

COURSE PROPOSAL - NORTH BOONE CUSD 200

**North Boone High School
New Course Proposal Form (25-26 school year)**

Proposed Course Name: **Film Studies**

Old Course Name (if applicable): **Not Applicable**

Submitted By: **Nathan Negrón**

Implementation Date: **Fall or Spring Semester (2025-2026 school year)**

Length of Course: **One semester long class (.5)**

Open to which grade levels: **Juniors and seniors (11-12)**

Prerequisites: **Must be a junior - 11th - or senior - 12th**

Pass/Fail Option: **Not a core requirement**

Credit: **.5 credits**

If the course meets a graduation requirement, which one does meet?

This course is an elective. It is entirely optional by the student

Where does this course fit into the department sequence?

11-12 elective course

What is the potential impact of this course on the other department offerings?

Help give students a wider choice of electives for the English department, as well as evening out the number of students who are enrolled in each class per semester. Additionally, I would like to think it would help us reach more students looking for new and interesting curriculum!

Course Description:

Introduction to Film Studies is designed to provide students with a broad understanding of the history, aesthetics, and cultural significance of film, including the technical aspects of film production, the analysis of film form and genre, and the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which films are made and consumed. Students will learn about key figures and movements in film history and theory and be introduced to various critical approaches to film analysis. In addition to lectures and discussions, screenings of a range of films from different periods and countries will be viewed, as well as writing assignments and other forms of film analysis. Students will develop their skills in

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analyzing and interpreting film as a medium.

Special Notes (i.e., extended periods, team teaching, etc.):

This course is simply a standard elective course.

RATIONALE, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES

1. Course Rationale

With the growing importance of media literacy, a film studies course would teach students how to critically assess visual media, an essential skill in navigating the digital world. Data from school assessments may show gaps in students' media literacy skills, highlighting the need for such a course.

A) What is the evidence of student need for this course? What student data shows that students are interested in this course?

Film studies encourages critical thinking by analyzing themes, symbolism, and visual storytelling. Students learn how to decode media, a necessary skill in today's media-saturated world. This aligns with broader educational goals of fostering critical literacy and media awareness.

B) What departmental needs/goals would this course meet?

A high school film studies course would align with and support several key departmental needs and goals, particularly in the areas of English, Visual Arts, and Career and Technical Education (CTE). Here are the primary ways this course would meet these goals:

Enhancing Critical Thinking and Analysis (English Department):

- **Literary and Media Analysis:** Just as English courses develop students' abilities to analyze literature, a film studies course would extend this critical analysis to visual storytelling. Students would learn to examine themes, character development, symbolism, and narrative structure in films, which are skills that complement literary analysis.
- **Media Literacy:** With the rise of digital content, media literacy is more important than ever. A film studies course would contribute to the department's goal of teaching students to critically engage with and interpret diverse forms of media, enhancing their overall comprehension and analytical skills.
- **Interdisciplinary Connections:** Film studies integrates elements of history, psychology, and social commentary, aligning with goals to foster cross-disciplinary thinking. This supports broader departmental objectives to prepare students for complex, interconnected academic challenges.

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By fulfilling these departmental needs and goals, a film studies course would not only enrich the curriculum but also help students develop the analytical, creative, and technical skills necessary for success in both academic and professional settings.

C) What institutional needs/goals would this course meet?

Engagement and Student Retention (School-wide Goals):

- **Student Motivation:** Offering a film studies course would meet the broader departmental goal of engaging diverse learners, particularly those with an interest in the arts or media. It would provide an academic option that appeals to students who might be less engaged in traditional courses but excel in visual and project-based learning.
- **Curriculum Diversity:** Introducing film studies would enhance the diversity of course offerings, aligning with the school's goals of providing a well-rounded education that meets a wide range of student interests and talents.

2. Course Priority Standards: List 5-6 standards that will be the focus of the curriculum. These standards are priorities because they meet the following criteria:

1. Grades 11 – 12: RL.11-12.3. Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
2. Grades 11 & 12: RL.11-12.7. Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.) . . .
3. CC.11-12.R.I.7 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
4. CC.11-12.SL.2 Comprehension and Collaboration: Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
5. CC.11-12.SL.5 Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas: Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
6. CC.11-12.W.6 Production and Distribution of Writing: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

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3. List the main topics to be taught.

