

Missouri Western State College

Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences

ENG 210-07 Approaches to Literature: Film Literature

Class meets Tuesday 2:00-4:50 JGM 224

Spring 2004

Basic Information

Instructor Information

Dr. Karen U.Fulton, Professor

Communication

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Office Hours

Office: 222H SS/C Building

10-11MWF, 10-12 T; other times by appointment

Required Texts

Dick, Bernard F. *Anatomy of Film*, 3rd edition. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998

Grisham, John. *The Rainmaker*. New York: Bantam, Dell, 1995.

Other Required Supplies

Access to computer and MWSC P-drive (you will need your Missouri Western password to access the P-drive).

Access to email; it is much easier to communicate with me via email.

Access to word processor with spell-checker (for written papers).

A 3 ring-binder and a supply of 8 1/2" x 11" notebook paper for class use (or other system that produces clean edges). Materials will be distributed to you already punched. Class assignments, responses, or other work completed on torn, spiral bound or ripped paper will be penalized by loss of points.

Course Objectives and Means

English 210 fulfills Category IV General Studies requirements. These goals can be found on <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/eflj/genstud.asp>. All English 210 sections provide practice in reading poetry, prose fiction, and drama.

General 210 Objectives:

- Recognize the major characteristics of literary genres.
- Discuss literature, orally and in writing, with assurance.
- Appreciate literary works which are encountered.
- Understand the different ways in which literary themes may be treated in literature.

Objectives for Film Literature:

- Recognize major characteristics of the various film genres and the literature on which the films are based as well as the literature the films generate.
- Discuss films and film literature orally and in writing with assurance.
- Appreciate filmed literary works which you encounter.
- Understand the different ways in which a literary theme may be treated in film.

General 210 Means:

- Read poetry, fiction, and drama.
- Investigate various methods of approaching and understanding literature.
- Written essays and essay examinations.
- Read a variety of works of literature.

Film 210 means

- View various film productions, read works on which films have been based, read a variety of criticism generated by film.
 - Investigate various methods of approaching and understanding films and their literature.
 - Complete written assignments which deal with the films viewed as well as a long paper and partial essay examinations.
 - Read at least one work on which a film has been based; read and understand material on how film is shaped as well as its terminology.
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Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Attendance will be recorded at each session. Class work distributed and completed during the same class session will not be accepted late. Multiple choice quizzes and written responses are graded (see grading policies); the resulting points make up one third of the final total. When written work is not completed during the class period, students will complete and sign an attendance verification rating sheet at the end of the hour. There is no *good* way to make up a missed session.

Academic Honesty Policy

It is required that students submit their own work. Students who are guilty of plagiarism or cheating in any form will automatically receive a zero for the assignment involved and will place themselves in jeopardy of failing the course.

Student Disability Policy

Students who have a disability which might prevent their maximum performance in the class should make this known to the instructor immediately so that provisions may be made for any assistance needed.

College Behavior Policies

- No cell phones, pagers, beepers or other electronic equipment are allowed in this classroom.
- Class begins at 2pm. Students who are not here when work is distributed will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.
- A sleeping student will be noted and will receive an absence for the day.
- Conversation and whispering during the film is distracting to other students; a student

engaging in either will be noted by the instructor and receive an absence for the day. During the instructor's presentation of material, students should be listening and taking notes; it is rude (as well as distracting) to talk, whisper, etc. during this part of the class.

- When questions are asked by others, listen carefully so that material does not need to be repeated.
 - All work is due on time and in the format specified. If it does not conform to specifications or is late, it will be penalized.
 - Class is not over until it is dismissed. It is your responsibility to pick up any material for the next class.
 - You are responsible for material placed on the P-drive by the next class--you must be able to recall it and apply it. In general, P-drive material will be posted on Wednesday morning. When there is more to come, a notice will be placed on the P-drive instructing you to check back on Friday.
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False Assumptions about this Class

Assumption 1: There is no reading in the class; we only watch films.

False. There is actually quite a bit of reading in this class. *Anatomy of Film*, a film text, provides terminology and film background. You are responsible for the reading assigned and will be quizzed over it.

The class will read a novel(*The Rainmaker*) prior to seeing a film based this film.

Other material will be handed out at class sessions.

Assumption 2: All work is done in class; there is no homework.

False. You will be doing outside writing in the assigned paper, in the take-home portions of the final, in the take-home portion of the mid-term, in the written responses, and in the extra credit assignments (if you choose to do them).

Assumption 3: The films have been chosen entirely based upon student enjoyment; therefore I will like every film in this class.

False. While I hope you enjoy the majority of these films, I primarily choose films based on their learning value and for the range of the film experience they represent. Therefore, we will see silent films and several films in black and white. If you are taking this class because you are a big fan of "Dumb and Dumber" or "Texas Chainsaw Massacre" and expect class films to be similar, you may want to rethink your decision to take this section. Because this class is offered as an English offering, ENG 210, (as opposed to a mass media one), the emphasis of this class falls on such things as narrative plot and dialogue (as opposed to special effects.)

Assumption 4: Every film we see will be a comfortable experience for me; all films will reinforce my moral belief system.

False. One of the goals of this class is to expose its members to films which may challenge your preconceptions of film and its subject matter. While I don't try to be "avant garde" of "cutting edge," I do try to select some films that expose you to cultural, religious, and sexual points of view that you may not have considered before or be comfortable with. If you feel that you will have trouble being open to this kind of experience and reflecting that openness in your written responses, you may want to rethink your decision to take this section.

