

## TENTATIVE SYLLABUS

English 2303.001, Summer 2, 2011  
Writing About Film

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**Texts:**

1. *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*, Timothy Corrigan.
2. Any material distributed in class

**Overview:** This course will focus on (some of) those films that offer versions of the future (science fiction, etc.), certainly with an eye to what they say, but just as certainly with an eye toward how they present whatever they seem to say. This means that, though this is not a course in film studies or history but “writing about film,” we will pay a great deal of attention to the language and elements of films (those that are common with literature, for instance, and those that are specific to the genre). Beyond the work we do in class, grades will be based on various shorter assignments and analytical-critical studies of films. Since time in class is limited, students will be expected to spend time outside of class seeing and studying additional films. The goals for this course are:

learning some of the basic language (terminology) used in making and reading films

learning how to write sophisticated film reviews and analytical-critical papers on films

**Reviews:** Each review should be written concerning a different film from the list, or others by permission. Every student must write and turn in Review #3 and must write and turn in *either* Review #1 OR Review #2.

**Policies:** Class attendance is required. *No more than one (1) absence is excused.* This means that no doctor's notes or, indeed, any excuses are needed for the first absence, and subsequent absences are unexcused regardless. Points will be deducted from your participation grade for each absence beyond the allowed number (see the points breakdown below).

*I will not accept late papers or assignments.* In case of illness or emergency, please contact me as soon as possible.

*I will not accept any assignments by e-mail.* Assignments are due at the beginning of class according to the syllabus schedule.

All work must be typed and double-spaced. Use basic fonts, no larger than 12 pt. Margins should be one inch all around. Titles are mandatory and fun. Be original and inventive. Do not use plastic binders or notebooks to enclose your essays. Staples are best. Always, always keep an extra hard copy of your work.

Students will be required to bring additional copies of their work for workshops. Please come to class with materials ready to distribute. We are all relying on each other.

*Plagiarism of any sort will result in immediate failure.*

**Please Note:** The films that we will be viewing might (one never knows) be offensive to some of you. While the films that we will view are generally films that have been shown in theaters in the US and in Europe to adults, some one or more of you might find them offensive to your political, religious, moral views or tastes. If you think that you will find them offensive, then you should not enroll in the course or, if enrolled, should withdraw from it. If you want or need to stay in the course, then you have made a

choice. Please understand that everyone else, at any time, should feel free to discuss these or any other films and in no way can your sensitivity to certain films or issues or language be used as a means of avoiding the required work for this course.

**Grades:** Your grade will be based on the following:

60 points: 2x30 points for reviews (must turn in 2 of 3)

20 points: 4x5 points for exercises

30 points: exam

15 points: attendance/participation

(so that 0-1 absence receives 15 points, 2 absences receives 5 points, and more than 2 absences receives no points)

**113-125 points total: A**

**101-112 points total: B**

**89-100 points total: C**

**77-88 points total: D**

**76 and below: F**

**Help:** Feel free to stop by during office hours or e-mail me. I will only read/respond to student e-mail during regular office hours.