

Eastern Illinois University

## The Keep

---

Spring 2022

2022

---

Spring 1-15-2022

### ENG 4904-001 Studies in Film

Bobby Martinez

*Eastern Illinois University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english\\_syllabi\\_spring2022](https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2022)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Martinez, Bobby, "ENG 4904-001 Studies in Film" (2022). *Spring 2022*. 36.  
[https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english\\_syllabi\\_spring2022/36](https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2022/36)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 2022 at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spring 2022 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact [tabruns@eiu.edu](mailto:tabruns@eiu.edu).

Eng. 4904, section 001: Studies in Film  
Explorations in Genre  
Spring 2022 | Coleman 3691 | Thursday, 3.30 PM-6.50 PM

**Instructor:** Dr. Bobby Martínez

**Office:** Coleman Hall 3371

**E-mail:** rlmartinez@eiu.edu

**Virtual Zoom Office Hours:** Mondays, 12 NOON-2 PM; Wednesdays, 12 NOON-2 PM; Tuesdays, 3 PM-4 PM; & by APPOINTMENT

**Class Websites:** D2L course page

**Course Description:**

(3-2-3) S. In-depth study of major periods, genres, history, criticism and/or theory of film. Topics to be announced and may include the following: representations of gender and masculinity, the problem of evil, crime and punishment, and understanding social problems.

We will explore these thematic ideas (listed above) through a study of films from around the world. We will pay special attention to how schools of film criticism and film genre affect our interpretation of cinematic meaning. Note: This course may be repeated once with permission from the Department Chairperson.

**Course Learning Goals:**

1. Students will evaluate film as an art form and a cultural artifact.
2. Students will analyze and synthesize theories of film form and visual style.
3. Students will identify film as a discursive narrative mode.
4. Students will identify, critique, and apply film theories and historical contexts.
5. Students will write analytically and effectively about film and related concepts.
6. Students will exercise their abilities to summarize and synthesize information from scholarly sources of various disciplines and from interdisciplinary materials (writing, critical thinking).
7. Students will have opportunities to make oral presentations of these summaries and syntheses (speaking).
8. Students will learn to conduct interdisciplinary film research using both primary and secondary sources (critical thinking).
9. Students will learn how to communicate these research findings in oral and written form (writing and speaking).
10. Students will learn to research, study, analyze and compare films from their own culture and those of other cultures (critical thinking).
11. Students will learn the importance of film studies in understanding cross-cultural interactions (citizenship).
12. Students will learn the importance of film studies as a basis for social action (citizenship).
13. Students will learn the significance of film as an integrated art form.
14. Students will learn the significance of contemporary film to a study of contemporary culture and society.

**Required Texts (at TRS):**

- Bernard F. Dick, *Anatomy of Film* (6<sup>th</sup> edition)
- Barry Grant, *Film Genre Reader III*
- Edward Branigan and Warren Buckland, *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Film Theory*

- Selected readings on D2L

**Required Screenings (in class and/or via D2L):**

- David Mackenzie, *Hell or High Water* (2016)
- Pierre Morel, *Taken* (2008)
- Anders Thomas Jensen, *Riders of Justice* (2021)
- Luc Besson, *La Femme Nikita* (1990)
- Emerald Fennell, *Promising Young Woman* (2020)
- Tobe Hooper, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974)
- Mike Nelson, *Wrong Turn: The Foundation* (2021)
- Jen & Sylvia Soska, *American Mary* (2012)
- Oliver Stone, *Platoon* (1986)
- John Ford, *The Searchers* (1956)
- George Stevens, *Shane* (1953)
- Scott Cooper, *Hostiles* (2017)

**Screenings in and Readings for Class:**

You are required to attend all class film screenings and to do all assigned reading for this course. More importantly, you are expected to read all assignments and watch all films **carefully** and **conscientiously**, meaning you are to make note of your reactions to the readings/films and be prepared to share your critical thoughts and interpretations of the works we cover. If you do not understand something in the reading, you should read it again and work at its meaning; likewise, if something about a film is perplexing, watch it again and think about it carefully. This process is what is known as “critical reading” and “critical thinking”: you must study a writer’s language or filmmaker’s films and think critically about its meanings and ramifications.

