

RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
First-Year Seminar
Film: A Critical Analysis

Course Information

Prerequisites and/or Co-requisites: First-time, first-year student status

Class Meeting Day(s), Time and Room Location: Wednesdays 3pm-6:15pm, Room TBA

Instructor Information

Instructor's Name, Title: Zachary Bressler, Video Coordinator

Office Location & Phone No.: H205, 201-684-6239

Office Hours: TBA

E-mail: zbressle@ramapo.edu

Mailbox Location: H201

School Office Location: H205

School Office Phone No.: ext. 6239

Common Course Description

Designed for first-time, full-time, first-year students, First-Year Seminar (FYS) provides a comprehensive introduction to college-level learning. Seminar courses are developed around an academic theme or topic that is based on one of Ramapo College's academic pillars. First-Year students will have the opportunity to select a seminar that best suits their interests while learning about Ramapo's academic foundation. The First-Year Seminar course helps students in their transition from high school to college life both in and out of the classroom. The common learning outcomes of FYS are: critical and creative thinking, college-level writing, oral communication, information literacy, and technological competency. FYS classes are small to emphasize open discussion and experiential learning within the context of the theme of the seminar course. Peer facilitators play an essential role in each FYS class ensuring that first-year students have guidance from a more experienced student. FYS is also the home of the Ramapo Summer Reading Program; all first-year students read the same book and discuss and write about it in their seminars. FYS encourages new students to participate in a community of learners, to strengthen their critical thinking skills, and to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

Course Description of this Section

This course is designed to introduce an appreciation of film as an art form. We will be discussing the artistic and technical choices filmmakers make in producing a film. We will be viewing some of the most highly acclaimed and respected films in history, giving the student a chance to analyze, critique, and discuss the films among their peers.

We will view films from different genres to contrast and compare different styles of filmmaking. Students will be responsible for writing journal-like papers on each film. After viewing every film, we will have an open forum style discussion for opinions to be shared. There will be a video project during the semester the students will choose a partner and create a television segment discussing a film of their choice.

The summer reading will be used as an initial focal point for in-class discussions and for written assignments during the first few weeks of the semester. We will discuss aspects of "*Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong*" by James Loewen as a group and we'll use these discussions to write thoughtful responses to questions about the book. Our discussions will likely involve opinions and viewpoints that differ from your own; however, we'll learn to steer away from feelings about the subject based upon anecdotal evidence and instead use factual data and background to support our positions.

Course Goals

Like all First-Year Seminars (FYS), in this course you will develop critical thinking skills that are basic to college level study, regardless of one's area of interest. The following means will be used to develop your skills to think critically:

- writing
- group discussion
- experiential learning

Other more specific skills that you will develop in this course are:

- presentation skills
- discussion and reasoning skills
- researching skills

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:	Research Paper	Class discussions and essays	Midterm and Final Project
demonstrate the ability to think critically and creatively.	x	x	x
demonstrate proficiency in written communication.	x	x	x
demonstrate proficiency in oral communication.		x	x
demonstrate information literacy and technological competency.	x		x

Peer Facilitators

As an added resource for first-year students, each section of First-Year Seminar (FYS) will have a peer facilitator. These upper-level students will attend FYS classes and assist the instructor with the academic topics covered in this seminar. They will serve as discussion leaders on issues that pertain to your personal and social development and they will facilitate weekly discussions on the class readings. Your peer facilitator will be your mentor and will be available to you to provide guidance on navigating the different personal and social hurdles that you may encounter in your first year at Ramapo.

First-Year Academic Advising Each First-Year Seminar course is assigned a professional Academic Advisor from the Center for Academic Advising and First-Year Experience (CAAFYE) who serves as your Academic Advisor during your first year. This advisor will attend your First-Year Seminar class for a group advisement session to review general academic advising policies and procedures. They will also be available to answer any general questions regarding college policies/practices. Students are encouraged to schedule individual appointments with their CAAFYE Advisor for assistance with course selection and the development of a personal academic plan. If you have any questions regarding Academic Advisement please call CAAFYE at (201) 684-7441 or via email at: caafye@ramapo.edu

Texts, Readings, Materials

List all readings (i.e., required, Library Reserve, and recommended) in the documentation format most appropriate for your discipline. For example:

- APA Good, T. L., & Brophy, J. E. (2002). *Looking in classrooms* (9th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon. Print. ISBN xxx.
- Chicago Good, Thomas L., and Jere E. Brophy. *Looking in Classrooms*. 9th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2002. Print. ISBN xxx.
- MLA Good, Thomas L., and Jere E. Brophy. *Looking in Classrooms*. 9th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2002. Print. ISBN xxx.

Turabian Good, Thomas L. and Jere E. Brophy. *Looking in Classrooms*. 9th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2002. Print. ISBN xxx.

