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: Tuesdays and Fridays 3:15-5:05pm room TBA

Instructor Information
Instructor's Name, Title: Zachary Bressler, Video Coordinator
Office Location & Phone No.: H205, 201-684-6239
Office Hours: TBD
E-mail: zbressle@ramapo.edu
Mailbox Location: H200

Common FYS 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

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 project during the semester the students will choose a partner and create an oral presentation 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 the summer reading 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students will:</th>
<th>Research Paper</th>
<th>Class discussions and essays</th>
<th>Final Project</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>demonstrate the ability to think critically and creatively</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>demonstrate proficiency in written communication</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>demonstrate proficiency in oral communication</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>demonstrate information literacy</td>
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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 Student Success 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 Student Success 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: success@ramapo.edu

Texts, Readings, Materials


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. There will be 2 required reaction papers concerning the summer reading.

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 presentation portion of
the project will be performed by the students Live in front of the class, mediated by the professor. The students will make a presentation 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.

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: L-211, x7557, crw@ramapo.edu.

Weekly Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class topic, reading assignment</th>
<th>Exam/assignment/paper due date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 1st</td>
<td>Opening Convocation, Phil Klay, author of <em>Redeployment</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Discussion on the summer read, watch clips of related film.</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Discuss comedy genre, watch clips of selected films. Assign film.</td>
<td>Summer read essay</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Discuss comedy film assignment. Watch clips from</td>
<td>Film analysis</td>
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**“Annie Hall”**

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<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>Discuss “Annie Hall”, Watch clips of “The King of Comedy”</th>
<th>Assign Film</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Discussion on film, discuss “horror” genre.</td>
<td>Assign Film</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Discussion on film, Midterm presentations.</td>
<td>Midterm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Discussion on film, view clips from “The Shining”</td>
<td>Assign film</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Discussion on film, view clips from “Taxi Driver”</td>
<td>Assign film</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Discussion on film, Library research session.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Academic Advisement session, discuss “Drama” genre.</td>
<td>Assign film</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Discussion on film, view clips from TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td><strong>Thanksgiving recess</strong> (Wednesday, November 25th to Saturday, November 29th)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Discussion on film, view clips from TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Discussion on thematic threads of viewed films.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Final research papers due. Final discussion.</td>
<td>Research Papers due</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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**Important Dates**

First Day of Classes: September 2nd

Last day for Schedule Adjustments (on the Web): September 9th

Last day to withdraw from courses with “W” grade: November 13th

Thanksgiving Recess: Nov 25th – 29th

Reading Day (no classes): December 15th

Final Exam Week: December 16th – 22nd

Common Finals: December 19th

Last day to request “I” grades: December 22nd

Final Exam Snow Make-Up Day: December 23rd

**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: 25%
• mid-term presentation video: 25%
• Research paper: 25%
• participation: 25% (discussion, attendance, CEC)

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. For additional information, contact the Office of Specialized Services (OSS) at x7514 or email at oss@ramapo.edu

Academic Integrity Policy

All members of the 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.

Procedure

Responsibilities
The Office of the Provost has responsibility for the oversight and enforcement of the Academic Integrity Policy and for making the policy an institutional priority. The Office of the Provost 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. They are also urged to report alleged violations of the policy to the Vice Provost.

Students have the responsibility to understand the Academic Integrity Policy and to comply with the policy in their academic work.
Criteria
There are four (4) 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 authorization from the instructor;
   - 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 or endnote 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 George T. Potter Library Website:

   [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:
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1.  Cheating

   o changing, altering, falsifying, or being the accessory to the changing, altering, or falsifying of a grade report or form, transcript, or other academic record, or entering any computer system or College office or building for that purpose;
   o stealing, buying, selling, giving way, or otherwise obtaining all or part of any unadministered test or paper or entering any computer system or College office or building for the purpose of obtaining an unadministered test;
   o 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;
   o disregarding policies governing the use of human subjects or animals in research;
   o sabotaging another student’s work through actions designed to prevent the student from successfully completing an assignment;
   o knowingly facilitating a violation of the academic integrity policy by another person.

2.  Plagiarism

   Plagiarism refers to the use of others’ ideas or words without giving credit to the author or without using quotation marks and appropriate citations. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

   o submitting work that is in whole or in part the result of another student’s work without the explicit permission of both instructors;
   o submitting work that is in whole or in part a paraphrase of another student’s work without the explicit permission of both instructors;
   o submitting as one’s own any academic work prepared in whole or in part by others, including the use of another’s identity;
   o falsifying information or signatures on registration, withdrawal, or other academic forms and records.

3.  Academic Integrity

   Academic integrity refers to the adherence to the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, and fairness in all aspects of an individual’s academic work. The integrity of the educational process is based on a commitment to the accurate and honest representation of one’s work and the principles of fair and honest competition.

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:

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

Reporting Violations

In order to ensure due process, any member of the community who is aware of a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is expected to report the incident to the Vice Provost. A faculty member may choose to resolve the incident him/herself or send the case to the Vice Provost for review (see below). In either case, the faculty member reports the incident to the Vice Provost on the reporting form, which serves not only to report the incident but also to record the finding and the sanction in situations in which the faculty member chooses to resolve the case. A faculty member is encouraged to report an alleged violation of academic integrity within 30 days of the discovery of the alleged violation but must do so no later than the last day to submit grades for the term in which the alleged violation occurred. A faculty member may report an incident after that date, but only if he/she has new evidence.

More details on Ramapo College’s academic integrity policy can be found here:

http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog-2015-2016/academic-policies/