

FOLSOM CORDOVA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

**Final Course Outline
Film as Visual Literature**

DATE: February 2002

SUBJECT AREA: Fine Arts

PROPOSED GRADE LEVEL(s): 12 (11 to be added)

COURSE LENGTH: 1 Year

GRADING: A-F

NUMBER OF CREDITS: 5/Semester

PREREQUISITES: 'A' or 'B' grade in previous year's English class and/or teacher approval/interview

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Students enrolled in this class study film both as a visual art form and as a form of visual literature. Although the average American views "moving images" for hours each day, most watch uncritically and passively, rarely analyzing how the film works to create meaning or shape images. This course will promote "cineliteracy," an understanding of how film communicates, by analyzing the complex network of language systems that film employs through the application of the techniques students have already been taught for analyzing and reviewing literary communication. They will learn to "read" film by analyzing its narrative structure, literary elements, genre conventions, technical and artistic factors, and purpose. The emphasis will be on the various language/sign systems and the spectrum of techniques, both visual and literary, used by filmmakers to communicate a message. In addition, students will examine how film has become a primary medium for reflecting on and conveying the history and conditions of society, as well as sometimes shaping its very attitudes and values.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

This college preparatory class in film as visual literature will:

- provide students with a broad base of aesthetic and technical knowledge to enable students to develop an understanding of and appreciation for cinematography.
- provide a rich body of work for discussion and review in order to motivate students to become critical rather than passive viewers of film.
- provide students with exposure to both film and literature that attempt to convey or shape the same ideas so as to compare and contrast the effectiveness of the given medium.
- develop and reinforce students' critical thinking and problem solving skills, effective oral and written communication techniques, and collaboration ability.
- provide students with a broad range of opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills to produce and perform in film as visual literature

Students will

- demonstrate their understanding of film as a medium of expression with its own language, history, and development after studying the basic language and history of cinematography and viewing a variety of films for which they take notes and write responses.
- show an understanding of the narrative elements film shares with literature by writing comparisons of novels and stories to their film adaptations.

- confirm proficiency in analysis of film through oral and written formats by writing expository, essays responding to themes found in selected films, writing responses to various essays about film, writing reviews of film, and keeping a cinematic journal.
- illustrate their acquired knowledge and skills to plan and produce short film projects with group partners.
- develop and expand artistic and critical perception by processing, analyzing and responding to film content and its unique language and skills.
- develop and expand visual and performing arts knowledge and skills to express ideas creatively and imaginatively in film projects.
- acquire knowledge and understanding of the historical and cultural developments of film in American and global cultures.
- develop a base for responding to, analyzing, and making critical assessments of the aesthetic component of cinematography.
- connect and apply to film the literary elements and analytical skills learned in English classes to view moving images critically rather than passively.

STUDENT READING COMPONENT:

Texts: Gianelli, *Understanding Movies*
Hollows/Jancovich, *Approaches to Popular Film*

Supplemental Instructional Materials: two novels per quarter, selected film and literary reviews, miscellaneous technical or informational pieces.

STUDENT WRITING COMPONENT:

Cinematic journal, essays, scripts, reviews, critiques.

STUDENT ORAL COMPONENT:

Class discussions, readers' theater, debates, voice-overs.

STUDENT VISUAL COMPONENT:

Live and cinematic performances and productions.

UNITS OF INSTRUCTION:

- Unit 1:** Film as Visual Literature
- Unit 2:** The History of Film
- Unit 3:** The Elements of Literature
- Unit 4:** Film Types and Genres
- Unit 5:** Film Style and Techniques
- Unit 6:** Acting and Drama
- Unit 7:** Content Analysis: Entertainment or Literature?
- Unit 8:** Creative Analysis: Method or Madness?
- Unit 9:** Technical Analysis: A Means to an End?
- Unit 10:** Classic vs. Post Modern vs. Current
- Unit 11:** Independent and Auteur Filmmakers
- Unit 12:** Performance, Production, and Politics

Instructional Methods and/or Strategies:

- Lecture
- Class discussion
- Instructional material
- Questioning techniques
- Audio/visual materials
- Demonstrations
- Modeling
- Peer coaching
- Electronic media
- Research
- Individualized instruction
- Group and individual activities/productions
- Guest speakers

Assessment Methods and/or Tools

- Traditional objective test formats, written tests with a variety of essay questions calling for analysis and interpretation, comprehensive finals.
- Written assignments including cinematic journal, reviews, critiques, and research, evaluative, or technical papers and essays.
- Performance-based assessments such as class participation demonstrations, discussions, performances, simulations, productions, and projects.
- Major assignments will utilize rubrics.
- Student presentations, exhibits, and competitions—both team and individual.
- Individual and group assessments of content, presentation quality, and process.
- Opportunities for self-assessment and peer coaching.

THIS COURSE WILL PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THE FOLLOWING HSEE/FCUSD EXIT EXAMS:

Writing, Reading, Language Arts

LAB FEES, IF REQUIRED: None

SUBJECT AREA CONTENT STANDARDS TO BE ADDRESSED:

Language Arts:

- Reading:** 1.0 Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development
2.0 Reading Comprehension
3.0 Literary Response and Analysis
- Writing:** 1.0 Writing Strategies
2.0 Writing Applications

- Visual and Performing Arts:** Artistic Perception
Creative Expression
Historical and Cultural Context
Aesthetic Valuing
Connection, Relations, and Application

DISTRICT ESLR's TO BE ADDRESSED:

Self-Directed Learners

Effective Communicators

Collaborative Workers

Constructive Thinkers

Quality Producers/Performers

Responsible Citizens