Unit 1: The Classics

The Wizard of Oz (1939)

A timeless classic film that takes audiences on a magical and fantastical journey through the colorful land of Oz. Directed by Victor Fleming and released in 1939, the film follows Dorothy, a young girl from Kansas, as she is swept away to the magical land of Oz by a cyclone. With its memorable characters, stunning visuals, and enduring messages, *The Wizard of Oz* remains a must-watch for film enthusiasts and continues to captivate audiences of all ages.

Psycho (1960)

Wildly popular and incredibly controversial at the time of its release, Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* would go on to become the most critically acclaimed and commercially successful film of the legendary director's career. The film is worth watching for its iconic shower scene alone (with the lights on)!

Unit 2: The Birth of the Blockbuster

Jaws (1975)

Director Steven Spielberg's groundbreaking thriller created and set the standard for suspense in cinema and is considered by many as the first blockbuster. Spielberg's brilliant use of suspense, John Williams' iconic score, and groundbreaking special effects make *Jaws* a thrilling experience. Beyond its heart-pounding moments, the film explores the delicate balance between humanity and nature, leaving an enduring impact on the landscape of modern cinema and solidifying its status as a classic.

Superman (1978)

Director Richard Donner brought the iconic DC Comics character to life in 'Superman,' a groundbreaking superhero film that captivated audiences and set the stage for the genre's cinematic dominance. Pioneering special effects, stellar performances, and the unforgettable score by John Williams collectively establish 'Superman' as a classic that not only set the standard for superhero films but also became a symbol of hope and heroism, shaping the landscape of the genre for years to come.

Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope (1977)

In 1977, George Lucas transported the Sergio Leone Spaghetti Western into outer space, and the modern template for a science fiction super franchise was born. Now the cornerstone of a universe of sequels and proprietary merchandise, *Episode IV: A New Hope* melds timeless elements of Greek drama with cutting-edge special effects to create

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larger-than-life heroes, unforgettable villains, and sprawling cultural mythology that shaped a generation

Unit 3: Animation

Toy Story (1994)

A touchstone in movie-making and digital technology, *Toy Story* paved the way for full-length computerized animation and marked a new era for family film. In the years since *Toy Story's* release, the film has spawned four sequels, countless cinematic imitators, and an entirely new genre of children's entertainment.

Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse (2018)

In the animated superhero spectacle *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*, directors Peter Ramsey, Rodney Rothman, and Bob Persichetti deliver a visually stunning and narratively inventive take on the iconic Spider-Man saga. As these diverse Spider-Heroes team up to stop a threat that endangers all realities, the film stands out with its groundbreaking animation style, blending comic book aesthetics with dynamic visuals. *Into the Spider-Verse* not only offers a fresh take on the superhero genre but also explores themes of identity, responsibility, and the universality of heroism, making it a standout and critically acclaimed entry in the Spider-Man franchise.

Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse (2023)

Embarking on a thrilling new chapter, *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse* unfolds as the sequel to the animated phenomenon. With a compelling narrative and a dynamic exploration of the Spider-Verse, this film continues the legacy of its predecessor, inviting audiences into an exhilarating and imaginative world of superheroes.

Unit 4: The Greatest Year of Cinema: 1993 or 1994?

The Sandlot (1993)

A coming-of-age sports comedy that captures the essence of childhood and the magic of summertime adventures. Set in the 1960s, the film follows Scotty Smalls, a new kid in town, who joins a group of neighborhood boys for baseball games at the local sandlot. Led by the charismatic Benny "The Jet" Rodriguez, the group navigates the challenges of growing up, friendship, and their legendary quest to retrieve a cherished baseball from the intimidating neighbor's yard, guarded by a legendary dog named "The Beast." Filled with laughter, life lessons, and a genuine portrayal of childhood, "The Sandlot" has become a cherished cinematic gem that captures the essence of growing up and the enduring spirit of friendship.

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Jurassic Park (1993)

Based on Michael Crichton's novel, the film is set on the fictional Isla Nublar, where wealthy entrepreneur John Hammond has created a dinosaur theme park. When a group of experts, including paleontologists Dr. Alan Grant and Dr. Ellie Sattler, visits the park, they soon discover that the cloned dinosaurs are not as controlled as Hammond had hoped. Chaos ensues as the prehistoric creatures break free, leading to a thrilling and suspenseful fight for survival. Known for its revolutionary special effects, gripping storytelling, and iconic score by John Williams, *Jurassic Park* remains a cinematic milestone that captivates audiences with its awe-inspiring spectacle and timeless sense of wonder.

