

## **Course Syllabus**

**Film Studies**

**2025-2026**

**Course Syllabus**

**Anders - M221**

Cocke County High School

## Film Studies

### 2025-2026 Syllabus

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## Part 1: Course Information

### Instructor Information

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### Course Description

Film Studies - The nature of this course is to promote understanding and awareness of film as one of the most powerful and influential forms of media. Film technique influences a wide array of other forms which use visuals and sound to communicate information and ideas. Films/movies themselves do not just contain and exemplify many methods of literary devices as well as quite frequently rhetorical ones, they are ultimately products of collaboration, visualization, and ultimately reading and writing (literacy). As a result, this course will involve active viewing of film, reading of informational texts, development of writing and reasoning skills in a variety of areas (from basic summary to analysis to critiquing). In addition, study of many literary concepts will occur as they are crucial to film (including but not limited to character, mood, motivation, symbol, allegory, characterization, nonlinear plot, framing sequence, point of view, etc). Storytelling is the most common way that we communicate to one another. Stories told with film have a tremendous influence on our attitudes and perceptions of the world around us. In fact, films may be one of the most powerful tools in modern culture for shaping values and conveying information. By viewing, studying, discussing and writing about film, students develop and demonstrate skills in technological, cultural, and media literacy, as well as critical thinking and problem solving - skills that will serve them well in the real world. As well as described in the nature of this course it will serve as additional opportunities for development of literary concepts and writing skills.

**Prerequisite**

- English 2

**General Education/High School Pathway Area**

- This course is an English Language Arts general education elective.

**Textbook & Course Materials****Required Text**

- Selected films, clips, articles, and reviews provided in class.

**Recommended Texts & Other Readings or Resources**

- Other readings and resources will be made available in a course packet, online, or other sources.

**Course Requirements**

- Internet Acceptable Use Policy Form
- Complete and submit course materials

Individual supplies

- Chromebook
- Google classroom
- Internet connection is desirable

**Course Structure**

Class sessions will be delivered by a combination of lecture, discussion, and activity.

## Part 2: Student Learning Outcomes

Text is used as term to interchangeably mean a print reading selection such as an a film relevant article, script, or review, a film, or a film clip

Goals derived from TN English III/IV Standards

- Reading - Literature
- Key Ideas and Details
  - 1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - 2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
  - 3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- Craft and Structure
  - 4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
  - 5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, scene) relate to each other and the whole.

- 6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
- 7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.\*
- 8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
- 9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
- Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity
- 10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.
- Writing
- Text Types and Purposes\*
- 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the

effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

- 3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- Production and Distribution of Writing
- 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- 5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- 6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge
- 7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- 8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
- 9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

- Range of Writing
- 10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- Comprehension and Collaboration
- 1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- 2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- 3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.
- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas
- 4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- 5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.
- 6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

- Conventions of Standard English
- 1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- 2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- Knowledge of Language
- 3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
- Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
- 4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.
- 5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- 6. Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or



expression.

You will meet the objectives listed above through class attendance via a combination activities in this course such as reading, discussion, projects, research, and writing.

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### Part 3: Topic Outline/Schedule

In all units students will complete assignments to develop skills associated with the course standards.

*\*All units will contain extension tasks in which students will either write, research, present, or a combination of the above.\**

#### UNIT 1: Genre

Key Concepts: War, Suspense, Mystery, Crime, Thriller, Fantasy, Musical, Comedy, Drama, Romantic Comedy, Sci-fi, Noir, Documentary, Biopic, Historical Drama

Film Examples: Dracula (Lugosi), El Cid, Dirty Dozen, Inception, Secondhand Lions, Iron Man, Casablanca, Dark Knight

#### UNIT 2: The Birth of Cinema/ Silent Film

Key Concepts: Precursors, early photography, persistence of vision, critical inventions, Thomas Edison's role, public reaction, inter-titles, continuity, Charlie Chaplin, landmark silent films, actors and directors.

Film Examples: Lumiere Brothers' First Films, A Trip to the Moon, The Gold Rush, The Kid, City Lights, Steamboat Bill, Jr., Metropolis, Nosferatu.

### UNIT 3: The Introduction of Sound / The Musical

Key Concepts: Important inventions, competing formats, public acceptance, newsreels, Broadway's influence, changes in the musical genre over the years, landmark musical films, actors, and directors.

Film Examples: Singin' in the Rain, On the Town, The Wizard of Oz, West Side Story, Hard Day's Night.

### UNIT 4: Censorship/ The Comedy

Key Concepts: Public concerns, MPPDA, The Production Code, The Hays Commission, the rating system, landmark comedies, societal

influences, effects of constraints on art, landmark comedy films, actors, writers and directors.

