

Montgomery County Community College  
COM 230  
The Movies: Meanings and Methods  
3-2-2

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The popular arts of “the movies” and television are carefully prepared constructions of sights and sounds. Watching them is the chief way our society comes to recognize itself. COM 230 is about learning to get more enjoyment and meaning from these products of the image industries. The course examines how meaning is created and communicated in non-print media. Basic concepts and techniques in constructing and interrelating visual and aural images will be discussed in light of the historical development of film and video technology and techniques.

**REQUISITES:**

*Previous Course Requirements*

None

*Concurrent Course Requirements*

None

LEARNING OUTCOMES Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
1. Express orally and in writing, an appreciation of the art of visual story telling in cinema and television.	Viewing Films and other Programs Essays Analysis Papers Film Reviews Research Paper Oral Presentation Final Exam Screening	Peer to Peer Review Portfolio Essays Analysis Papers Research Paper
2. Describe the ways that the moving visual media create stories that portray the world.	(Viewing Films and other Programs Essays Analysis Papers Film Reviews Research Paper Oral Presentation Final Exam Screening	Peer to Peer Review Portfolio Essays Analysis Papers Research Paper

LEARNING OUTCOMES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
3. Compare and contrast how meaning and value are constructed visually for film and TV storytelling.	Viewing Films and other Programs Essays Analysis Papers Film Reviews Research Paper Oral Presentation Final Exam Screening	Peer to Peer Review Portfolio Essays Analysis Papers Research Paper
4. Utilize vocabulary of technical and aesthetic terminology to converse about film and TV.	Viewing Films and other Programs Essays Analysis Papers Film Reviews Research Paper Oral Presentation Final Exam Screening	Peer to Peer Review Portfolio Essays Analysis Papers Research Paper
5. Discuss how "movies" made by different cultures deal with diverse issues using visual story telling techniques.	Viewing Films and other Programs Essays Analysis Papers Film Reviews Research Paper Oral Presentation Final Exam Screening	Peer to Peer Review Portfolio Essays Analysis Papers Research Paper
6. Demonstrate artistic expression through analysis and/or creation.	Viewing Films and other Programs Essays Analysis Papers Film Reviews Research Paper Oral Presentation Final Exam Screening	Peer to Peer Review Portfolio Essays Analysis Papers Research Paper
7. Make aesthetic judgments about the construction of visual stories in films and TV storytelling based on established production criteria.	Viewing Films and other Programs Essays Analysis Papers Film Reviews Research Paper Oral Presentation Final Exam Screening	Peer to Peer Review Portfolio Essays Analysis Papers Research Paper

LEARNING OUTCOMES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
8. Discuss observations and thoughts concerning the techniques of visual storytelling used in moving visual media to others.	Viewing Films and other Programs Essays Analysis Papers Film Reviews Research Paper Oral Presentation Final Exam Screening	Peer to Peer Review Portfolio Essays Analysis Papers Research Paper

At the conclusion of each semester/session, assessment of the learning outcomes will be completed by course faculty using the listed evaluation method(s). Aggregated results will be submitted to the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs. The benchmark for each learning outcome is that *70% of students will meet or exceed outcome criteria.*

#### SEQUENCE OF TOPICS:

1. How Movies Work and the Importance of Movie Making in Culture
2. Telling Stories with Light
3. Movie Genres and Classification
4. Film Theory, Film Studies, Ideology and Point of View,
5. Mise-en-scene including Movement (Blocking) and Non-Verbal Communication
6. Lighting and Cinematography
7. Editing, Writing,
8. Story and Plot Review, Social Context
9. Acting, Directing and Other Key Elements of Film Construction
10. From Idea to Screen: The Producer and Putting It All Together

#### LEARNING MATERIALS:

Barsam, Richard et al (2013). *Looking At Movies*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.; Norton.(package with DVD and book *Writing About Movies*).

Other learning materials may be required and made available directly to the student and/or via the College's Libraries and/or course management system.

#### COURSE APPROVAL:

Prepared by: John Gallagher	Date: 6/1998
Revised by: Neil Goldstein and Allan Schear	Date: 7/22/2012
VPAA/Provost or designee Compliance Verification: Victoria L. Bastecki-Perez, Ed.D.	Date: 8/27/2012
Revised by: Neil Goldstein	Date: 5/15/2013
VPAA/Provost or designee Compliance Verification: Victoria L. Bastecki-Perez, Ed.D.	Date: 8/9/2013
Revised by: Allan Schear and Gerald Collom	Date: 1/15/2016

VPAA/Provost or designee Compliance Verification:  
Victoria L. Bastecki-Perez, Ed.D.

Date: 6/01/2016

Revised by: Debbie Dalrymple  
VPAA/Provost or designee Compliance Verification:

Date: 1/10/2018

Date: 1/10/2018



*This course is consistent with Montgomery County Community College's mission. It was developed, approved and will be delivered in full compliance with the policies and procedures established by the College.*