The Lion King (1994)

Released in 1994 and directed by Roger Allers and Rob Minkoff, *The Lion King* is an animated masterpiece that has become a pinnacle in the realm of storytelling and animation. The film explores themes of responsibility, identity, and the circle of life, all set against the backdrop of unforgettable music composed by Hans Zimmer and Elton John. With its stunning animation, compelling characters, and powerful narrative, *The Lion King* continues to captivate audiences of all ages and remains a timeless classic in the realm of animated cinema.

Forrest Gump (1994)

Robert Zemeckis' cinematic masterpiece chronicles the extraordinary life of its protagonist, played by Tom Hanks. Through Forrest's simple yet profound observations, the audience is taken on a rollercoaster of emotions, and the film delves into themes of destiny, resilience, and the impact of choices. With its memorable quotes, exceptional performances, and a soundtrack that echoes through time, *Forrest Gump* remains a classic that resonates with audiences, offering a unique perspective on the human experience.

4. What types of student assessment procedures will be used? How will the assessment be used to guide instruction?

Student assessment in the film studies class will be ongoing and varied to capture both the analytical and creative aspects of the course. Here's how assessment will be structured and used to guide instruction:

1. Tracking Sheet Assessments:

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- **Purpose:** As students view each film, they will complete a **tracking sheet**, which will serve as a formative assessment tool. The tracking sheet will require students to apply the notes they've taken on specific film elements (e.g., cinematography, sound, theme, character development) to analyze the movie in real-time.
- **Assessment Use:** These sheets will be collected regularly and reviewed to assess students' understanding of the targeted lesson elements. By examining their responses, the teacher can gauge whether students are grasping the concepts and applying them accurately. If common misconceptions arise, this will inform the need for re-teaching or revisiting certain concepts.
- **Feedback:** Immediate, formative feedback will be provided on the tracking sheets, guiding students on how to deepen their analysis or refine their observations. This also allows for adjustments in pacing or emphasis for future lessons based on student needs.

2. Creative Projects:

- **Purpose:** Periodically, students will create their own short films or scenes, applying the elements they've studied. These projects will assess both their understanding of film analysis and their ability to translate theory into practice.
- **Assessment Use:** Rubrics will be used to evaluate technical skills (e.g., editing, cinematography) and narrative elements (e.g., plot structure, character development). Observing areas where students excel or struggle will inform future instruction, particularly in emphasizing technical or creative skills that need reinforcement.

3. Written Film Analyses:

- **Purpose:** Students will write formal essays analyzing films they have studied in class. These essays will assess their ability to synthesize the notes from their tracking sheets into cohesive, well-structured arguments.
- **Assessment Use:** These summative assessments will be graded using rubrics that focus on critical thinking, organization, use of evidence, and depth of analysis. The results will guide future instruction by highlighting strengths and gaps in students' writing and analytical skills, informing whether additional scaffolding or writing workshops are necessary.

5. List resources needed and approximate costs to implement this course. Include staff development, materials, textbooks, additional staff, equipment, technology resources, facilities, and fees.

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Projector or Large Display Screen: A high-quality projector or large screen for screening films, allowing students to clearly view details such as camera angles, lighting, and visual effects.

DVD/Blu-ray Player and/or Streaming Subscriptions: Access to physical media and streaming services (Netflix, Criterion, Amazon Prime, etc.) for a wide selection of films, documentaries, and supplementary material.

Laptops or Tablets: Access to devices for students to complete tracking sheets, write essays, and collaborate on film projects.

Google Classroom: For organizing assignments, discussions, and feedback. Google Docs/Slides/Sheets can also be used for collaboration on film projects.

Include any additional information pertinent to your course.

I previously taught this film studies course at my former school - Saint Edward Central Catholic High School - and it was extremely successful. The course not only provided students with more diverse elective options but also helped lighten the load for other teachers, as it spread out student enrollment across additional classes. Even though I left my old school, I am still in the process of refining and expanding the course because I believe there's so much more I can do with it. I'm excited about the potential to bring an even better version of the course to North Boone to offer more choices to the students.

Signatures: Form must be signed before it can be presented to the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Committee.

Building Principal: _____ Date: _____

Curriculum Director: _____ Date: _____

Superintendent: _____ Date: _____

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