

PHI 345: PHILOSOPHY AND FILM, 4 CR.
 SPRING 2019
 MONDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS 3:00 PM – 4:50 PM
 GERHARDINGER CENTER 109

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name: Dr. Catherine Homan
 Office Location: Fidelis Hall, 329
 Phone: (414) 930-3013
 E-mail: homanc@mtmary.edu
 Office hours: Mondays 1-2, Tuesdays 10-12, Wednesdays 1-2, and by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to explore both the philosophical questions surrounding film and how film might inform our philosophical understanding. Through an examination of a variety of film practices and philosophical approaches to film and cinematic experience, this course will consider questions such as, What is film anyway? How do we evaluate film? In what ways are race, socio-economic status, gender, or ability at stake in film? What roles does film have in society, ethics, or education? The course will include a variety of articles with film clips shown in class. Throughout the semester we will also watch several films in their entirety. Students will develop their own creative projects relating to philosophy and film.

LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

We will build on the following primary learning goals and objectives throughout the term. At the end of the course, students, you will be able to:

- identify and pose thoughtful questions of several philosophical theories of film,
- compare and distinguish substantively among at least two theories,
- analyze contemporary issues through the lens of a particular philosophical theory,
- facilitate course discussion and demonstrate nuanced understanding of course material,
- argue well for your own position in class and in written assignments,
- cultivate the intellectual virtues of epistemic humility, intellectual curiosity, and open-mindedness, and
- cultivate an appreciation for film.

TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS

1. Sutton-Smith, Brian. *The Ambiguity of Film*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Other texts will be posted on E-Learning. You must bring the assigned text with you each class period in a format with which you can actively read.

MOUNT MARY UNIVERSITY MISSION

Mount Mary University, an urban Catholic university for women sponsored by the School Sisters of Notre Dame, provides an environment for the development of the whole person. The University encourages leadership, integrity, and a deep sense of social justice arising from a sensitivity to moral values and Christian principles.

Mount Mary commits itself to excellence in teaching and learning with an emphasis on thinking critically and creatively. The baccalaureate curriculum integrates the liberal arts with career preparation for women of diverse ages and personal circumstances; the programs at the graduate level provide opportunities for both men and women to enhance their professional excellence.

MOUNT MARY UNIVERSITY VISION STATEMENT

Mount Mary University is recognized as a diverse learning community that works in partnership with local, national and global organizations to educate women to transform the world.

DIVERSITY AND ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Mount Mary University and the Department of Philosophy are committed to an educational environment that affirms the uniqueness, diversity, and integrity of all students. Similarly, the well-being and success of each student in this course are important to me. I will do my best to ensure that students from all backgrounds and perspectives will be served equitably. The diversity that students bring to this class will be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful and inclusive of the many identities of students in terms of gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, perspective, and other background characteristics. Thus, I encourage students registered in the course to discuss their learning styles and comprehension requirements with me.

Mount Mary University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which stipulates that the University will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations; please see me or

- Marci Ocker, Student Success Center, Haggerty Library, Room 124.
- Phone: 414-930-3368
- Fax: 414-930-3700
- Email: ockerm@mtmary.edu

If you require any particular accommodations, please meet with me by **as soon as possible** so we can work together to make optimal arrangements. Please bring your letter of accommodation to our meeting. All information will be held in the strictest of confidence.

BASIC NEEDS STATEMENT

Doing philosophy is challenging, and can be especially challenging if we have difficulty meeting basic needs, too. Any student who faces challenges securing their food, transportation, or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact Sarah Olejniczak, Dean of Student Affairs for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that she may possess.

ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

In addition to formal assignments listed below, there are a few other requirements:

