

UIC Freshman Writing Intensive Seminar

Songdo Campus

Fall Semester 2022

W.L. Ashline

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Texts:

Karen Gocsik, Richard Barsam, and Dave Monahan. *Writing About Movies*. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: Norton, 2019. (Third or Fourth Editions are also OK with some considerations.)

James Monaco. *How to Read a Film*. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: Oxford UP, 2009.

Films: Student selection based on consultation with instructor

Highly Recommended:

Kurt Hjordtshoj. *The Transition to College Writing*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009.

Ann Longknife and K.D. Sullivan. *The Art of Styling Sentences*. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Hauppauges, NY: Barron's, 2002.

Note: Students are strongly encouraged to purchase a 3-4 month subscription from Grammarly (<http://www.grammarly.com>) if they wish to succeed in this class at a high level. In previous terms, I have painstakingly reviewed and marked student essays for grammar, conciseness, precision, and clarity, and I will be doing so to a considerably lesser degree going forward, mostly because it involves doing much of the work that students themselves should be doing. While students will never be perfect on issues like articles or prepositions, nor should they expect to be so on such minor matters, other issues like subject/verb agreement, pronoun reference, etc. can be carried out when one attends more closely to them in editing and proofreading. Grammarly can aid in this process. Similar websites that address points of grammar are available for free, such as Paper Rater (<http://www.paperrater.com>), but they are not as comprehensive or as high in quality as Grammarly. (One could conceivably combine a number of separate free sites but still not get a reasonably close approximation to Grammarly). Thus, it's a worthy investment for students who want to succeed. We do not overemphasize grammatical competence in this class, but at some point in your lives you will need to be able to compose comprehensible sentences if you wish to be taken seriously in written communication. Delaying this necessity due to excuses of foreign language competence or ability merely puts off what one should be working toward mastering now.

Other Recommended Texts:

Some of these texts might still be available in Korea or as used copies floating around the Yonsei campus.

John D. Ramage, John C. Bean, and June Johnson. The Allyn & Bacon Guide to Writing. 8<sup>th</sup> Ed. New York: Pearson Longman, 2017.

H. Ramsey Fowler, Jane E. Aaron and Michael Greer. The Little Brown Handbook. 14<sup>th</sup> Ed. New York: Longman, 2018.

Michael Swan, Practical English Usage. 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Websites: We may also use a number of the following websites during the course. These are recommended to you for developing your writing abilities:

Purdue University Online Writing Lab: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Merriam Webster Online Dictionary and Thesaurus: <http://www.merriam-webster.com>

Conduct of the Class for Fall 2022: Underwood International College and Yonsei University have determined that fall classes will go back to in-person instruction. However, in the event of infections in class, it is possible for a return to online instruction. Some of my lectures for the class will be posted on the LearnUs system. Regular assignments and activities will also be announced at LearnUs, so please consult our class postings there each day. Your class attendance will be determined from those assignments, lectures and meetings. I am assuming that you are all adult, responsible, and professional enough to monitor both LearnUs and any email communication that might need to be carried out. Please check both daily throughout the semester.

Please note that the standard for any three-credit course is two hours of preparation and study for each credit hour of class. This means you should count on at least six hours of study and preparation each week in addition to our regular three hours of class time. Accordingly, students are advised to not register for more than 15.5 credit hours for their first term. See your academic advisor for additional consulting as needed.

This course is the primary first term writing class for all incoming students to the UIC program. Our class is mandated to include readings in the fields of philosophy and theory, history and journalism, and film and literature, so throughout the term, we will be reading such material. The purpose is to enhance the sophistication of the writing through conjoining practice of reading. The course, therefore, assumes the inseparability of both reading and writing. In the past, a number of students have brought up the critical reservation of the class being overly theme-based rather than focused on specific writing techniques. In point of fact, this criticism fails to recognize the purpose of the Freshman Writing Intensive Seminar. This course is both a writing class *and* an introduction to undergraduate academic study. Our class, then, not only has a content component but also requires extensive writing and is quite difficult, though not impossible for diligent, committed students. If you are at a more remedial level, you might consider taking some other more basic academic writing classes before taking this one. On main campus, there is a Building Fluency in Writing course taught in the University College. The Yonsei Language Institute also has writing classes for students who need additional assistance.