The text listed above is available from Textbook Rental (TRS). Other required readings will be available online via our course page on D2L. On the day that a text is to be discussed, you must have that work with you in class. For **electronic readings (PDF or Web documents)**, you must **have readable access to those documents in class on the day the material is discussed**. Since this course emphasizes careful reading and writing, you must either print out the document(s) or use a laptop, desktop, iPad, Kindle, or Nook to view them. *Using Smartphones to view readings for class discussion is not acceptable, unless directed to do so by the instructor.*

**Content Warning:**

Contemporary, and especially postmodern, texts (“texts” meaning novels, films, music, poems, etc.) often use violence and disturbing misappropriations of sex (rape and other forms of sexual abuse) as a way to get readers’ attention and tell stories that represent realities and challenges they see in their worlds. Some of our texts may prove either emotionally painful for or morally offensive to you. If you’re unwilling to read such material, please consider switching to another course. If you consider this literature worth reading but find yourself upset by it, always feel free to talk to me during my office hours, and to bring up your concerns during class if you are comfortable.

**Smartphone/Social Media Policy:**

To protect the safety of the classroom and the privacy of the students, usage of cell phones or smartphones during class to videotape, to text, and to access social media sites or apps (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, YouTube, etc.) **is strictly forbidden**. I also strongly encourage you to not post any class-related content or speech to social media in order to protect the privacy of you and your classmates. Smartphone or cell phone use during class will only be permitted with the

prior approval of the instructor.

### **Successful Behaviors for the Course:**

- Check Panthermail (e-mail) several times **daily**
- Visit class web site (D2L) or other recommended web resources frequently (use Firefox or Safari browsers)
- Use text editions found at Textbook Rental
- Attend class and actively participate **daily** in discussion
- Take notes during class lectures and discussions
- Take notes while reading and watching films
- Contact the instructor if you miss class

### **Active Participation and Attendance:**

Active attendance means that you are present in class each day in both *body and mind*—that is, I expect you to come to class each day having completed any required reading or listening or viewing assignments and ready to share your thoughtful, considered ideas. **Missing class and not completing assignments are not acceptable.** *If you become ill or experience family or personal difficulties beyond your control, then you must notify me of your absence as soon as possible.* Not completing daily assignments and not contributing to class discussion will result in poor participation grade scores. If you miss more than three (3) classes, your final course grade will be penalized: starting with the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) absence, a “+” or “-” will be deducted from your final course grade.

### **Turning in Assignments & Improving Your Work:**

Assignments turned in via D2L Dropbox must be in **Microsoft Word format**. Instructor feedback will be embedded in graded writing. Be sure to review and save your graded essays. One of your most important tools for improvement will be the comments and corrections I make in or suggest to your writing. *If you wish to see your writing improve and your grade rise as the semester progresses, you must carefully refer back to these written comments as you write subsequent essays.*

### **Guidelines for Specific Assignments:**

All written work should be formatted thus:

- Upload all writing assignments to D2L Dropbox in Microsoft Word format
- Use Double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman or Cambria font
- Use 1” (top/bottom) and 1.25” (left/right) margins
- Include your name, course name, professor’s name, and date on the front page
- Include a witty or informative title for your essays
- Place your name and page numbers in the headers of your essays
- Turn in all written work electronically via D2L Dropbox

### **Grading of Assignments:**

- Four (4) Analysis Task essays (3-4 pages each): 20%
- Participation in class discussions: 20%
- Forum posts for each film (250-300 words per post): 15%
- Discussion Leader exercises: 5%
- Précis & Annotated Bibliography for Term Paper: 15%
- Research Term Paper (9-11 pages): 25%

### **Grading Scale:**

- A = 94-100
- A- = 90-93
- B+ = 87-89
- B = 84-86
- B- = 80-83
- C+ = 77-79
- C = 74-76
- C- = 70-73
- D = 60-69
- F = below 60

### **Assignment Descriptions:**

All papers should be double spaced, in 12-point, Cambria or Times New Roman font, with 1" (top/bottom) and 1.25" (left/right) margins. Make sure to include your name, course name, professor's name, and date on the front page; a title for your paper; and your name and page numbers in the headers of the paper. Submit all work electronically, in Microsoft Word format, in D2L Dropbox.

