

**HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**Department of English**

English 2341  
Literature and Film  
Distance Education

Professor Schweitzer  
Fall 2012  
16-Week Term

# Literature and Film: Virtual Reality

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[PREREQUISITES](#) / [COURSE CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES](#) / [SCHOLARLY STANDARDS](#)  
[REQUIRED TEXTS](#) / [REQUIREMENTS](#) / [GRADING SCHEDULE](#) / [WITHDRAWAL POLICY](#)  
[STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES](#) / [EGLS](#) / [COURSE COMMUNICATION](#) / [COURSE SCHEDULE](#)

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## Prerequisites

- Successful completion of English 1301 and English 1302

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## Course Content and Objectives

Catalog Description: “An introduction to film form and its relationship to literary form. Students will read poems, novels, and essays and view experimental, feature, and documentary films. Discussion and papers will center on the parallel influence and development of form in both mediums.”

English 2341 investigates semiological differences between film art and traditional literary forms. To accomplish this, emphasis will be on viewing a number of films, learning film techniques and terminology, reading creative literature and nonfiction essays, writing critical analyses, and researching.

Secondarily, this course, by emphasizing similarities and differences between these art forms, seeks to foster a greater critical understanding and appreciation of all these forms and particularly to encourage more intellectual and critical viewing of film art.

As a tertiary objective, this course’s theme is “Virtual Reality” and, as such, will examine attempts either to blur or further separate “real life” and creative representations of life.

Beyond these goals, particular to this course, for Liberal Arts and Humanities majors and non-majors alike, exposure to these literary concepts and interpretive tools and the challenge of reading serious



literature in a strenuous intellectual climate will develop their intuitive, creative, and aesthetic faculties, enhance their communication skills, sharpen their capacities for critical thinking and analysis, and help them address serious ethical, moral, and philosophical issues.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Analyze representative literary and film texts.
2. Connect study of literature and film texts to human values in historical and social contexts.
3. Identify similarities and differences between film art and various literary genres.
4. Demonstrate understanding of the creative and interpretive issues surrounding film adaptations of literary texts.
5. Research and analyze primary and secondary sources relating to the study of literature and film.

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## **Scholarly Standards**

Scholarly standards are those established in the course but universally followed in college-level scholarship. One purpose of course lectures, presentations, and discussions is to demonstrate college-level academics. These standards are better learned in class than from any manual. The college writing standard ought to be well known and, for this class, specifically employs *The Little Seagull Handbook* for correct English expository style. The English department further authorizes students to use the MLA parenthetical citation method for scholarly form. Any work that falls beneath the college, departmental, and course standards is unacceptable.

The college has a code that regulates academic ethics. While the code is self-evident, there is one ethical question that needs be addressed here. Plagiarism is epidemic in higher education. It is a serious academic offense to plagiarize, i.e., to commit academic theft by presenting the ideas or words of another as though they were one's own, and therefore pains must be taken to indicate borrowed ideas by endnotes, and borrowed phraseology by endnotes and quotation marks. Again, it is the student's responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism.

If the code and the guidance here are insufficient, *The Little Seagull Handbook* (p. 82-92) has an excellent description with helpful examples. If questions about plagiarism remain, it would be best to consult the instructor before submitting any assignment for evaluation. Any assignment deemed to have been plagiarized will receive a zero and cannot be made-up or reviswed. The instructor stresses her belief that plagiarism not only violates the rules of the university and injures the integrity of higher education at large but is also immoral.

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## **Required Texts**

- Kesey, Ken. [\*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest\*](#). (New York: Penguin, 2002).
- Frequent handouts in the form of downloadable PDF documents

## Recommended Texts

- Bullock, Richard and Francine Weinberg. [\*The Little Seagull Handbook\*](#). (New York: Norton, 2011).
- Corrigan, Timothy. [\*Film and Literature: An Introduction and Reader\*](#). (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1999).

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## Requirements

*Interpretive/Analytical Essay* . Students will write a 3–4 page interpretive/analytical paper (typed, double-spaced) on assigned readings and viewings. More details on this assignment will come later.

*Quizzes* . Weekly quizzes will be administered to assure that students keep up with the reading assignments and course lectures. Of the 14 quizzes administered during the semester, students may elect to skip four of them or, alternatively, the four lowest scores will be dropped at the end of the semester.