Theme: Our focus for this session is writing about film, specifically narrative film, with a deep emphasis on film interpretation and understanding. Accordingly, we have chosen two books that deal with film. One of the books is focused on writing about film, including the processes of focusing on subject matter and developing ideas. The other book is about reading film, including classic techniques of cinematic analysis. Thus, we will practice various forms of interpretation, including the application of literary/narrative terminology, image analysis, and critical cultural concepts. In order to carry out our work, we practice two different types of film analysis essays that will require the examination of one or two different films, preferably having been released since January 2019 or students may choose a film released before 2019 for the **first essay only** so long as they consult with me first on it. I am always pleased when students show an interest in European, Asian, American, or African auteur directors from before about 1980, and you may choose a film from such a director after prior consultation with me. Films from the Criterion Collection are automatically accepted as well as encouraged for use for either essay (except for *Being John Malkovich*, which has been overdone, and obviously documentary films that do not have fictional characters and a strong narrative component). You can find a list of them by searching online at the Criterion Collection website. Films should be rich enough in content and imagery to allow for an extended essay on them, and the films of the Criterion Collection certainly meet that expectation. Furthermore, animated films are permitted for **the first assignment only**. Students may use the same film for both essays in the class so long as the film was released in 2019 or later and is not animated. Criterion Collection films or early auteur films from 1970 and before are also eligible pending prior consultation with me. Two films from 2019, *Parasite* and *Joker*, have been overdone and are therefore ineligible for use in this class. Students are not allowed to use sources, from the Internet or otherwise, for their essays, except for the film itself. By sources, I mean articles or other information about the film posted online or in print journalism. What I mean is do not turn to other authors to help you with interpreting meaning of your specific film. Instead, rely on the critical terms we cover in class and your own insights and ideas rather than someone else's. You may, however, consult the IMDB website in order to identify directors, producers, actor and character names, year of release, etc., and you may certainly check certain kinds of sources for etymologies of terms, etc. You may also do background reading about the specific content of your film. For example, if you choose to work on Quentin Tarantino's *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*, it would behoove you to learn a bit more about the Manson family and the Tate/LaBianca murders of 1969 as well as perhaps some of the specified television programs of that era. However, do not turn to reviews to help you grasp the meaning of the ending of the film. That's for you to figure out. Accordingly, you are expected to use the critical tools we cover in class and apply those tools to interpret the meaning of the films. Any attempt to employ a source to help with the interpretation of a film might very well merit a grade deduction if the evidence for such use is apparent. **Any plagiarism of such sources on the paper will earn an F for the assignment as well as the course. That means no copying of sentences or even phrases from a source or a student paper previously submitted in the class.** Students are expected to develop a substantial appreciation of cinematic history, especially with regard to cinematic and technological developments as well as film theory. However, if you are not interested in focusing on film for the writing assignments for our class, please

consider dropping it and enrolling in another section of the course in the future that more suitably captures your interests.

A list of films is posted on the website that have been overdone as topics for essays. Some of these papers are starting to circulate now, so I prefer not to read any more essays on these films. Of course, the films used for essays that I have as examples on the website are also off limits for obvious reasons.

Students who may be retaking the course after failing the first time through must choose different films and write brand new essays the second time through the course.

**Classroom Etiquette:** Smart phones are to be turned off and stored during class hours except for break time and specified class projects. Laptop computers must be turned off except for break time, peer review workshops, and specified class projects. Students should keep a paper notebook handy at all times for taking notes during lectures and while viewing film clips. Students who insist on using portable electronic devices or who carry out assignments for other courses during our regular class lectures and activities will be asked to leave the class. Students who do so a second time during the session will be asked to leave the class for one week. Students who do so for a third time will be asked to drop the course. Students are expected to bring all textbooks and other course materials to class at all times, unless instructed to do otherwise. Students who do not bring their assigned books to class will be counted as absent for the class. Students are responsible for keeping track of all assignments and requirements posted on the board or the LearnUs system, including minimum page length for the assignments. Students who fail to bring their textbooks to class, yet nonetheless manage instead to bring their smart phones to class will be considered as having seriously misguided priorities with regard to their learning and may very well be evaluated accordingly.