- ***Come to every class.***
 - Attendance is mandatory. There may be legitimate reasons to miss class, but there can be no more than three absences without impacting your final grade.
- ***Come to class on time.***
 - Late arrivals are disruptive and jeopardize your own ability to follow the class. Three late arrivals count as an absence
- ***Come prepared.***
 - Before class, read the text carefully and make note of any questions or ideas. Have your textbook, notes, and something to write with ready at the start of class. I will do my best to help you understand the material, but you must make a good faith effort to do the work.
- ***Be respectful.***
 - Being respectful means listening attentively and making a good effort to engage with your classmates and me. Please wait for opportunities for group work instead of having side conversations. There is no excuse for rude, disruptive, aggressive, or dismissive behavior toward your classmates or me even if you have a differing opinion. Cell phones must be out of sight during class unless arranged otherwise.
- ***Strive for open communication.***
 - We have a joint responsibility to make the class the best it can be. If you're having difficulties or have other concerns or recommendations, please come to my office hours or make an appointment with me as soon as possible. If something is working well, let me know that, too!
- ***Practice intellectual virtues***
 - Epistemic humility: Question your own certainty in ways that enable you to revise your views, even regarding convictions central to your worldview
 - Intellectual curiosity: See out diverse experiences and perspectives to test, complicate, and enrich existing knowledge.
 - Make an effort to hear and respect others' testimonies, try to inhabit their perspectives, and consider multiple perspectives at once
- ***Practice self-care***
 - Many of the themes we will cover this term will be challenging, including issues of race, gender, sexuality, ability, class, national origin, colonialism, violence, and self-harm. Readings and discussions might trigger strong feelings—anger, discomfort,

anxiety, confusion, excitement, humor, and even boredom. Some of us will have emotional responses to the readings; some of us will have emotional responses to our peers' understanding of the readings; all of us should feel responsible for creating a space that is both intellectually rigorous and respectful. Above all, be respectful mindful of the ways that our identities position us in the classroom.

I expect everyone to come to class prepared to discuss the readings in a mature and respectful way. If you are struggling with the course materials, here are some tips: read the syllabus so that you are prepared in advance. You can approach me ahead of time if you'd like more information about a topic or reading. If you think a particular reading or topic might be especially challenging or unsettling, you can arrive to class early and take a seat by the door so that you can easily exit the classroom as needed. If you need to leave or miss class, you are still responsible for the work you miss. If you are struggling to keep up with the work because of the course content, you should speak with me and/or seek help from the counseling center.

1. RATs	10%
a. iRAT	(10%)
b. tRAT	(10%)
2. In-class Performance	10%
3. ARRs	15%
4. FRRs	15%
5. Essays	25% (10%, 15%)
6. Peer Feedback	5%
7. Final Project	20%

1. RATs (READINESS ASSURANCE TESTS)

This assignment aims at meeting the learning goal of identifying thoughtful questions of philosophical theories of film and facilitating the discussion. RATs are designed to make sure that you take responsibility for reading and understanding the basic concepts in the core readings for each unit. RATs will be administered on the first day of each unit, and will generally cover basic concepts that will prove essential for further reflecting on the broader significance of the texts. You will take five RATs, ten-question multiple-choice quizzes, both individually and in teams. Your lowest RAT score will be dropped. RATs cannot be made up at a later date. If you must miss a RAT due to an emergency, please meet with me as soon as possible to avoid receiving a zero for the RAT. NOTE: You must score at least 40% on the individual RAT in order to benefit from your team score; if you score less than 40% on the individual RAT, your final score for that RAT will be your individual score alone.

2. IN-CLASS PERFORMANCE

This course will be conducted more as a seminar, so participation from everyone is imperative. When you contribute to discussion, other students' learning is enhanced. I expect students to come to class having completed the assigned readings and with the texts in hand. Participation means not simply speaking for the sake of speaking, but

contributing to the development of class discussion on comments or questions. As a fairly shy person, I understand that it can be difficult to participate verbally. I urge you to try anyway and I will also make a special note of active listening. Please also remember that participation includes respect, so disruptive behavior such as talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early, and the use of cell phones won't be tolerated. Pop quizzes may be given in class occasionally and will count toward the participation grade.

3. ARRs (ACTIVE READING RESPONSES)

It is important that you develop the habit of "active" reading, including the reading of films. This assignment is designed to help you do that. As you read, I urge you to highlight significant passages and even include in the margins of the text questions and ideas you have about what you are reading. These texts will be challenging, but will also be rewarding through active reading and discussion. This assignment enables you to prepare better for class by working through the text ahead of class to determine both what you understand and where you have questions. Thus, the responses are a *shared responsibility* between the students and me. Instructions for the responses are on e-Learning. Responses should be 350-500 words. **Responses must be submitted via eLearning by 11am the day they are due.** No late responses will be accepted except in unique circumstances and with prior arrangement. The guidelines for the ARRs are on eLearning. There are no ARRs due the day that RATs are assigned. **Please be sure to include your ID number, but not your name, to facilitate anonymous grading**