Film Examples: Duck Soup, Bringing Up Baby, Some Like It Hot, Dr. Strangelove, What's Up, Doc?, School of Rock, Roman Holiday, Three Stooges Short Films

#### UNIT 5: The Studio System/ The Western

Key Concepts: The Big Eight Studios, vertical integration, art as a business, landmark westerns, landscapes as characters, mythological heroes, landmark western films, actors, writers and directors.

Film Examples: Stagecoach, Red River, The Searchers, Shane, High Noon, 3:10 to Yuma, Chisum, Fistful of Dollars

#### UNIT 6: Cinema and Patriotism/ The Combat Film

Key Concepts: McCarthyism, Hollywood blacklist, House on Un-American Activities, First Amendment, Hollywood's role in the war, war bonds, propaganda vs. patriotism, landmark war films, actors and directors.

Film Examples: Bataan, Sergeant York, Sands of Iwo Jima, Stalag 17, Paths of Glory, The Great Escape. Kelly's Heroes

#### UNIT 7: Documentaries and Bias in Cinema

Key Concepts: Bias, first person accounts, journalistic versus editorial, history films, Cinema Verite, docudramas, biopics, re-enactments, propaganda, objectivity, landmark documentary films, artists, studios and directors.

Film Examples: Endless Summer, On Any Sunday, Sicko, Dogtown and Z-Boys, Riding Giants, Step Into Liquid, Dust to Glory.

## UNIT 8: The Art of Cinematography/ Film Noir

Key Concepts: The cinematographer as an artist, the rule of thirds, lighting concepts and terminology, techniques of focusing, negative space, shadowing, landmark noir films, actors, writers and directors.

Film Examples: Sunset Boulevard, The Maltese Falcon,

Double Indemnity, The Third Man, The Big Sleep, The Big Heat, Detour, Citizen Kane.

## UNIT 9: The Art of Editing/ Suspense Films

Key Concepts: The grammar of film editing, editing terminology, montage, cross-cutting, landmark suspense films, Alfred Hitchcock, other suspense actors and directors.

Film Examples: Charade, Vertigo, Rear Window, Rope, Wait Until Dark, Duel, North by Northwest

#### UNIT 10: The Art of Director/ The Drama

Key Concepts: The evolution of the director's job, the role of the director, producer vs. director, the auteur theory, the final cut, Orson Welles, David Lean, John Huston, landmark drama films and directors.

Film Examples: On the Waterfront, Seven Samurai, The Treasure of the Sierra Madre, The Bridge Over the River Kwai, Yojimbo

#### UNIT 11: The Film School Generation/ The Blockbuster

Key Concepts: Low-budget filmmaking, B-movies, location shooting, product tie-ins, conglomerate takeovers, landmark 1970s films, artists, and directors such as Francis Ford Coppola, George Lucas, Martin Scorsese, and Steven Spielberg.

Film Examples: , Star Wars, Raiders of the Lost Ark, Close Encounters of the Third Kind, ET.

#### Unit 12 : The Animated Film and Animated Film Resurgence

Key Concepts : key animation, in between animation, cel, voice acting, studios such as Disney, Pixar, individuals such as talent/directors such as Mel Blanc, Walt Disney, Chuck Jones, Tex Avery

Film Examples : Disney's Robin Hood, Fantasia, Toy Story, Up, Walle , Despicable ME, Transformers: The Movie, Howl's Moving Castle

#### Unit 13 : The Teen Movie

Key Concepts: coming of age, teen angst, rebellion, codes and conventions, directors such as George Lucas and John Hughes, talent such as the Brat Pack (Judd Nelson, Anthony Michael Hall, Molly Ringwald, etc)

Film Examples: 16 Candles, Ferris Bueller's Day Off, Grease, American Graffiti, Say Anything....



Unit 14: The Contemporary Blockbuster pt 1(novel adaptations)

Key Concepts: back to back filming, adaptation, source material, recasting, diverge from source material, special effects, cgi, green screen, directors such as Peter Jackson and Chris Colombus

Film Examples: Harry Potter and the Sorceror's Stone, Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring, Chronicles of Narnia

Unit 15: The Contemporary Blockbuster pt 2 (superheroes)

Key Concepts: Origin story, source material, recasting, special effects, reboot, shared universe, directors such as Joss Whedon, Sam Raimi, Zack Snyder, Michael Bay

Film Examples: Man of Steel, Avengers, Thor: Ragnarok, Dark Knight Rises, Avengers: Infinity War, Aquaman, Wonder Woman



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## Part 4: Grading Policy

### Graded Course Activities

**Major assignments** for class units are listed below; majors works will include selection tests as well. Ongoing assignments will vary per unit.