**Attendance:** Yonsei University requires all professors and lecturers to carefully monitor and record attendance. Accordingly, we will use this information to partially determine grading. Class attendance is weighted ten percent on final evaluation. Grades will be calculated as follows: A+ = no missed class hours; A0 = one or two hours of absence; B0 = three hours of absence; C0 = four hours of absence; D0 = five or six hours of absence; F = more than six hours of absence. Absenteeism will also negatively affect the participation grade in the class. Two instances of lateness will count as one absence. Students are considered late if they arrive at class after attendance is taken. If students arrive more than 15 minutes late, they will be counted as absent from the class hour. Students who come to class before class starts and then leave the room until after class starts will be counted as late for class unless they let me know in advance of what they are doing. Students who return late from their allotted break during a two hour class will be counted as late for the second hour. Students who miss more than 15 hours of class time during the term (absences include actual missed hours, days, assignments and activities used to gauge attendance or days where they arrive more than 15 minutes late) will receive an automatic "F" for the course without exception. Absences can be excused only if students provide a doctor's note or prescription explaining the illness, a note explaining a family emergency, or a note describing an academic field trip or activity.

Employment issues, job interviews, traffic problems, etc. are not legitimate reasons for absence. It is your responsibility to plan for all possible exigencies that might cause you to miss or be late for class. Students are held responsible for all class time missed. If you need to miss class call a classmate to inquire about the homework required and material missed. ***Students suffering from menstrual symptoms in order to be excused from class must send an email or text message prior to the class missed in order to have the absence excused. No documents in lieu of such contact will be allowed after the fact to excuse the absence. However, exams, workshops, and other in-class projects are not excused by university policy. Online classes also do not apply.*** Students who need to miss class for any excusable reason should contact the instructor in advance of class by email. Students who cut a large number of classes, regardless of the legitimacy of the reason, statistically do not get high evaluations in the class. Students who sleep in class for the duration of class time will be counted as absent for class. In other words, you are not only expected to be present during class time but also conscious and active as well. While we will be viewing a number of film clips in class in order to illustrate concepts, this does not give you the right to check out mentally even if the clips are ostensibly **entertaining**. If you are unable to occupy a chair without falling asleep, then go to the back of the classroom and stand for the duration of class. We will be recording attendance for every class hour this term as mandated by the university administration, and this attendance will be kept on Yonsei's online roll book.

Submissions: Essays should be composed in Microsoft Word or a comparable free program like LibreOffice (<http://www.libreoffice.org/>) or Open Office (<https://www.openoffice.org/>) in order to carry out all essay assignments. If you use either of the latter, you should save your files from LibreOffice or Open Office as doc or docx files before uploading them to LearnUs or you may upload pdf files instead. Submissions by Hangul word processing, Pages, or Google Docs will not be accepted. The Korean version of MS Word presents several formatting issues that must receive attention. These are the four defaults, and I will present an image on LearnUs and do a lecture on it at the time of submission. All essay submissions are due on the date assigned though a 48-hour grace period is provided without penalty. Papers submitted more than one week after the assigned due date will not be accepted. Exceptions can be made in the case of documented proof of illnesses, injuries, emergencies or field trip activities. Those are the only instances of accepted cases and they must be supported with proof. **Submissions that are not peer reviewed by another member of our class will not be accepted.** Submissions that were not peer reviewed during our regular class hours will be docked by one letter grade as well. All submissions must conform to the submission guidelines required for the class. The final version of a submitted essay must be posted at LearnUs. You will also upload the peer review workshop that you complete as well as the workshop draft that may have your comments on it. This document will need to be scanned or photographed prior to uploading. Final drafts of papers, reading tasks, and workshop comments must be submitted according to the appropriate deadlines. **No email submissions are accepted.** Please review the policies on this syllabus on a regular basis throughout the semester so that you stay familiar with the expectations in the course. ***Extensions on due dates may be granted on a case-by-case basis for students who supply the necessary reasons and evidence for such extensions. However, extensions***