4. FRRs (FILM READING RESPONSES)

Part of our task is to seriously consider the ways in which films can pose philosophical questions or answers, as well as how films are texts that can be interpreted. For each film we watch, you will complete a film reading response connecting the film to the course material covered that week. These responses will help you view films more actively and critically and develop a deeper engagement with the texts. The FRR prompts are on eLearning. Responses should be 350-500 words. **Responses must be submitted via eLearning by 11am the day they are due.** No late responses will be accepted except in unique circumstances and with prior arrangement. **Please be sure to include your ID number, but not your name, to facilitate anonymous grading**

5. ESSAYS

The essays will be critical analysis and response papers of 1100-1500 words (approximately 4-6 pages), typed and double-spaced. The essays provide you the opportunity to demonstrate familiarity with the texts by answering a particular prompt, which I will provide you. Students are welcome to come up with their own prompt, but it must receive my approval ahead of time. This assignment connects to learning goal of being able to identify, explain, and pose thoughtful questions of several philosophical theories of film; compare and distinguish substantively among at least two theories; analyze contemporary issues through the lens of a particular theory; and articulate and argue well for your own position in written assignments. Because the aim is to develop your voice and your

argument in relation to the texts, we will have writing workshops prior to the final submission. Participating in the workshop, as well as a draft, and a reflection on the revision process, will count toward the essay grade. More specific guidelines for the essays will be discussed in class. **Please be sure to include your ID number, but not your name, to facilitate anonymous grading.**

N.B.: Online sources can be helpful for preliminary background research, but they will not help you significantly beyond this. You'll need to demonstrate original thought and provide your own analysis of different arguments. Have confidence in your own abilities, and if you need more help, see me. All sources, including those consulted for background absolutely must be cited properly.

6. PEER FEEDBACK

Since so much of our work is dependent on shared responsibility for preparation and discussion, peer evaluations will be collected at the midterm. The aim is for teams to provide constructive feedback to one another to improve everyone's performance.

7. FINAL PROJECT

The final project is your opportunity to provide an answer to a question regarding philosophy and film. It is up to you what question you address. To answer your question, you have the opportunity either to

1. create a work (an artwork, piece of music, podcast, dialogue, short story, video, etc.) and provide a 1500-1800 word written analysis and explanation of the work that draws on one of the theories we discussed this semester. Or,
2. write a 2200-2800 word research paper analyzing a theory or contemporary issue relating to philosophy and film.

Both project formats require a proposal for the project (paragraph length is sufficient), which must be submitted via eLearning by **Thursday, April 26th**. The proposal should articulate the question you will be asking, some suggestions of how you will answer it, and which project format you have chosen.

Final projects are due by **Tuesday, May 15th**. Students may include a photograph, video, or audio file of their works if they wish to retain the original.

Presentations should be 2-5 minutes long. The written component will be graded according to the rubric provided for writing assignments.

Project Breakdown for Option 1:

Proposal	10%
Creative work	25%
Paper	65%

Project Breakdown for Option 2:

Proposal	10%
Paper	90%

GRADING STANDARDS

- A, Excelling: The work primarily demonstrates especially skillful and in-depth understanding, analysis, synthesis, and insight
- B-A/B, Achieving: The work primarily demonstrates competent understanding, analysis, synthesis, and insight with some depth
- C-B/C, Improving: The work primarily demonstrates basic understanding, analysis, synthesis, and insight, but requires further development
- D. Developing: The work primarily demonstrates incomplete or inaccurate understanding, analysis, synthesis, and insight;

Please also see the detailed rubrics on our course site to see how the essays and final paper assignments will be assessed.

Your grades will be recorded on our class site. I am happy to discuss outcomes and strategies for maintaining or improving your development in the course in person. If you have a question about a particular grade, I ask that you first read through my comments and criteria and then schedule an appointment with me to discuss it.

LATE WORK

RATs, ARRs, and FRRs may not be made up, except in very particular circumstances. For other written assignments, you have a one-day free extension, no questions asked, and it is up to you when you use it. After two days, if I have still not received your work, we must meet together to discuss your ideas and put a plan for completion in place. Late work without that meeting will not be accepted.

COMMUNICATION

Students are expected to check their Mount Mary email accounts regularly. The best way to contact me is via email. I will generally respond to all emails within twenty-four hours, except possibly on weekends. I will respond to emails before 8pm, so do not wait until the last minute to contact me.