Schedule	Assignment(s)
Unit One	Writing assignments, film activities, quiz, test
Unit Two	Writing assignments film activities, quiz, test
Unit Three	Writing assignments, film activities, quiz, test
Unit Four	Writing assignments, film activities, quiz, test
Unit Five	Writing assignments, film activities, quiz, test, essay
Unit Six	Writing assignments film activities, quizzes test
Unit Seven	Writing assignments film activities, quizzes test
Unit Eight	Writing assignments, film activities, quizzes test, essay
Unit Nine	Writing assignments, film activities, quizzes test
Unit Ten	Writing assignments, film activities, quizzes test

Unit Eleven	Writing assignments, film activities, quizzes test
Unit Twelve	Writing assignments film activities, quizzes test
Unit Thirteen	Writing assignments film activities, quizzes test, essay
Unit Fourteen	Writing assignments film activities, quizzes test
Unit Fifteen	Writing assignments film activities, quizzes test

**Late Work Policy**

Be sure to pay close attention to deadlines—there will be no make up assignments or quizzes, or late work accepted without a serious and compelling reason and instructor approval. Due dates are posted with assignments in Google classroom. A grace period of a week is given with reminders before assignments are closed.

**Viewing Grades in ASPEN (optional)**

Points you receive for graded activities will be posted to the ASPEN Grade Book. Click on the My Grades link on the left navigation to view your points.

Your instructor will update the online grades at least once a week, by 3:45 pm on Fridays. For major assignments such as extended essays, please allow 7 days following the completion of an activity. You will see a visual indication of new grades posted on your ASPEN home page under the link to this course.

**Letter Grade Assignment**

Final grades assigned for this course will be based on the percentage of total points earned and are assigned as follows:

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

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### Part 5: Course Policies

#### Class rules:

1. **Be on time:** You must be inside the classroom when the tardy bell rings in order to be "on time." All penalties will fall in accordance with CCHS attendance policy.
2. **Be prepared:** Do not interrupt class time to borrow/obtain forgotten materials.
3. **Be respectful:** Sleeping, putting your head down, and off topic conversations are considered disrespectful because they distract from learning. Please use good manners with your peers, your teacher, and all school personnel.
4. **Do YOUR work, and let others to do theirs:** Anyone caught cheating or allowing/aiding others to cheat will receive an automatic zero on the assignment as well as a parent contact and/or discipline referral. Any form of plagiarism will not be tolerated.
5. **Be mindful of CCHS policies and procedures.**

#### Attend Class

Students are expected to attend all class sessions as listed on the course calendar. Generally speaking, you have three days to make up work for an **excused** absence. If you are absent for an extended period or have extenuating circumstances, please speak to me regarding your deadlines as I may allow an extension depending on circumstances and if your absences were excused. However, there are several things to keep in mind:

- If you are absent, it is **your responsibility** to find out what you missed. **You can find out what we did in class by checking the Makeup Folder** or the website. All handouts will be filed according to day of the week in the green. If you have any questions, I will be more than happy to help you, but you must see me BEFORE or AFTER class.
- If you were present when an assignment was made, your absence will **NOT** delay/extend the due date. If you were absent on a due date, you must either

email the assignment on the due day or turn in the work immediately upon your return. If a quiz/test is previously scheduled for the day of your return, you will be expected to take the assessment along with the rest of the class.

- YOU are responsible for arranging a time to stay after school or come by when you need to make up quizzes/tests (never during class time) or get additional help.
- All work not made up within the allotted time frame will be calculated as zeroes in the average.

## **Participate**

Participation will be tracked through completion of participation questions, active participation in discussions, and active/effective viewing of material and class readings.

## **Build Rapport**

If you find that you have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure you let your instructor know as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming an effective professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing your instructor when difficulties arise during the semester so that they can help you find a solution.

## **Complete Assignments**

Assignments must be submitted by the given deadline or special permission must be requested from the instructor *before the due date*. Extensions will not be given beyond the next assignment except under extreme circumstances.

All discussion assignments must be completed by the assignment due date and time. Late or missing discussion assignments will affect the student's grade.

## **Incomplete Policy**

Under emergency/special circumstances, students may petition for an incomplete grade. An incomplete will only be assigned if the student petitions before grades are due. All incomplete course assignments must be completed within a reasonable time frame set by your teacher.

**Academic Dishonesty Policy**

1. Academic dishonesty includes such things as cheating, inventing false information or citations, plagiarism and helping someone else commit an act of academic dishonesty. It usually involves an attempt by a student to show possession of a level of knowledge or skill that he/she does not possess.
2. If there is convincing evidence that a student is guilty of academic dishonesty, the instructor shall assign an appropriate academic penalty to include any or all of the following measures: parent contact, discipline referral, verbal reprimand, and no credit for the assignment.

**Important Note:** Any form of academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, may be reported to the school administration.

**Course policies are subject to change.** It is the student's responsibility to check for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be posted in the classroom.