*cannot be granted for peer review workshops. Similarly, workshop drafts are excluded from the submissions policy described previously since late submission means being unable to participate in the peer review workshop.*

**Responsibility for posting the CORRECT version of the final submission on LearnUs belongs with the student.** If there is an error in the submission, the student must contact me to ask that the previous posting on LearnUs be removed so that the proper version may be submitted. If you have trouble with the submission, please inform me, but **do not send the assignment by email.**

Workshops: During the semester, we will have two in-class, peer-review sessions in which each student will engage in a critical reading and commentary on another student's work. Students are required to be present for all workshops and must bring a completed draft of a paper. Failure to attend class on workshop days will count as two (2) absences and the grade for the paper will be lowered by one letter grade. Moreover, the failure to participate in a workshop by critiquing another student's paper will lead to a reduction of the participation grade for the class. All submissions of a paper must be workshopped by some member of class. Therefore, peer-review workshops have two basic requirements: one is bringing a complete, carefully written draft and the other is actively critiquing and analyzing another student's paper. Workshops are considered essential to the writing process since they aid in facilitating self-criticism in writing. Please bring two copies of your drafts for workshop. One is for your peer reviewer. The second is for the instructor for preliminary review. **Essays that are not peer reviewed by another member of the class or by a student in another section of my class will not be accepted or graded under any circumstances. This will mean not passing the assignment or the course, so be sure to plan accordingly.**

Reading Tasks: For several of the reading assignments from our texts, we will be doing a number of reading tasks. Certain questions or prompts will be posted on LearnUs, and students will be expected to answer those questions after reading the assigned material. The length of the reading task will be a minimum of 300 words and posted at LearnUs in advance of class. Both the reading and reading task must be completed **PRIOR** to the class in which the reading is to be discussed in order to prove that one has prepared for the lesson. Late submissions will not be accepted for this particular assignment. These reading tasks will be used to facilitate class discussion on the reading and will be graded on a ten-point scale. Students must complete at least five of the reading tasks. Students who complete all five of the reading tasks with at least a passing grade of 6 or above will have their top two scores averaged for final grading. Students who fail to submit at least five reading tasks or who have one score or more that is not of a passing grade will have their five scores averaged instead. You should compose your reading task in LibreOffice, Open Office, MS Word or submit as a PDF file. Other formats will not be reviewed or evaluated. If the file is corrupt in any way, it will also not be evaluated.

Class Participation: In order to have a successful and interesting class, all students must take responsibility to participate as much as possible every week by providing comments or asking questions to the instructor, other members of the class or the class as a whole as

well as providing insights about the material being discussed. Accordingly, ten percent of your grade will be determined from class participation and will be measured informally through observation. However, the largest portion of the evaluation will be the peer review workshop participation. Class attendance will also be part of the component. The following are the criteria for evaluating class participation on an individual basis:

In order to earn a **superior grade (A or A+)**, you must:

1. Routinely attend class
2. Regularly participate while in class (i.e., raise/address issues relating to course content, offer to others your own ideas and insights, answer questions asked by your instructor)
3. Fully participate in and complete all class related activities or projects
4. Complete assigned readings prior to class
5. Perform all of the above in a manner that demonstrates you are beginning to engage course content on your own ground
6. Share such competency (i.e., your own ideas, insights, analyses) with others in the course

In order to earn an **above average grade (A- or B+)**, you must:

1. Routinely attend class
2. Regularly participate while in class (i.e., raise/address issues relating to course content, offer to class your own ideas and insights, answer questions asked by your instructor)
3. Fully participate in and complete all class related activities
4. Be reasonably attentive while in class
5. Complete assigned readings prior to class