*Final Examination* . Students will take an online comprehensive final examination based on assigned readings, class discussions, and viewed films.

*Research Project* . Student will complete one of the following three choices for research projects:

- Documentary Film Option: an eight to ten minute documentary about one of the films we are discussing this semester
- Annotated Bibliography Option: a 10 to 15 source annotated bibliography about the films and/or literature we are discussing this semester
- Original Script Option: an original ten to 15 page script adapting a work of short fiction or poetry along with a two to three page critical précis

*Participation* . The success of online learning experience is largely dependent on student participation in the discussion forums. Frequent and collegial participation in the discussion threads will be an essential part of the course grade.

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## Grading Schedule

Listed below is the weight that will be given to the particular assignments detailed in the section above and the instructor's conception of the meaning of lettered grades. In fairness, the instructor has provided the range of scholarly opportunities so as to prevent penalizing any student for some extraneous

personality trait like shyness, or illness or fatigue on some particular occasion. The instructor's practice of grading is at a high academic standard and scrupulously fair.

Research Project	30%
Essay	20%
Quizzes	20%
Final Examination	10%
Participation	20%

A	(90-100%)	==>	Outstanding, and therefore rare Exceptional in mechanics, style, and content
B	(80-89%)	==>	Superior work, surpasses an "average" performance Superior in one or two areas: mechanics, style, content
C	(70-79%)	==>	Has satisfied requirements for college work Performed in an average manner, good but unexceptional
D	(60-69%)	==>	Less than adequate, frequently slipshod Noticeably weak in mechanics, style, content
F	(0-59%)	==>	Not at all adequate Does not show mastery of course material
I		==>	Incomplete

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## Withdrawal Policy

As of Fall 2007, the Texas legislature has instituted a new policy governing all community colleges in Texas. The new regulations require that all student-initiated or administrative "withdrawals" must be recorded on or before the official college "Withdrawal Date." After that date, students dropping out of the course or not fulfilling course requirements may only be given an "F." Individual professors have no discretion in this matter anymore.

Additionally, freshmen entering college Fall 2007 onward are only allowed to have six "Withdrawals" total over the course of their academic careers. This rule does not apply to students enrolled previous to Fall 2007. Thus, if students are thinking about withdrawing from a course, it is important to discuss the implications of this choice with an academic adviser, as they now carry serious academic consequences.

This semester's deadline for withdrawals is Friday, November 2 at 4:30 pm. It is the student's obligation to withdraw from the course. The professor will not do it for him/her.

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## Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires all places of business and employment, all government agencies, and all educational institutions to make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities—whether those disabilities be physical handicaps or learning disabilities—are encouraged to discuss immediately any and all difficulties or potential difficulties in the course with this instructor and with all their instructors more generally. To facilitate any necessary accommodations, students must contact their appropriate Distance Education counselors.

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## EGLS<sub>3</sub>: Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System

At Houston Community College, professors believe that thoughtful student feedback is necessary to improve teaching and learning. During a designated time, you will be asked to answer a short online survey of research-based questions related to instruction. The anonymous results of the survey will be made available to your professors and division chairs for continual improvement of instruction. Look for the survey as part of the Houston Community College Student System online near the end of the term.

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## Course Communication

Professor Schweitzer will be available for general consultation by phone or by internet chat by appointment. I will also offer “Virtual Office Hours” using iChat, Jabber, or GoogleTalk (ID: corie.schweitzer@gmail.com) or Skype (ID: porcupineproductions). Each week, I will post different “Virtual Office Hours,” during which students may conference with me by internet chat or by telephone.

If a student should encounter problems with the course, he or she ought immediately to inform the instructor by e-mail (through the Eagle Online course e-mail or, only if necessary, through [corie.schweitzer@hccs.edu](mailto:corie.schweitzer@hccs.edu)). The instructor encourages students to communicate with her about this course and any other important matters. Also, any student who encounters difficulties in the class, in his or her studies in general, or with the larger academic institution, should immediately inform me so that we may try together to overcome them.

The instructor’s objective in teaching is to educate students at a high academic standard, that is, to equip students intellectually and empower them to think critically and to read and write correctly and well both in English courses and in college more generally. What students learn in this course ought to be relevant to other courses and to their lives. The instructor’s objective is, in sum, Socratic. Consequently, the instructor implores students to engage in dialogue with her. Teaching is not the instructor’s occupation but her vocation.