1. Loewen, James W. *Lies My Teacher: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong*. New York: Touchstone, 2007. Print. ISBN: 978-0-7432-9628-1
2. Hacker, Diana, and Barbara Fister. *Rules for Writers with Tabs with 2009 MLA and 2010 APA Updates*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009. Print. ISBN-13: 978-0-312-66482-4.
3. Monaco, James. *How to Read Film: Movies, Media and Beyond*. Oxford University Press, 2009. ISBN: 978-0195321050

Course Requirements

Classroom Participation – This is a seminar course, therefore your reading preparation and your contributions to the class discussions are essential requirements of the course. You are expected to devote at least two hours outside the class studying for every class hour. Mobile phones are strictly prohibited in the classroom. Turn off all phones, including “silent mode” while in class.

Writing Assignments – There is a graded writing assignment following each film we view. The papers will be due by the beginning of the next class period. A midterm and final paper are also to be written over the course of the semester.

Examinations, Laboratory/Studio, Library Research – There will be a midterm and final project. The Midterm is a project where the student will be partnered with another student, each will be responsible for a paper. The video portion of the project will be performed by the students Live in front of the class, mediated by the professor. The students will tape a television segment critiquing a film of their choice. The Final will be a research paper on any film director’s body of work. The student will need to research critical essays on the films of their chosen subject and discuss themes within the work. The final paper is due by the last class period.

Course Enrichment Component

Each course will include a minimum of five (5) hours of unmonitored appropriate experience outside of the classroom. There will be opportunities to attend film screenings on campus. Lectures and visits to museums are forms of experiential experience. Students will be expected to write a short journal essay on their experience from these events to be graded.

General Education Program Course

This course fulfills the First-Year Seminar category of the general education curriculum at Ramapo College. Common to all First-Year Seminar (FYS) courses, you will develop critical thinking skills that are basic to college level study, regardless of your area of interest. You will be reading, writing, and participating in thoughtful group discussions with the aim of developing the skills of a scholar. You will learn to support your arguments using a foundation of knowledge and facts rather than simply using personal opinions and experiences.

This course is categorized as an Interdisciplinary Studies FYS course because it draws from the disciplines of technical filmmaking, critical analysis, and film theory. Students will view and discuss films and examine the elements which together make thematic statements within a film.

Writing Intensive (WI) Course

Writing will be integrated into the life of this course. You will receive comments, direction, and support as you work on strengthening your writing skills. Your writing will be evaluated and returned in a timely fashion, allowing you to incorporate my comments into your future work. For help outside the classroom, please see me during my office hours and/or work with a writing tutor in the Center for Reading and Writing (CRW), Room: E-230, x7557, cas@ramapo.edu."

Weekly Class Schedule

For each class meeting, indicate date, topic and required readings and assignments. Indicate due dates for papers, assignments, quizzes, and exams where possible. With as much detail as possible, a syllabus will provide students with a sense of the course's structure and sequence so that they can perceive a relationship between the goals of the course and the topics of materials to be covered. The calendar should include notice of when exams are to be given, or are due, or conferences to be held. The calendar should also include important deadlines such as add/drop, withdrawal, and incomplete requests. The ARC reminds faculty that tests/quizzes may not be scheduled on days of religious observances, as posted on the Academic Calendar. Web for Faculty is updated prior to the start of semester to show the Final Exam schedule for the upcoming semester.

Week 1	Course Introduction, Discussion of <i>"Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong"</i> by James Loewen, assign reading from textbook.
Week 2	Discussion on assigned reading, View film "Annie Hall"*
September 21 st , 2011 1:00 – 2:30 PM	Opening Convocation, Dr. Kames W. Loewen
Week 3	Discussion on "Annie Hall", View "Dr. Strangelove"*
Week 4	Compare and contrast styles within comedy genre. Assign reading. Introduce 2 nd genre, Horror/Thriller.
Week 5	View "Halloween"*. Discussion on assigned reading.
Week 6	Discussion on "Halloween", View "The Shining"*
Week 7	Discussion on horror genre and themes. Visit Library for research assignment.
Week 8	Midterms Due. Class presentations.
Week 9	View film "Taxi Driver"*
Week 10	Discussion on "Taxi Driver"*, Advisement session. Assign reading
Week 11	View film "Paths of Glory"*, Discuss reading.
Week 12	Discussion on genre and themes. View film "King of Comedy"*
Week 13	Thanksgiving recess (Wednesday, 11/23 rd – Saturday, 11/26 th)

Week 14	Discussion on “King of Comedy”
Week 15	Final projects due, discuss final projects. Wrap up course.
Final Exam Week	No Exam! Happy Holidays!!