In order to earn an **average grade (B or B-)**, you must:

1. Routinely attend class
2. Periodically participate (i.e., raising/addressing issues relating to course content, offering to everyone your own ideas and insights)
3. Participate in and complete all class related activities
4. Be reasonably attentive while in class

A **below average (C or D)** class participation grade means that you:

1. Rarely if ever participate in class
2. Rarely if ever ask or answer questions
3. Are sometimes attentive
4. Miss more than 20% of classes
5. Begrudgingly participate in all class/group activities

**Failure (F)** means:

1. Your presence in class is marginal (or disruptive) at best
2. You never participate in discussions
3. You contribute little to class activities
4. You never raise and/or answer questions

5. You rarely complete reading assignments
6. You are absent constantly from daily class
7. You are rarely attentive on the rare occasions you do attend

Grading: Your course grade will be determined from a calculus of writing submissions, other homework, quizzes, and in-class participation.

Grading Distribution:

Attendance—10%

Class Participation, including Peer Review Workshops—10%

Film Analysis Essay #1 (Literary/Narrative Categories of Interpretation) (Animation Permitted)—No Sources Allowed (other than the film and our texts)—minimum four full pages (1500-1800 words)

Film Analysis Essay #2 (Semiotic, Cinematic and Literary/Narrative Categories of Interpretation) (Animation Not Permitted)—No Sources (other than the film and our texts)—minimum five full pages (1800-2000 words)

Your Highest Score on Either of the Two Major Essays—70%

Reading Tasks and Reading Quizzes—10%

Students may use the same film for both of the major essays on the following conditions:

1. The film cannot be animated.
2. The film must be released over the last three years or be a Criterion Collection film or an early auteur film approved in advance by me.
3. The second essay must be 75% original material or more. Only 25% or less of the first essay may be used on the second essay. This means the second essay must be substantially refocused and revised with new elements.

Please do not exceed the maximum word counts for each of the major essays.

I generally try to give plus grades as much as possible with the following caveats: for a B+, one needs to have at least one essay graded in the B range; for an A+, one must have at least one essay graded in the A range **AND** the essay must impeccably adhere to MLA formatting rules as well as the submission guidelines for the class. Students who do not participate in peer review workshops at the appointed time or who do not submit complete drafts that meet the required word limit by the required deadline will not be considered for plus grades. Students who do not do so a second time will not be considered for “0” grades either (e.g. B0, C0, etc.).

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR A PASSING GRADE:** Students who wish to pass this course are required as a bare minimum expectation to submit both major essays and **each submission must meet the minimum limit required on word length and receive a passing grade on each.** That means both essays must go through the entire process of drafting, having a complete draft peer reviewed, and substantially revising after peer review. Failure to do so means that you will not pass the course regardless of your average on other assignments. Students who plagiarize on their work by covertly copying chunks or entire texts of source material from the Internet or other locations and without attribution or if they submit other people’s work as their own work will not pass the class



under any circumstances. Be sure to carefully attend and listen to the course lectures on plagiarism so as to avoid being so unfortunate. Even borrowing a couple of words or a phrase from a source constitutes plagiarism (technical words are excluded), so be sure at all times to use your own language when writing. Do not rely on the phrasing of others.

**Students who submit essay assignments that do not meet the minimum page or word lengths will not pass the course.**

Please note that while one might be able to make up for deficiencies in writing evaluations by attending and participating class at a high level, the inverse is almost always not true. It is difficult to overcome deficiencies in attendance and class participation by performing well on writing assignments alone. Accordingly, to have an opportunity at a high grade in this class, students need to attend and participate at a high level.

