

**Texts:**

1. *A Short Guide to Writing about Film* 9<sup>th</sup> Edition, Timothy Corrigan.
2. Netflix and/or Amazon Prime account
3. Any material distributed in class

**Overview:** This course will focus on (some of) those films that offer versions of the high school experience, 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

**Exercises:** Each exercise (1-3) should be written concerning different films from [the list](#), or others by permission. Exercise #4 may be written concerning a film you have already viewed for this course.

**Reviews:** Each review should be written concerning a different film from [the list](#), or others by permission. For each review assignment, please write both a Screening Report (1-2 pages) and a Movie Review (2-4 pages) as described in your textbook for one of the films from the list. The Screening Report should be appended after the Movie Review. In addition to watching your film (more than once) and taking notes, go online for examples of quality film reviews from notable sources (Roger Ebert, A. O. Scott, etc.). One way to learn to write well in a particular genre is to model your work on the masters of that genre.

**Short Essay:** The short essay should be written concerning a film from [the list](#), or another by permission. It may be a film you have already viewed for an Exercise or Review. It may be the film you choose for your Signature Essay. For this essay, select a single film from the list to discuss from the angles of two different methods. Explain why you chose these methods over others for this film. Devote two paragraphs to each method and show how each offers different perspectives on that film. Finally, explain which approach you think is most valuable and why.

**Critical Essay:** The Critical Essay should be written concerning a film from [the list](#), or another by permission that you have already viewed for this course. Write a well-organized, effectively developed, 3-5-page analysis of one film from [the list](#) (or off the list by permission). The essay should critically analyze the way the film engages a significant issue of social responsibility (race, class, gender, cultural difference, generational difference, etc. as discussed this semester). Anchor the paper’s argument with a clearly articulated thesis statement and use careful analysis of a single scene or a closely related sequence of scenes. Consider some of the various technical elements (mise-en-scene, editing, sound, whatever) in detail in order to describe what’s being proposed/argued/discussed/presented and explain how these elements promote (or don’t promote) the social issue in the film. Be detailed, precise, and compelling.

**Please Note:** The films that we will be viewing might be offensive or troubling 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:

40 points: 4x10 points for Exercises  
40 points: 2x20 points for Reviews  
30 points: Short Essay  
60 points: 2x30 points for Exam  
30 points: Critical Essay  
20 points: attendance/participation  
(so that 0-1 absence receives 20 points, 2 absences receives 10 points, and more than 2 absences receives no points)

**220 points possible, so:**

199-220 points total: A  
177-198 points total: B  
155-176 points total: C  
133-154 points total: D  
132 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.*

**NOTE:** The following is a general plan for our classroom discussions and assignments. Due dates and assignments are subject to change with notice from the instructor.

<b>December 19</b>	Course Intro Media & Discussion
<b>December 20</b>	Discuss Ch. 1 <i>Fast Times at Ridgemont High</i> (1982) Ex 1, #1 pg 18 due
<b>December 21</b>	Discuss Ch. 2 <i>The Breakfast Club</i> (1985) <a href="#">Review 1 Due</a>
<b>December 22- January 2</b>	WINTER BREAK

<b>January 3</b>	Discuss Ch. 3 <i>Pretty in Pink</i> (1986) <a href="#">Short Essay Due</a>
<b>January 4</b>	Discuss Ch. 4 Ex 2, #1 pg 35 due
<b>January 5</b>	Discuss Ch. 5 <i>Heathers</i> (1989) <a href="#">Review 2 Due</a>
<b>January 6</b>	<b>Exam #1</b>
<b>January 9</b>	Discuss Ch. 6 <i>Rushmore</i> (1998) Ex 3, #2 pg 85 due
<b>January 10</b>	Discuss Ch. 7 <i>Donnie Darko</i> (2001) Ex 4, #1 pg 130 due
<b>January 11</b>	Workshop Critical Essay <i>Brick</i> (2006)
<b>January 12</b>	<a href="#">Critical Essay Due</a> <b>Exam #2</b>

**Policies:** Class attendance is required. At the University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, I require attendance in order to encourage participation. A significant percentage of this course consist of discussion and interaction with other students, so points are awarded simply for being in class and lost for not being in class.

I will only read/respond to student e-mail during regular office hours.

I will not accept late papers or assignments unless you have made arrangements with me in advance. In case of illness or emergency, please contact me as soon as possible.

All essays 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. No late papers will be accepted. Always, always keep an extra hard copy of your work.

Plagiarism may result in immediate failure of the course.

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Disability Accommodations:** UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD) [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or calling 817-272-3364.

Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS) [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671.

Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

**Title IX:** The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [uta.edu/eos](http://uta.edu/eos). For information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX).

**Academic Integrity:** Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will

be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as "lecture," "seminar," or "laboratory" shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the class syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is located [insert a description of the nearest exit/emergency exit]. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

**Student Support Services:** [Required for all undergraduate courses] UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php>

**The English Writing Center (411LIBR):** [Optional.] Hours are 9 am to 8 pm Mondays-Thursdays, 9 am to 3 pm Fridays and Noon to 5 pm Saturdays and Sundays. Walk In Quick Hits sessions

during all open hours Mon-Thurs. Register and make appointments online at <http://uta.mywconline.com>. Classroom Visits, Workshops, and advanced services for graduate students and faculty are also available. Please see [www.uta.edu/owl](http://www.uta.edu/owl) for detailed information.