Important Dates

First Day of Classes: September 1st

Last day for Schedule Adjustments (on the Web): September 12th

Last day to withdraw from courses with “W” grade: October 27th

Thanksgiving Recess: Nov 23rd - 26th

Reading Day (no classes): December 14th

Final Exam Week: December 15th – 21st

Common Finals: December 17th

Last day to request “I” grades: December 21st

Residence Halls close (6pm): December 21st

Final Exam Snow Make-Up Day: December 22nd

Grading Policy

All assignments are graded on a grade scale:

A 95%, A- 90%, B+ 87%, B 85%, B- 80%, C+ 77%, C 75%, C- 70%, D 60 – 69%, F below 60%

Final grades are determined by overall average of these factors:

- Reaction papers: 30%
- mid-term presentation video: 25 %
- Research paper: 25%
- participation: 20 % (discussion, attendance)

Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is expected. More than 1 absence will result in a final average deduction of one full grade. More than 2 absences will result in a failing grade. Papers are to be handed in at the beginning of the assigned class date. Late papers will be accepted with a loss of a letter grade. College policy states that students must notify faculty within the first three weeks of the semester if they anticipate missing any classes due to religious observance.

Electronic Forms of Communication

In accordance with College policy, I will use your Ramapo College email address (@ramapo.edu) to communicate with you about all course-related matters.

Students with Disabilities

If you need course adaptation or accommodations because of a disability that has been documented with the Office of Specialized Services, please make an appointment with me. Please note: Students must be registered with the Office of Specialized Services (OSS) to receive accommodations. As you develop or revise your course syllabus, consider ways to make your course material accessible to students with disabilities. For additional information, contact the Office of Specialized Services (OSS) at x7514 or email

at oss@ramapo.edu.

Policy on Academic Integrity

Students are expected to read and understand Ramapo College's academic integrity policy, which can be found in the *Ramapo College Catalog*. Members of the Ramapo College community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. Students who violate this policy will be required to meet with the faculty member and/or will be referred to the Office of the Provost. An abbreviated version of this policy is described below.

Policy

All members of the Ramapo community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. Since violations of academic integrity erode community confidence and undermine the pursuit of truth and knowledge at the College, academic dishonesty must be avoided.

Procedures

The Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs has the responsibility for the oversight and enforcement of the academic integrity policy and for making the policy an institutional priority. The Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs is also responsible for publishing the policy and for educating both faculty and students about the policy.

Faculty members play a crucial role in the academic integrity policy. They are responsible for educating their students about the importance of academic integrity and for communicating to students their expectations with respect to academic integrity in course work.

Students have the responsibility to understand the College academic integrity policy and to comply with the policy in all their academic work.

Criteria

There are four broad forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Cheating

Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents his or her mastery of material on a test or other academic exercise. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to:

- copying from another student's work;
- allowing another student to copy his/her work;
- using unauthorized materials such as a textbook, notebook or electronic devices during an examination;
- using specifically prepared materials such as notes written on clothing or other unauthorized notes, formula lists, etc., during an examination;
- collaborating with another person during an examination by giving or receiving information without authority;
- taking a test for another person or asking or allowing another to take the student's own test.

2. Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when a person represents someone else's words, ideas, phrases, sentences, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work that includes such material, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific footnote references; additionally, verbatim statements must be acknowledged through quotation marks.

To avoid a charge of plagiarism, a student should be sure to include an acknowledgment of indebtedness:

- whenever he or she quotes another person's words directly;

- whenever he or she uses another person's ideas, opinions, or theories, even if they have been completely paraphrased in one's own words;
- whenever he or she allows another individual to contribute to the work in some significant fashion (for instance, through editing, or sharing of ideas);
- whenever he or she uses facts, statistics, or other illustrative material taken from a source, unless the information is common knowledge.

Examples of standard citation formats can be found on the [Library Website: Citation Manuals and Style Guides](#).

3. **Academic Misconduct**

Academic Misconduct includes the alteration of grades, involvement in the acquisition or distribution of unadministered tests, and the unauthorized submission of student work in more than one class. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- changing, altering, falsifying, or being the accessory to the changing, altering, or falsifying of a grade report or form or other academic record, or entering any computer system, College office or building for that purpose;
- stealing, buying, selling, giving way, or otherwise obtaining all or part of any unadministered test or entering any computer system, College office or building, for the purpose of obtaining an unadministered test;
- submitting written work (in whole or in significant part) to fulfill the requirements of more than one course without the explicit permission of both instructors;
- disregarding policies governing the use of human subjects or animals in research;
- sabotaging another student's work through actions designed to prevent the student from successfully completing an assignment;
- knowingly facilitating a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy by another person.

4. **Fabrication**

Fabrication refers to the deliberate use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive. Examples of fabrication include, but are not limited to:

- citation of information not taken from the source indicated;
- listing of sources in a "works cited" that were not used in that project;
- altering, stealing and/or falsifying research data used in research reports, theses, or dissertations;
- submission as one's own of any academic work prepared in whole or in part by others, including the use of another's identity;
- falsifying information or signatures on registration, withdrawal, or other academic forms and records.

More on academic integrity can be found here:

http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog_11_12/academic-policies.html?col10=open#CollapsiblePanel10