Note about Class Participation: The language of use in this class is English only. Students who insist on using Korean, Chinese, Swahili, Russian, French, Spanish, or any other language in this class will not be considered for anything better than a “C” on final grade determinations.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

September 1-6—Introduction and Overview of the Course; Review of Syllabus; Diagnostic Essay; Personal Introductions

September 8-13— Writing about Movies; Lecture on the Writing Process; The Key Concepts of Writing; Paragraph and Essay Form; Generating Ideas; Reading: *Writing About Movies*, Chapter 1: The Challenges of Writing About Movies and Glossary; Chapter 5: Generating Ideas; Chapter 7: Developing Your Thesis; Chapter 8: Considering Structure and Organization

September 15-20—Analyzing and Writing About Film—Literary/Narrative Categories of Interpretation; Sample Essays; Carrying Out a Plot Segmentation and Shot Analysis for the First Film Assignment; Formal Analysis; Readings: *Writing About Movies*, Chapter 2: Looking At Movies; Formal Analysis; Chapter 3: Formal Analysis; Reading Task #1: Assignment—Plot Segmentation, Shot Analysis Chart, and Asking Why Questions

September 22-27— Film Analysis Essay #1 due; Peer Review Workshop; MLA Formatting; Submission Guidelines; Revision; Reading: *Writing About Movies*, Chapter 10: Revising Your Work

September 29-October 4— Cinematic History; Reading: Monaco, Chapter 4: The Shape of Film History, pp. 289-349; Group Chat on Questions/Prompts and Chapter Material

October 6-11 —Cinematic History (Concluded); Reading: Monaco, Chapter 4: The Shape of Film History, pp. 349-431; Group Chat on Questions/Prompts and Chapter Material

October 13-18—Film Analysis Essay #1 due—Submission; Cultural Analysis; Reading: *Writing About Movies*, Chapter 4: Cultural Analysis

Submission of Film Analysis Essay #1 Due at Midnight, Tuesday, October 18

October 20-26—Midterm Exam Period—No Class (Essay Submission Counts as Three Hours of Class Attendance)

October 27-November 1—Film Theory; Reading: Monaco, Chapter 5: Film Theory: Form and Function, pp. 434-56; Reading Task #2

November 3-8—Film Theory (continued); Introduction to Semiotics; Reading: Monaco, Chapter 5: Film Theory: Form and Function, pp. 456-77; Reading Task #3

November 10-15—Semiotics; Reading: Monaco, Chapter 3: The Language of Film: Signs and Syntax pp. 170-205; Reading Task #4

November 17-22—Semiotics (continued); Reading: Monaco, Chapter 3: The Language of Film: Signs and Syntax pp. 205-249; Reading Task #5

November 24-29—Requirements for Film Analysis Essay #2; Cinematic Vocabulary; Reading: Monaco, Chapter 2: Technology: Image and Sound: pp. 76-114; Reading Task #6

December 1—Film Analysis Essay #2 due—Peer Review Workshop

December 6—Finish Peer Review Workshop—Submit Peer Review to Partner and at LearnUs

December 8-13—Online Lectures: Style and Revision; Coherence; Sentence Variety; Reading: *Writing About Movies*, Chapter 9: Attending to Style

December 15-21—Final Exam Period—No Class (Essay Submission Counts as Two Hours of Class Attendance. Course Evaluation Counts as One Hour of Class Attendance.)

Final Submission of Film Analysis Essay #2—Official Due Date at Midnight, Wednesday, December 14 via LearnUs. There are three options, however, regarding this submission:

Option #1: Final Submission of Film Analysis Essay #2—Due at Midnight, Wednesday, December 14 for Students Who Want Detailed Marks and Comments (Extensions may be taken until Saturday, December 17 at midnight with mostly full marks and comments. After Saturday, I cannot guarantee that I will have sufficient time to provide feedback

beyond a grade and a summary comment. Therefore, you would likely move to Option #2 after that time.)

Option #2: Final Submission of Film Analysis Essay #2—Due at Midnight, Wednesday, December 21 via LearnUs for Students Who Only Want a Detailed Summary Comment and a Grade

Option #3: Final Submission of Film Analysis Essay #2—Due at noon, Monday, December 26 via LearnUs for Students Who Only Need the Final Grade Without a Detailed Summary Comment

You may, therefore, tailor your own submission date based on how much time you need versus how much feedback you want from me.