- **Four Analysis Task Essays (3-4 pages each):** These essays require you periodically to analyze closely one of the films that we watch throughout the course. The purpose of this assignment is two-fold: first, it is meant to help you develop and demonstrate a stronger grasp of film vocabulary to use when analyzing cinema; and second, it offers you a chance to explore ideas in depth related to a film, which in turn may spark an idea for your term paper.
- **Prospectus & Annotated Bibliography for Term Paper (1-3 pages):** This short paper requires you to state what you intend to work on for your Term Paper. You will need to identify your topic, the film or films (no more than two allowed) you will study, the themes/ideas you will explore, and what you hope to find or produce through your research and analysis. Finally, you should include a short bibliography of sources you have investigated that you think may be useful to your analysis.
- **The Term Paper (9-12 pages):** The Term Paper will require you to write a researched, interpretive analysis of a film of your choice. You should focus on a specific topic that you will explore in a film or two in order to develop and present an interpretive argument (that is, have a thesis statement!) about the film's meaning. Your paper should include at least 3-4 professional, academic sources related to film studies that you will use in proving your analysis.
- **D2L Forum Posts:** To prepare for each week's in-class discussion, you will be required to complete weekly posts to our discussion forum for the various films that we will study throughout the course. Your posts should demonstrate thoughtful analysis of each film by analyzing at least one (1) specific piece of evidence from each film for that week's post, as your way to support your interpretive thinking about the film. This means analyzing dialogue or other aspects of the *mise-en-scene* and making use of film vocabulary as you conduct your analysis.
- **Discussion Leader Assignment:** This assignment requires you to prepare for and lead one class discussion on a course film. To prepare for this assignment, you should zero in on a particular scene of a film that supports the ideas you have to share with the class to

generate class discussion. Note: You will not have to complete a D2L Forum post on the day you are a discussion leader.

- **Class Discussion:** All students should strive to complete weekly D2L Forum posts to prepare for weekly class discussion. The more that you actively share your critical interpretive thoughts or questions about our films, the more points you earn towards class participation.

### **The English Department Statement on Plagiarism:**

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's own original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Office of Student Standards. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources. **Failure to cite ideas or writing not your own will constitute plagiarism.**

### **Students Pursuing English Education/Teacher Certification:**

Students seeking Teacher Certification in English Language Arts should request each of their English Department professors to complete the "Application for English Department Approval to Student Teach" before the end of the semester. This online evaluation form is available here: <https://www.eiu.edu/english/machform/view.php?id=19831>.

### **Student Academic Integrity:**

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

### **Disability Services:**

If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by McAfee Gym, Room 1210, or call 217-581-6583.

### **Student Success Center:**

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center ([www.eiu.edu/~success](http://www.eiu.edu/~success)) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call [217-581-6696](tel:217-581-6696), or go to McAfee Gym, Room 1301.

### **Tech Support:**

If you need assistance with D2L, call D2L Support toll free at 1-877-325-7778. Support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. E-mail and Chat options are also available on the "My Home" page after logging in to D2L. Other D2L resources including a D2L Orientation course for students are available on the same page. For technical questions regarding other software, hardware, network issues, EIU NetID/password, or Panthermail, please contact the ITS Helpdesk at 217-581-4357 during regular business hours (8 am-5 pm) or submit a help ticket at <https://techsupport.eiu.edu/>. If you have a question regarding course content, contact your instructor.

**COVID-19 Practices & Expectations on EIU's Campus:**

All students, regardless of vaccination status, are required to wear face coverings during class. Students may sit in any classroom seat where they are most comfortable. All reasonable efforts will be made to provide modifications to classroom seating arrangements if needed; however, this may not be possible in all situations.

Students should not attend class if they are ill or feel sick and should consult the student health clinic if they have any COVID-19-like symptoms. Everyone in the campus community is responsible for following practices that reduce risk. If you have a health condition that may require a potential classroom accommodation or variation from current EIU COVID-19 policy, please contact Student Disability Services (studentdisability@eiu.edu or 581-6583) to determine what options may be available based on current CDC guidance.

If you are unable to follow EIU's COVID-19 guidelines, you may be asked to leave class or office hours as compliance with public health guidance is essential. Accommodations for instruction and make-up work will be made for students with documented medical absences according to IGP #43 [ <https://castle.eiu.edu/auditing/043.php> ]. To view the latest EIU COVID-19 related information and any policy updates, please visit <https://www.eiu.edu/covid/>.

Eng. 4904, section 001:  
 Studies in Film: Explorations in Genre  
 Spring 2022 | Tentative Class Schedule\*

**\*Please note:** This schedule is *tentative*; activities or readings are subject to change depending on class progress.

