

## FYS 049: ADAPTATION – READING FILMS BASED ON OTHER SOURCES

Instructor Nick Renkoski

Nicholas.Renkoski@drake.edu

This course examines movies that have been adapted to the screen from other media and asks you to critically analyze the works as both movies and as adaptations. The movies will be adapted from media of all kinds from stage plays to operas to literary classics to popular fiction, and you will be asked to process your thoughts on what challenges are present in adapting certain media and whether or not the movie succeeded both on its own and in honoring its source material. The goal is to recognize what is uniquely cinematic and how those aspects can be used to translate and, in some cases, enhance material from other areas.

We will study both the craft of filmmaking and receive a brief overview of film techniques while assessing the differences between film and other media. It will be important to understand the differences in storytelling both to understand how the film artists approached their unique craft and how they attempted to translate their source onto the screen.

### **Required and Optional Texts**

Henry V, William Shakespeare

Jaws, Peter Benchley

The Age of Innocence, Edith Wharton

Oil!, Upton Sinclair

Pygmalion, George Bernard Shaw

Every student can anticipate writing several essays analyzing the movies we've been watching for class, as well as contributing to an ongoing critical-narrative exploration of adaptation theory. The course will be broken into three sequences. For the first two, the class will provide essays on the same subject. For the final sequence, students will be able to choose their subject from a list.

All assignments for this class may be read by all members of the class and may often form the basis of class discussion.

### **Final Grade**

Students are graded in these four areas: essays and daily assignments, the final project, participation and attendance. The percentage breakdown of these areas is as follows:

Attendance: 20% dependent on Writing Workshop appearances

Participation: 20%

Essays and daily assignments: 35% Final project: 25%

## **Assignments**

Individual assignments will receive detailed feedback and a letter grade. Students will be alerted of their current grade twice during the semester; once at the halfway point, and the final grade at the end of the semester.

Students who turn in every assignment on time and at a satisfactory level will receive a guaranteed minimum writing grade of "B."

All students are encouraged to meet with me at least once during office hours to review and discuss their progress. As an adjunct professor, I do not have an office on campus or regular hours but can arrange for meeting times, usually Fridays, 3 p.m. – 5 p.m. These meetings will be held outside of our regular class time, and every effort will be made to accommodate students' schedules.

This course is writing intensive and is part of the Writing Project at Drake University. As such, each student will be required to attend sessions at the Writing Workshop TWICE during the semester. Students will be required to schedule and keep their own appointments. Failing to do so will automatically reduce their final grade.

For specific hours and to make appointments in the Writing Workshop call 515-271-4712 or visit [library.drake.edu/writing-workshop](http://library.drake.edu/writing-workshop).

It is possible in this class that we will workshop each other's work. This means we will consider an adaptation critically, giving our detailed impressions and making suggestions.

The goal of these discussions is to be constructive and helpful. Disagreements are a necessary part of this process, but it will be important for students to remember that they are here to help each other, not to tear each other down. As we will be discussing subjective issues, differences in opinion will arise and the goal is not to try to change anyone's mind as much as to adequately express your own views.

## **Absences**

Students are required to attend class. Because of illness or other unforeseen situations, 100% attendance is not demanded, simply hoped for. It is possible for a student to miss three classes and not have it affect his or her grade (though this will most likely impact the student's participation grade, which is based on a student's performance in class). After three absences, the penalty to the student's grade will be severe, culminating at six absences, with a failure of the course.

Two late arrivals or early departures equal one absence. Answering a phone or texting in class equals one absence.

Participation is a subjective measure but will be graded on the frequency and quality of contributions in class discussion as well as bringing required materials to class and adhering to classroom policies.

## **Classroom Policies**

Students are expected and required to respect others and actively help create a productive learning environment. Any type of class disruption will result in a lowered final grade. The use of disruptive electronic devices during group discussion, including but not limited to phones and mp3 players, is prohibited. Disrespectful behaviors, like texting or moving one's belongings around loudly, or even continuing to work when other students (or the instructor) are presenting, will result in a significantly lowered grade. On-time, prepared attendance is required at all class meetings. Any student asked to leave the classroom for any reason must comply; failure to comply will result in forfeiture of the entire participation grade.

## **Student Services:**

An overview of the philosophy behind the First Year Seminar curricula is available at Drake University's website and should be read:

<http://www.drake.edu/dc/fysstudentpage.html>

Students that require academic or physical accommodations in this course, may contact Student Disability Services (Michelle Laughlin, Direct of Student Disability Services, at 271-1835 or [michelle.laughlin@drake.edu](mailto:michelle.laughlin@drake.edu)) in advance of the date the accommodations are needed. SDS will coordinate with the instructor to ensure that the necessary accommodations are provided.

The Coordinator for Sexual Violence Response and Healthy Relationship Promotion's primary role is to act as a resource for students who have been subjected to interpersonal [gender] violence including sexual assault/harassment, dating/domestic violence, gender-based discrimination, and stalking and will advocate on behalf of the student victim's requests if services are voluntarily initiated. The coordinator can explain how to initiate a complaint within the university and through criminal/civil processes, assist with referrals to a confidential crisis advocate and/or counselor and appropriate medical or legal professionals. The coordinator must report "known" student campus assaults to the Dean of Students and/or Title IX Coordinator, but the complainant still has rights to participate or withdraw from the university process. Other services include providing crisis intervention (safety plan, crisis counseling, rights information), and assistance in academic and housing accommodations as needed. To contact the coordinator, Alys Mozak, call 515- 271-4141 or email [alysa.mozak@drake.edu](mailto:alysa.mozak@drake.edu). The Violence Intervention Partner (V.I.P.) program through this office provides peer-based 24/7 confidential advocacy services. To access a V.I.P. advocate call or text 515-512-2972. For more information about these services visit [www.drake.edu/sexual-assault/](http://www.drake.edu/sexual-assault/)

## **Plagiarism**

Work submitted in this course will be original to the author. When the work of others is included, it will be indicated and attributed. If there is unattributed work that is intended as homage, it must be reasonably clear in the writing. Any work presenting the ideas or words of others as though they were your own is grounds for failure of the course.

### **Late Work**

Assignments will be accepted late but with severe penalties. Arrangements can be made if unforeseen circumstances arise, but those circumstances will be judged on a case-by-case basis. Should any technical problems arise, formatting and presentation are less important than timeliness, meaning that papers can be submitted in the body of an email or even photographically. These extreme cases will be taken with the assumption that the work will be submitted properly later.

### **Technology Policies**

Students are permitted to use their laptops in class to take notes and their cellphones in a respectful way. If an unavoidable situation requires a student to remain available via cellphone, the student must alert the instructor before class and an exception will be made. Cellphone calls taken under these circumstances will be conducted outside of the room.

This syllabus, class calendar and assignments reflect the Fall semester of 2019 and are subject to change.

### **Assignments Calendar**

8.27 First Day of Class  
9.5 First Assignment due in class  
9.17 Assignment due in class  
9.26 Assignment due in class  
10.10 Assignment due in class  
10.17 Students officially choose final project subject  
10.24 Assignment due in class  
11.7 Assignment due in class  
11.20 Assignment due in class  
11.28 Thanksgiving, class will not meet.  
12.05 Final Assignment Due  
End of Semester  
(This class has no final exam)

Please note that this calendar may change throughout the semester. More information will be added and some dates may change to suit the pace of the class.