/spectators in both form and content
- Explain developments in cinematic storytelling as they relate to sentimental literature
- Analyze a film through the technologies of affect and the categories of emotion

Course Materials

Reading assignments and course documents, such as the syllabus and grading rubric, will be available as PDF files on Canvas.

Communicating with Your Instructor

Email or messaging through Canvas are the primary ways to contact your instructor. The instructor will make every effort to respond to student emails and discussion questions in a timely manner (within 24 hours). Students should also keep in mind that instructors are not required to respond to emails during evenings, weekends, or holidays.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Emotion Presentation.....	10%
Writing Activities	10%
Film Analysis Essay	30%
Midterm Examination.....	25%
Final Examination	25%

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory, and in-class contributions are an important part of the classroom experience. Students are expected to complete each reading assignment for discussion in class. The instructor will be prepared to clarify concepts and to provide film clips for analysis as a group.

The instructor will maintain an attendance record for each class meeting. Prior to the beginning of class, a roster will be located at the front of the room for each student to sign. It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that he or she has signed the roster for that day. **Rosters without signatures will be recorded as absences.** The instructor will accept a signature as evidence of a student's presence for the entirety of a class session. Any form of dishonesty with the attendance record, which includes signing and leaving or signing for another student, will be treated as academic dishonesty and result in a zero for the course.

Rosters will remain available for students to sign for fifteen minutes after class has started; however, please be on time to avoid signing during class instruction. Signatures will not be permitted fifteen minutes after instruction has started, and they will not be accepted at the end of class.

Students who do not attend the first class session are subject to being dropped from the course, unless they notify the instructor ahead of time.

Students who acquire more than two unexcused absences over the course of the semester will receive a penalty in their final grade: each unexcused absence after the first two will result in three percentage points deducted from the final grade. For example, a total of four unexcused absences in the semester would result in two penalties; consequently, a final score of 84% would drop to 78%.

Classroom Behavior

Rude or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated in the classroom. Disruptive behavior can include anything that would interfere with an instructor’s ability to conduct class or with a

student's ability to benefit from the instruction. Please note that behaviors likely to distract the instructor and, thus, to interrupt the flow of the class include activities designed to signal student inattentiveness, such as texting, reading, sleeping, working on material for other classes, etc. Electronic devices, such as laptops and tablets, are permitted in the classroom, as long as they are used to assist with course-related learning.

Emotion Presentation

At the beginning of the semester, each student will select a day during the semester they will give their presentation. This assignment is a 5-10 minute presentation about a movie of the student's choosing. Details for this assignment will be available on Canvas.

Writing Activities

Ten writing activities will be assigned during the semester. Each writing activity is designed for a student to respond to the weekly reading assignment. These activities are akin to in-class writing activities, so they are not meant to be as formal as the film analysis essay (discussed below). Students do not need to complete a rough and revised draft, conduct research, and compose a bibliography. With the writing activities, I'm mainly interested in seeing your recall and application of information. Writing activities are to be completed online through links posted on Canvas. Hard copies and/or late submissions, without instructor approval, will not be accepted.

Film Analysis Essay

Students will complete one film analysis essay during the semester (at least 2500 words). This paper is meant to be a formal college essay, necessitating time, preparation, a writing process, a cohesive argument supported by reasons and evidence, and a bibliography. Detailed instructions for the essay will be available on Canvas. A grading rubric will also be available online that details what the instructor considers when evaluating completed assignments.

Examinations

There will be two examinations to be completed online through links posted on Canvas. Each examination will be worth 25% of your overall grade. The final examination will not be cumulative. Each examination will consist of multiple-choice questions, short answer questions, and a short essay. The questions will be based on class lectures, reading assignments, and films screened in class.

While examinations are to be completed online, they are closed-book and should be treated with the expectations of an in-class examination. Students are not to look to outside sources during an exam: these include the textbook, notes, and other people. To mitigate the use of outside sources, the examinations will be timed.

To complete an exam, students will need to download and install Respondus Lockdown Browser (or use a campus computer available to students with Respondus Lockdown Browser installed). Respondus Lockdown Browser will also require a webcam to monitor the testing process.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Students can expect a grade for writing activities and exams to be posted on Canvas within one week of that activity or exam's due date. Short papers may take up to two weeks for a grade to post on Canvas.

Late Work

Students are required to submit assignments on due dates listed in this syllabus. Late submissions of the weekly writing activities are generally not accepted. A late submission of a short paper will result in a deduction of 10 percentage points of the grade per day. Students are responsible for presenting appropriate documentation to excuse late work.

Grading Criteria:

- Because assignments for this course are submitted online, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that submissions are fully uploaded into Canvas and Turnitin. Additionally, it is a good idea to keep backup copies of all completed work in case these online systems encounter problems during the semester.
- Because of security concerns and your right to privacy, the instructor will not discuss grades over email. If you have a question about your grade, send your instructor a message indicating that you want to discuss your grade, and your instructor will make arrangements to visit with you.
- Your instructor's goal is to help you improve your writing and critical thinking skills, so it is important for you to ask questions.
- Other than the bonus points for the theme presentation, extra credit assignments and final grade curving will not be offered in this class.
- Grades are not negotiable. Your final course grade will be based on your work in the course. If you are concerned about a grade, see your instructor during office hours.
- **Any form of academic dishonesty will result in an "F" for the course and possibly further sanctions at the university level.**

Numerical Grade Equivalents.