Date	What We'll Do in Class	Homework
Thurs., 1/13	Discuss course policies and syllabus  Cultural & Intellectual background to contemporary society  Discuss how film creates representation and meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read "Sound" in <i>Anatomy of Film</i> (pp. 36-50)</li> <li>- Read "Mise-en-Scène" in <i>Anatomy of Film</i> (pp. 86-98)</li> <li>- Read "The Shot" in <i>Anatomy of Film</i> (pp. 51-63)</li> <li>- Read sections on shots and editing in <i>Anatomy of Film</i> (pp. 69-83)</li> <li>- Complete Film Vocabulary Worksheet (D2L)</li> <li>- Read Wright's "Genre Films and the Status Quo" (60-68) in <i>Film Genre Reader</i></li> </ul>
Thurs., 1/20	1. Discuss examples of film techniques  2. Unit I – Understanding war: Watch Oliver Stone's <i>Platoon</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read excerpt regarding Francois Truffaut's response to conflict cinema and "The Algerian Tragedy" (D2L)</li> <li>- Read "Friendly Civilians: Images of Women and the Feminization of the Audience in Vietnam War Films" in <i>Film Genre Reader</i> (510-523)</li> <li>- Read "Trauma and Cinema" (484-488) in <i>Routledge Encyclopedia of Film Theory</i></li> </ul>
Thurs., 1/27	1. Discuss <i>Platoon</i>  2. Understanding the (family) Action Film: Watch Pierre Morel's <i>Taken</i>	Read Tasker's "The Family in Action" (524-541) in <i>Film Genre Reader</i>
Thurs., 2/3	1. Discuss <i>Taken</i>  2. Understanding the (family) Action Film: Watch Anders Thomas Jensen's <i>Riders of Justice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep Tasker's essay in mind</li> <li>- Read entry for "Queer Theory" (384-385) in <i>Routledge Encyclopedia of Film Theory</i></li> </ul>
Thurs., 2/10	1. Discuss <i>Riders of Justice</i>  2. Understanding Gaze, Bodies, and Horror: Watch Tobe Hooper's <i>Texas Chain Saw Massacre</i>  <b>Analysis Task #1 due in D2L            Dropbox by Fri., 2/11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read Williams's "Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess" (159-177) in <i>Film Genre Reader</i></li> <li>- Read Kawin's "Children of the Light" (360-380) in <i>Film Genre Reader</i></li> </ul>
Thurs., 2/17	1. Discuss <i>Texas Chain Saw Massacre</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (D2L)</li> <li>- Read "Gaze Theory" (225-229) in <i>Routledge Encyclopedia of Film Theory</i></li> </ul>



	2. Understanding Gaze, Bodies, and Horror: Watch the Soskas' <i>American Mary</i>	
Thurs., 2/24	1. Discuss <i>American Mary</i>  2. Understanding Gaze, Bodies, and Horror: Watch Mike Nelson's <i>Wrong Turn: The Foundation</i>  <b>Analysis Task #2 due in D2L Dropbox by Fri., 2/25</b>	Read Carol Clover's "Her Body, Himself: Gender in the Slasher Film" (D2L)
Thurs., 3/3	1. Discuss <i>Wrong Turn: The Foundation</i>  2. Rethinking the Meaning of Noir and Gender: Watch Luc Besson's <i>La Femme Nikita</i>	- Read Barbara Klinger's "Cinema/Ideology/Criticism Revisited (100-107) in <i>Film Genre Reader</i> - Read Paul Schrader's "Notes on Film Noir" (265-278) in <i>Film Genre Reader</i>
Thurs., 3/10	1. Discuss <i>La Femme Nikita</i>  2. Rethinking the Meaning of Noir and Gender: Watch Emerald Fennell's <i>Promising Young Woman</i>	
Thurs., 3/17	<b>No Class - Spring Break</b>	
Thurs., 3/24	1. Discuss <i>Promising Young Woman</i>  2. Rethinking the Western: Watch John Ford's <i>The Searchers</i>	<b>Précis &amp; Annotated Bibliography for Term Paper due in Dropbox by Wed., 3/30</b>
Thurs., 3/31	1. Discuss <i>The Searchers</i>  2. Rethinking the Western: Watch Scott Cooper's <i>Hostiles</i>  <b>Analysis Task #3 due in D2L Dropbox by Fri., 4/1</b>	<b>Reminders!</b> <b>- Be working on Research Term Paper!</b>
Thurs., 4/7	1. Discuss <i>Hostiles</i>  2. Rethinking the Western: Watch George Stevens's <i>Shane</i>	<b>Reminders!</b> <b>- Be working on Research Term Paper!</b>
Thurs., 4/14	1. Discuss <i>Shane</i>	<b>Reminders!</b> <b>- Be working on Research Term Paper!</b>

	<p>2. Rethinking the Western: Watch David Mackenzie's <i>Hell or High Water</i></p> <p><b>Analysis Task #4 due in D2L Dropbox</b></p>	
<p>Thurs., 4/21</p>	<p>1. Discuss <i>Hell or High Water</i></p> <p>2. Watch: TBD</p>	
<p>Thurs., 4/28</p>	<p><b>Last Day of Class</b> Course evals</p>	<p><b>Research Term Paper is due Wednesday, May 4, by 9 PM</b></p>