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## Course Schedule

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### Before August 27: ORIENTATIONS

Students must participate in online orientations for both Distance Education generally and this particular course

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### Week of August 27: WEEK 1 INTRODUCTION TO COURSE HOW TO MAKE AN INTERPRETATION

- Readings:**
- “How to Read Sigmund Freud’s *The Interpretation of Dreams*” (in “Course Appendices: Course Handouts”)
  - Sigmund Freud, excerpt from *The Interpretation of Dreams* (in “Course Appendices: Course Handouts”)
  - “Discussion Questions for Freud and Film Clips” (in “Course Appendices: Course Handouts”)

**Viewings:** • “Interpretations” Film Clips (in “Media Files: Analyses”)

**Audio/Visual** • Literature and Film

**Lectures:**

- Due:**
- Syllabus Quiz (by Saturday, September 1 by midnight)
  - Quiz #1 (by Saturday, September 1 by midnight)
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### Week of September 3: WEEK 2 HOW TO READ A FILM

- Readings:**
- Timothy Corrigan, Introduction and Chapter 1 of *Film and Literature* (in “Course Appendices: Course Handouts”)
  - Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” (in “Course Appendices: Course Handouts”)

**Viewings:** • *Citizen Kane*, d. Orson Welles, 1939 (in “Media Files: Films”)

**Audio/Visual** • The Spell of Fascinating Images vs. The Discriminating Power of Crafted

**Lectures:** Words

- Due:** • Quiz #2 (by Saturday, September 8 by midnight)

**Note:** • Students must participate in the course by joining discussions by Friday, September 7 or else face being withdrawn from the course

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**Week of September 10: MEDIUM AND MESSAGE**  
**WEEK 3**

**Readings:** • Corrigan, Chapter 2 (in “Course Appendices: Course Handouts”)  
 • Hugo Munsterberg, “The Means of Photoplay” (in “Course Appendices: Course Handouts”)  
 • Kate Chopin, “The Story of an Hour” (in “Course Appendices: Course Handouts”)  
 • William Carlos Williams, “The Red Wheelbarrow” (in “Course Appendices: Course Handouts”)  
 • Ezra Pound, “In a Station of the Metro” (in “Course Appendices”)  
 • Wallace Stevens, “A Jar in Tennessee” (in “Course Appendices”)

**Viewings:** • *Our Town*, d. Kirk Browning, 1989 (in “Media Files”)  
 • *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, d. Robert Wiene, 1920 (in “Media Files”)

**Audio:** • *Suspense*: “Sorry, Wrong Number,” 1943 (in “Media Files”)

**Audio/Visual** • The Form of the Content vs. The Content of the Form

**Lectures:**

**Due:** • Quiz #3 (due Saturday, September 15 by midnight)

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**Week of September 17: THE GENRE FILM: HORROR**  
**WEEK 4**

**Readings:** • Corrigan, Chapter 3 (in “Course Appendices”)  
 • Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, “Monster Culture (Seven Theses)” from *Monster Theory: Reading Culture* (in “Course Appendices”)

**Viewings:** • *Nosferatu*, d. F. W. Murnau, 1922 (in “Media Files”)  
 • *The Blair Witch Project*, d. Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sánchez, 1999 (in “Media Files”)

**Audio/Visual** • Monsters and Monster Movies

**Lectures:**

**Due:** • Quiz #4 (due Saturday, September 22 by midnight)

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**Week of September 24: HORROR, CONTINUED**  
**WEEK 5**

**Readings:** • Corrigan, Chapter 4 (in “Course Appendices”)

**Viewings:** • *Halloween*, d. John Carpenter, 1978 (in “Media Files”)

**Audio/Visual** • The Dwellers at the Gates and The Monsters Within  
**Lectures:**

**Due:** • Quiz #5 (by Saturday, September 29 by midnight)

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**Week of October 1: THE GENRE FILM: WESTERNS**  
**WEEK 6**

**Readings:** • Bret Harte, “The Outcasts of Poker Flat” (in “Course Appendices”)  
• Robert Warshaw, “Movie Chronicle: The Westerner” (in “Course Appendices”)