Course grades are calculated on the standard scale:

- A = 100-90
- B = 89-80
- C = 79-70
- D = 69-60
- F = 59-0

Every border creates situations where you may be "just below" the grade you want or require. This is frustrating for all concerned, but it is not a reason to change the grade.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS/ASSISTANCE

Every student enrolled in this course needs access to a computer with a webcam that is capable of connecting to the Internet and a technical capacity to run Canvas and Respondus Lockdown Browser. Canvas technical requirements: <https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements>

Students also need a word processing program (e.g. MS Word or Google Docs) to draft and submit writing projects.

The instructor will be available for virtual office visits through Zoom. If you wish to visit with your instructor over Zoom, then send him a message through Canvas or campus email, and he can set up a link for a virtual visit.

The University of North Texas provides student technical support in the use of Canvas and supported resources. The student help desk may be reached at:

<u>Help Desk Contact Information</u>	<u>Help Desk Hours</u>
Email: helpdesk@unt.edu Phone: 940-565-2324 In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130	Monday-Thursday, 8am-midnight Friday, 8am-8pm Saturday, 9am-5pm Sunday, 8am-midnight

Minimum Technical Skills Needed

- Sending and receiving email
- Creating, sending, and receiving Microsoft Word documents
- Printing Word documents OR opening and printing PDF files, using Adobe Acrobat Reader
- Navigating Canvas

Netiquette

Netiquette, or online etiquette, refers to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors online. Please read through "Netiquette Guide for Online Courses," available on Canvas, and treat your instructor and fellow classmates with kindness and respect.

Outages

The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty that prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or 940.565.2324. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

UNT POLICIES

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in an "F" in the course and possible further sanctions at the university level.

ADA Policy

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Blackboard online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for

student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail: eagleconnect.unt.edu/

Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website at <http://spot.unt.edu/> or email spot@unt.edu.

Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oeo@unt.edu or at (940) 565 2759.

MRTS 4415 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY	
<u>January 20</u>	
Introduction to the Course	
READ: Course Syllabus	
<u>January 27</u>	
Writing Activity 1 Due	Lesson 1: Affect and Emotion
	READ: "Introduction: Feel Your Way" by Sara Ahmed "Fictions and Feelings" by Patrick Colmes Hogan
	SCREEN: <i>Happy-Go-Lucky</i> (2008, Mike Leigh)
<u>February 03</u>	
Writing Activity 2 Due	Lesson 2: Structure of Feeling
	READ: "On Structure of Feeling" by Raymond Williams
	SCREEN: <i>Inside Out</i> (2015, Pete Docter et al.)
<u>February 10</u>	
Writing Activity 3 Due	Lesson 3: Sentimental Power
	READ: "Everybody's Protest Novel" by James Baldwin "Sentimental Power" by Jane Tompkins
	SCREEN: <i>The Color Purple</i> (1985, Steven Spielberg)
<u>February 17</u>	
Writing Activity 4 Due	Lesson 4: Technologies of Affect
	READ: "The Cry, Effeminate Sentimentalism" by Robyn Warhol
	SCREEN: <i>Marvin's Room</i> (1996, Jerry Zaks)
<u>February 24</u>	
Writing Activity 5 Due	Lesson 5: A Medium of Sentiment
	READ: "Cinema as a Medium of Sentiment" by James Chandler
	SCREEN: <i>Children of Men</i> (2006, Alfonso Cuarón)

March 03**REVIEW DAY**
Lessons 1-5March 10**MIDTERM EXAMINATION**
Available Online – No Class
Due Thursday, March 10 at 11:59pmMarch 17**SPRING BREAK**
No ClassesMarch 24Writing
Activity
6 Due**Lesson 6: Thresholds of Feeling**
READ: "Thresholds of Feelings" by Charles Affron
SCREEN: *Raise the Red Lantern* (1991, Zhang Yimou)March 31Writing
Activity
7 Due**Lesson 7: Genres of Feeling**
READ: "Film Bodies" by Linda Williams
SCREEN: *Now, Voyager* (1942, Irving Rapper)April 07Writing
Activity
8 Due**Lesson 8: Cinema of Sensation**
READ: "Remembering Love, Forgetting Everything Else" by Lauren Berlant
"Landmark Movies of the 1960s and the Cinema of Sensation" by Paul Monaco
SCREEN: *Playtime* (1967, Jacques Tati)April 14**RESEARCH AND WRITING DAY**
No Reading or Screening

April 21

Writing
Activity
9 Due

Lesson 9: Moving Viewers

READ: "Movies and Emotions" by Carl Plantinga

SCREEN: *Set It Off* (1995, F. Gary Gray)

April 28

Writing
Activity
10 Due

Lesson 10: Nostalgia

READ: "All over the Map: Building and Rebuilding Oz" by Henry Jenkins

"Papering the Cracks" by Robin Wood

SCREEN: *Return to Oz* (1985, Walter Murch)

May 05

REVIEW DAY

Lessons 6-10

May 12

FINAL EXAMINATION

Available Online – No Class

Due Thursday, May 12 at 11:59pm