The class grade is computed on the basis of 300 points divided into thirds.

- Class work (Quizzes, responses, etc.) 100 pts total (Eleven of these exercises will be given; the lowest score will be dropped).
- One 3-5 page paper @ 75 pts total
- Tests 125 pts total
 - A take-home mid-term essay (2-1/2 pages maximum) @25 pts, a 15point in-class objective mid-term.
 - A final examination @ pts
 - 10 points survey (all or nothing)
 - 50 point take-home portion
 - 25 point day of final written responses to clips
- Total points possible 300 pts

Final grades are determined on a 10% scale; above 270 total points constitutes an "A" (300 minus 30 = 270 etc.) This final score will be lowered because of absences or late work.

Opportunities to earn a maximum of 15 points extra credit are given during the second half of the semester. These extra credit assignments are all or nothing.

Course components

Class written responses

- Written work must be mechanically clean and formatted in structured paragraphs to receive full credit. Lack of paragraph form or errors in grammar and mechanics will result in deductions from the score.
- Individual written work can earn 5 to 10 points each; the possible points will be given on the assignment. At the end of the semester, each student will have had the opportunity to amass a total of 110 points. The lowest 10 point score will be dropped for each student at the end of the semester.
- Written work completed on torn, spiral bound, or ripped paper will be penalized by a 2 point deduction from the grade.
- Some written work will be due after we view the film. Sometimes a short scene or shot is replayed followed by you interpreting and analyzing specific components of the scene (usually covered in *Anatomy of Film*). Sometimes the prompts are distributed before viewing the movie so you can look for materials as you view the film. In either case, names of movies, actors, directors, characters, etc. must be spelled correctly to receive full credit. These cannot be made up.
- Some written work will be take-home in nature. At the film's conclusion, a response assignment will be given. These are due at the beginning of the hour.
- When a specific kind of response (a paragraph) is indicated by the prompt, penalties will be taken if the response is three paragraphs rather than one or if the paragraph is underdeveloped.
- Most frequently, these will be due at the next class session.

Quizzes

- Quizzes may take place at the beginning of the hour; these work sheets will ask you to recall material (terminology, etc.) from the *Anatomy of Film* and/or the P-drive.
- Most quizzes will take place at the end of the film and require that you

respond to both the film and *Anatomy of Film* and/or P-drive material. In other words, you will apply what you have read to what you have just seen.

- All quizzes will be short-answer or multiple choice. These cannot be made up.

Short paper (3-5 pages double spaced Arial)

- This writing will give you a chance to reflect upon what you have viewed and to compose a full-length statement of your ideas.
- Topics for these papers will be assigned, but you are always given at least two options to choose from.
- This paper must be word processed. Preparing your work on a computer with spell checker makes for an easier job. Make sure you save your work to disk in case it is lost or misplaced.
- This paper is expected to be in essay format with complete sentences, correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling. When you are quoting, summarizing or paraphrasing material from the book or the film, you must properly source such material within the paper and document such material in MLA style at the end.
- No outside sources should be used unless directed by the instructor.
- Your essay must have a title.

Examinations

- The mid-term exam will be comprised of two parts: a take-home essay, which is expected to follow all the rules above for the short paper (worth 25 points) and a multiple choice component (worth 15 points).
- The mid-term essay may be rewritten and resubmitted for credit. Students in past classes have found that this has helped them with the larger paper.
- If you wish to rewrite the mid-term essay, both the old and the revised copy are due to the instructor the week after you receive your first copy back.
- I encourage you to set up an appointment to visit with me over the first draft of the essay.

- The final exam will consist of three parts:
 - A take-home component which will be based on reading and viewing *The Rainmaker*.
 - The question will be distributed.
 - The essay will be due
 - An in-class short answer examination in response to clips of various films (5 clips for a total of 25 points) , and
 - An all-or-nothing survey of the class (worth 10 points)
 - Distributed ; due .

Course Procedures

Materials

Film-based materials are posted on the P-drive one week ahead. At the end of today's first class, material for next week's film will already be up on the P-drive and I will go through the steps to access the P-drive again. You are responsible for mastering the background material. It may be the basis for quizzes.

Your reading of the assignment in *Anatomy of Film* must be

completed prior to class; it will also be clarified on the P-drive—see “210 Reading file”. Quizzes will be given to insure that you are keeping up with reading.

Agenda

Since we meet only once a week, our time together is likely to be very full. Therefore class will start on time. When you come into the room, check the screen for the day’s agenda. Every class will begin with an agenda posted on the screen.

At the beginning of the semester, we are likely to start with a short (5 pt) quiz over the material in *Anatomy of Film*.

There is usually a short lecture by the instructor on the reading and how it applies to the film and the film itself. Sometimes in place of the lecture, we will view a short “making of” featurette so that you can hear and see the people directly involved in the film.

Depending upon the length of the film (and films are getting longer), question time will follow.

If a film's length is under 2 hours, we will view it with no break.

If a film's length is over 2 hours, we will take a short (no more than 5 minutes) break around the middle of the film.

All classes will end with you handing in your "rating" slip for the film.

You are expected to keep a rating journal over the course of the semester, listing your own rating as well as the class rating of the film and the IMDb rating which will be found on the P-drive under Class Tally.