**Viewings:** • *Stagecoach*, d. John Ford, 1939 (in “Media Files”)

**Audio/Visual** • The Easterner vs. The Westerner  
**Lectures:**

**Due:** • Formal Essay #1 (by Saturday, October 6 by midnight)  
• Quiz #6 (by Saturday, October 6 by midnight)

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**Week of October 8: WESTERNS, CONTINUED**  
**WEEK 7**

**Readings:** • Corrigan, Chapter 5 (in “Course Appendices”)  
• Alexander Kluge, Edgar Reitz, and Wilfried Reinke, “Word and Film” (in “Course Appendices”)

**Viewings:** • *The Searchers*, d. John Ford, 1956 (in “Media Files”)

**Audio/Visual** • Visions and Revisions  
**Lectures:**

**Due:** • Quiz #7 (by Saturday, October 13 by midnight)

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**Week of October 15: AUTHOR/AUTEUR**  
**WEEK 8**



**Readings:** • Corrigan, Chapter 6 (in “Course Appendices”)

**Viewings:** • *Notorious*, d. Alfred Hitchcock, 1946 (in “Media Files”)  
• *The Birds*, d. Alfred Hitchcock, 1963 (in “Media Files”)

**Audio/Visual** • Creators and The Creative Mind

**Lectures:**

**Due:** • Research Project Registry  
• Quiz #8 (by Saturday, October 20 by midnight)

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**Week of October 22:**      **ADAPTATION: MODERNISM**  
**WEEK 9**

**Readings:** • Dudley Andrew, “Adaptation” (in “Course Appendices”)  
• James Joyce, “The Dead,” from *Dubliners* (in “Course Appendices”)

**Viewings:** • *The Dead*, d. John Huston, 1987 (in “Media Files”)

**Audio/Visual** • Language vs. Image

**Lectures:**

**Due:** • Quiz #9 (by Saturday, October 27 by midnight)

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**Week of October 29:**      **ADAPTATION: SHAKESPEARE**  
**WEEK 10**

**Readings:** • Lynda E. Boose and Richard Burt, “Totally Clueless? Shakespeare Goes Hollywood in the 90s” (in “Course Appendices”)

**Viewings:** • *William Shakespeare’s Romeo + Juliet*, d. Baz Luhrman, 1986 (in “Media Files”)

**Audio/Visual** • Adaptation vs. Transformation

**Lectures:**

**Due:** • Quiz #10 (by Saturday, November 3 by midnight)

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**Week of November 5:**      **FILM AND SOCIETY**  
**WEEK 11**

**Readings:** • Ken Kesey, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*

**Viewings:** • *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, d. Milos Forman, 1975 (in “Media Files”)

**Audio/Visual** • The Anxiety of Influence and The Social Film

**Lectures:**

**Due:** • Quiz #11 (by Saturday, November 10 by midnight)

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**Week of November 12: FILM AND SOCIETY, CONTINUED**  
**WEEK 12**

**Viewings:** • *Asylum*, d. Peter Robinson, 1972 (in “Media Files”)  
• “Animated Minds: Schizophrenia” (in “Media Files”)

**Audio/Visual** • Real Life vs. Reel Life

**Lectures:**

**Due:** • Quiz #12 (by Saturday, November 17 by midnight)

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**Week of November 19: FILM AND HISTORY / FILM AS HISTORY**  
**WEEK 13**

**Viewings:** • *United 93*, d. Paul Greengrass, 2006 (in “Media Files”)

**Audio/Visual** • Film and History vs. Film as History

**Lectures:**

**Due:** • Quiz #13 (due Monday, November 26 by midnight)

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**Week of November 26: RESEARCH PROJECTS**  
**WEEK 14**

**Due:** • Research Projects (due Saturday, December 1 by midnight)

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**Week of December 3: FILM CULTURE**  
**WEEK 15**

**Viewings:** • *Sunset Boulevard*, d. Billy Wilder, 1950 (in “Media Files”)

**Audio/Visual** • The Phantom Empire vs. The Dustbin of History

**Lectures:**

**Due:** • Quiz #14 (due Saturday, December 8 by midnight)

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**Week of December 9:**      **FINAL EXAMINATIONS**  
**WEEK 16**

**When:** • From Sunday, December 9 at 12:01 am to Wednesday, December 12 at 11:55 pm

**Where:** • Online