Emails between us, as well as among your classmates, are professional correspondences and should reflect that degree of formality. Please be sure to include a subject line, greeting, and signature. Remember, too, that a “thank you” goes a long way. I am more than happy to answer questions or bounce around ideas, but try first to verify whether your questions have already been answered in the syllabus or other course materials. So, before you send an email, ask yourself, 1) Did I already check the syllabus?, 2) Did I check eLearning?, 3) Have I asked a classmate, or can I ask at the beginning of the next class meeting? If your question is more substantive, please send it along.

Grades may not be discussed via email, so please come by office hours or set up an appointment instead. Appointments for office hours are not necessary and you’re strongly encouraged to drop in to see me, if even to just say hello.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Mount Mary is an academic community dedicated to the intellectual and social and ethical development of each of its members. As members of this community we all are responsible for maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect and honesty.

Standards for academic integrity provide a structure for the creation of an academic environment consistent with the values of the School Sisters of Notre Dame and the mission. In keeping with these goals, all students are expected to strive for integrity, in academic and non-academic pursuits. Acts that involve any attempt to deceive, to present another's ideas as one's own, or to enhance one's grade through dishonest means violate the integrity of both the student and University.

Academic dishonesty in any form has a negative impact on the essential principles of the Mount Mary Community. Therefore, such acts are treated as a serious breach of trust.

A faculty member has the right and authority to deal with academic dishonesty in his or her classroom; however, a student who commits multiple violations against academic integrity shall be subject to administrative disciplinary action as described in the Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy and Procedures.

Copies of the full Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy and Procedures are available through the office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The policy and procedures are included in the Mount Mary Student Handbook, the Undergraduate Bulletin and online at mtmary.edu/handbook.htm and my.mtmary.edu

COURSE CALENDAR

Please complete assignments before the date listed. Be sure to bring all texts to class.

WHAT IS FILM?

WEEK 1, JAN. 22, 24

1. Tuesday
 - a. Consider: What is film? How does film relate to philosophy?
2. Thursday
 - a. Read: Handout: How to "Read" a Film
Handout, "Team Based Learning"
"What is the Nature of Film?" 39-42
Hugo Münsterberg, "Defining the Photoplay," 43-9
 - b. Consider: How does Münsterberg define "photoplay"? How does he distinguish between film and theater? What is the role of unity in art?

DO FILMS HAVE AUTHORS?

WEEK 2, JAN. 29, 31

1. Tuesday
 - a. Read: Rudolf Arnheim, "The Artistry of Silent Film," 50-8
 - c. Consider: Why does Arnheim find combining sound and film to be problematic? Arnheim is also concerned about unity. How does he describe it? What advantage might film have?
 - b. Prepare: Practice RAT
 - c. In class screening: *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*
2. Thursday
 - a. Read: Do Films Have Authors?" p. 91-4
François Truffaut, "La Politique des Auteurs," 95-8
Andrew Sarris, "Auteur Theory and Film Evaluation," 99-107
 - b. What problems does Truffaut have with French cinema at that time? What are the three different ways we can think about the auteur theory? What does Sarris demonstrate with the concentric circles? Who counts as a good director? Why?
 - c. Prepare: RAT 1

WEEK 3, FEB. 5, 7

1. Tuesday
 - a. Read: Pauline Kael, "The Idea of Film Criticism," 108-17
Stephen Heath, "Against Authorship," 118-22
 - b. Consider: Kael objects to auteur theory outright because it eliminates the role of the critic. What does she mean by this? Why does she think that auteur theory is essentially masculinist? What should the film critic be like?
 - c. In class screening: 8/1/2
2. Thursday
 - a. In class screening: 8/1/2

WEEK 4, FEB. 12, 14

1. Tuesday
 - a. Read: "Must Films Have Narrators?" 179-92
Bordwell, "Principles of Film Narration," p. 183-9
 - b. Consider: What do syuzhet and fabula mean? What does Bordwell think the role of the spectator is when watching a film? Do films require narrators?
 - c. Prepare: **Writing workshop**
2. Thursday
 - a. In class screening: *Rear Window*

HOW DO FILMS ENGAGE OUR EMOTIONS?

