Description

This course focuses on a variety of films and works of literature that explore how crossing national, ethnic, societal, or psychological boundaries gives shape to fundamental philosophical questions and their possible answers. The goals of LIT 191 are two-fold: (1) thinking and writing clearly about core questions raised by the course and prompted by works of literature, and (2) learning what is involved in adapting literature to film. The course should deepen students' philosophic sophistication and leave them with a valuable set of academic and practical skills. During the first part of the course you will read philosophically rich works of literature, watch their film adaptations, learn what is involved in adapting literature to film, and write, with the guidance of instructors, about the core questions raised by the course. In the second half of the semester you will read a number of short stories that have not been adapted to film and study the art of adaptation. After learning basic video production skills (shooting and editing) you will be assigned to production groups, each of which will produce a video of a particular scene they have adapted from one of the assigned short stories. You will work in groups of three, deciding collectively what scene most effectively asks (and perhaps answers) one of the "big questions" foundational to the course.

Outcomes

1. Insight into varieties of conceptual borderlines and barriers; how they are crossed or transgressed.
2. Awareness of perennial philosophical questions relevant to the rubric of crossing boundaries.
3. Knowledge of the basic elements of fiction.
4. Knowledge of the basic elements of film.
5. Knowledge of the process of adaptation.
6. A short script created collaboratively in a small group.
7. Knowledge of video production skills.
8. A short video created collaboratively.

Reading

McCarthy, *The Road* (Knopf)
Schroeppel, *The Bare Bones Camera Course for Film and Video* (Schroeppel)
Short stories and poems via Moodle

Viewing

You will watch three films outside the class. These can be streamed via Amazon.
Writing

Six short papers will be assigned. These will entail (1) presenting your general or specific reactions to a literary text and/or movie adaptation and (2) focusing on a particular aspect—idea, theme, approach, tactic—that you have noticed and found significant regarding the assigned reading or viewing. These papers should be roughly two printed pages each.

See policy statements regarding plagiarism on page 3.

Exams

There will be a comprehensive final covering texts, films, lectures, and class discussions.

Attendance

After one unexcused absence your grade will decline. A note from a doctor or some other relevant professional is needed to excuse an absence. The final exams must be taken when scheduled.

Grading

Writing—40%, film production—40%, class participation—20%.

Schedule

August

26 Introduction

September

2 Read “In Another Country” (Moodle)
   Watch Babel outside of class
   Due: Response Paper #1

9 Read (Moodle) “Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge,” “Cathedral,” “Who’s Irish?”
   Watch Occurrence in class
   Due: Response Paper #2

16 Read (Moodle) “In a Grove,” “Two Tickets,” “Interpreter of Maladies”
   Watch Rashamon in class
   Due: Response Paper #3

23 Read The Road; watch The Road outside of class
   Due: Response Paper #4

30 Read (Moodle) This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona,” “A & P,” “Boys and Girls,” poems
   Watch Smoke Signals
   Due: Response Paper #5

October

7 Introduction to Production
   Read Bare Bones pp. 1-42 and newly assigned short stories for potential adaptation

14 Workshop: adapted script, treatment, and storyboard
   Read Bare Bones 43-85
   Due: script, treatment, storyboard for adaptation
21 Production #1 – (We will start production #1 in class)

28 Production #1 due
   Workshop Production #1
   Script Workshop for Production #2

November

18 Production #2 due
   Workshop production #2

December

2 Presentations; preview for final

9 Final examination, 10:10-12:10

GLI Lectures

GLI students must attend TWO of the lectures listed below. Write a response paper (“Lecture Response”) to one of the lectures you attend, connecting some aspect of what you hear to a theme, idea, text, or film that we have discussed in LIT/FILM 191. Turn it in within three days following the lecture to which you are responding. This assignment is in addition to the other five papers required for the course.

“News in the Age of Snowden: What investigations of leaks to reporters tell us about the World”
William Glaberson, former New York Times reporter
Monday, September 29 at 7pm in the UC Theater

“It’s the Oil, Stupid: The Oily Aspects of the Current Wars in Iraq, Syria and Other Hot Spots on Five Continents”
Michael Schwartz, founding director, College of Global Studies, Stony Brook University (SUNY)
Wednesday, October 22 at 8pm in the Dennison Theatre

First-Year Reading Experience Book, The Things They Carried
Tim O’Brien, author
Tuesday, October 28 at 8pm in the Dennison Theatre

“Do Words Kill? Hate Speech, Propaganda and Incitement to Genocide”
Elizabeth White, Research Director of the Center for the Prevention of Genocide
Wednesday, November 5 at 7pm in the UC Theater

“The Riddle of Sustainability: A Surprisingly Short History of the Future”
William Cronon, Professor of History, Geography, and Environmental Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Monday, November 17 at 8pm in the Dennison Theatre

“Ukraine, Russia and the West: Crisis, Causes and Consequences”
Robert D. English, Professor and Director, School of International Relations, University of Southern California
Monday, December 1 at 8pm in the Dennison Theatre

“In the Pavilion of Snow Oxen — Big Animals in an Increasingly Peopled World
Joel Berger, Professor of Wildlife Conservation
Tuesday, December 2 at 6pm in the UC North Ballroom”
Policy Statements

Add-Drop Deadlines and Incompletes: For details of important dates and deadlines, please see: http://www.umt.edu/registrar/documents/_notes/Important%20Dates%200130.pdf

Disability Accommodation: Students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodations for coursework. To request accommodation, please contact your instructors as soon as possible in the semester. For more information, visit the Disability Services website at http://www.umt.edu/dss/ or call 406.243.2243 (Voice/Text).

Plagiarism: From the UM catalog: “Plagiarism is the representing of another's work as one's own. It is a particularly intolerable offense in the academic community and is strictly forbidden. Students who plagiarize may fail the course and may be remanded to Academic Court for possible suspension or expulsion.” Plagiarism means using someone else's ideas, organization, and/or wordings as one's own.