WEEK 5, FEB. 19, 21

1. Tuesday
 - a. Read: "How Do Films Engage Our Emotions?"
Gregory Currie, "Narrative Desire," 139-47
Murray Smith, "Engaging Characters" 160-169
 - b. Consider: What are narrative desires? What are character desires? Are emotions in film the same as those in real life? What is the role of the imagination? How do we find characters sympathetic or not?
 - c. Prepare: RAT 2
2. Thursday
 - a. In class screening: *Spirited Away*

WEEK 6, FEB. 26, 28

1. Tuesday
 - a. In class screening: *Do the Right Thing*
 - b. Prepare: **First Essay due by the start of class**
2. Thursday
 - a. Read: Dan Flory, "Spike Lee and the Sympathetic Racist" on eLearning
 - b. Consider: What does Flory mean by "sympathetic racist"? How concerned should be we about whether we feel sympathy with fictional characters?

WEEK 7, MAR. 5, 7

1. Tuesday
 - a. Read: Noel Carroll, "The Paradox of Horror," 170-7
Cynthia Freeland, "Realist Horror," 260-9
 - b. Consider: What is the paradox of horror? What role does the monster serve in this paradox? Can we get pleasure from horror fiction? What sorts of morally problematic messages in realist horror does Freeland point out? Do you agree?
 - c. Prepare: RAT 3
2. Thursday
 - a. In class screening: *Get Out*

Mar. 9-15, Spring Break

WEEK 8, MAR. 19, 21

1. Monday
 - a. Lecture from guest professor 12-2, details TBA
2. Tuesday
 - a. In-class screening: *Frankenstein*
3. Thursday
 - a. Read: Melinda Hall “Horrible Heroes: Liberating Alternative Visions of Disability in Horror”, bookmark on eLearning
 - b. Consider: What is the social construction of disability? How do films perpetuate or challenge particular constructions or stereotypes? What might alternative depictions of disability be?

WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF FILMS?

WEEK 9, MAR. 26, 28

1. Tuesday
 - a. In class screening: *The Shape of Water*
2. Thursday
 - a. Read: Theodor Adorno, “The Schema of Mass Culture” on eLearning
 - b. Consider: What does Adorno mean by “mass culture”? How is it a schema? How is mass culture perpetuated? What do art and film have to do with this?
 - c. Prepare: RAT 4

WEEK 10, APR. 2, 4

1. Tuesday
 - a. In class screening: *Koyaanisqatsi*
2. Thursday:
 - a. In class screening: *Black Girl*

WEEK 11, APR. 9, 11

1. Tuesday
 - a. Read: W.E.B. DuBois, “The Souls of Black Folk” on eLearning
 - b. Prepare: **Writing Workshop**
2. Thursday
 - a. Read: Mary Devereaux, “Oppressive Texts, Resisting Readers and the Gendered Spectator: The New Aesthetics” on eLearning
bell hooks, “The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators”
 - b. Consider: What do Devereaux and hooks mean by “gaze”? Can a gaze be neutral? How do Devereaux and hooks think films can be oppressive? How do their positions differ?

WEEK 12, APR. 16, 18

1. Tuesday
 - a. Read: Mary Devereaux, "Beauty and Evil: the case of Leni Riefenstahl's Triumph of the Will," eLearning
 - b. Consider: How much should we consider content when evaluating the aesthetic worth of art of film? Should we not watch films with ethically problematic content? How do we make judgments?
 - c. Prepare: **Second Essay Due by the start of class**
2. Thursday
 - a. Holy Thursday, no class

WHAT ARE THE PHILOSOPHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF FILM?

WEEK 13, APR. 23, 26

1. Tuesday
 - a. Read: Karen Hanson, "Minerva in the Movies: Relations Between Philosophy and Film," eLearning
Lester Hunt, "Motion Pictures as a Philosophical Resource," eLearning
 - b. Consider: Can films be philosophical? Can films make arguments? What is the relationship between film and philosophy?
 - c. Prepare: RAT 5
2. Thursday
 - a. In class screening: *The Seventh Seal*

WEEK 14, APR. 30, MAY 2

1. Tuesday
 - a. In class screening: *Groundhog Day*
 - b. Prepare: **Final Project Proposal Due**
2. Thursday
 - a. Read: Joseph Kupfer, "Virtue and Happiness in *Groundhog Day*," 284-294
Aristotle, selection from *Nicomachean Ethics*
 - b. Consider: How important is meaning for a good or virtuous life? What sort of lives should we lead? Can films lead us to be better people?

WEEK 15, MAY 7, 9

1. Tuesday
 - a. **Final project writing workshop**
2. Thursday
 - a. Final project presentations

EXAM WEEK, MAY 14

1. Tuesday
 - a. Final paper presentations
 - b. Final paper due by 11:55 p.m.