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MART 304.50: The Modern Horror Film

Mark V. Shogren

University of Montana - Missoula, mark.shogren@umontana.edu

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School of Media Arts

MAR 304-50—The Modern Horror Film-3 credits

Instructional Design: Mark Shogren and Nicholas Jenkins

Tutorial Videos: Nicholas Jenkins

Course Design: Mark Shogren and Nicholas Jenkins

Technical Support: Justin Lewis and Nick Moles

Course Management: Mark Shogren

E-Mail: mark.shogren@umontana.edu

THE ONLINE COURSE OVERVIEW:

The MAR 304-50 class will be divided into the following two online environments: the MAR 304-50 Moodle shell, and the MAR 304-50 Google+ community. In addition, those students who are declared Media Arts majors will have access to the BA lab located in McGill 123.

-THE MOODLE SHELL

Moodle will contain your gradebook, assignments, projects, reading materials, project media and particular discussion forums. It will also contain a link to the website. Don't forget that all class emails will be sent from Moodle to your university email account, not your separate personal one.

-GOOGLE COMMUNITIES

Each class will have a Google + Community associated with it that all registered students are welcome to join. Invitations will be sent out during the first week of classes. The community is optional and is designed to offer students a private virtual space where they can interact with each other or graduate student teaching assistants.

-THE BA LAB

The Media Arts BA lab is located in McGill, room 123. It is available 24/7 to students registered as Media Arts Majors and will be staffed by graduate instructors each weekday during the semester. Instructor hours will be posted. The lab is not a classroom space but rather a place where individual students can go to interact with instructors and small groups can meet to discuss their work. Access will be by Griz card only.

Office Hours: Since this is an “Online Class” I have set aside time throughout the semester to answer emails. Typically I can get back to most emails within 24 hours. Be reasonable in your expectations of correspondence. I typically answer emails during the day sometime between 8am and 5 pm. I may check in in the evening. If you are having an emergency with something class related and cannot get a hold of me, please contact the Media Arts Office at **406.243.4540** and ask if they can locate me on campus.

“Read Marcus Aurelius. Of each particular thing ask: what is it in itself? What is its nature?”

- Hannibal “The Cannibal” Lecter

Course Description:

The horror genre is one of the most profitable in the history of filmmaking. It is lauded by some, rebuked by others, but enjoyed by millions. But what makes this genre of filmmaking so popular and powerful? Why does it endure in all forms of art? What is it about horror that draws so many people in and keeps them coming back? These questions as well as others we will attempt to answer in this 15-week online course. You will explore the changing landscape of the horror film since 1960, studying the movies in filmic terms (Acting, Directing, Cinematography, Music, etc...) and sociological importance. Through online discussions, selected readings, multimedia projects, and online lectures, we will seek to understand the often-controversial genre of horror.

Course Materials:

Required Text:

The Horror Film by Peter Hutchings

ISBN-10: 0582437946 ISBN-13: 978-0582437944

This is NOT a suggested text. It is REQUIRED. I have scanned in the first two chapters and ONLY the first two chapters of the book to give you time to get it ordered and shipped. We do weekly readings from the text that you will be quizzed on and expected to understand for

the exams.

Movies:

It will be your responsibility to acquire copies of all the required films we will be viewing. A list is provided on this syllabus in the “Schedule” section. Also there is a list on MOODLE with links to each movie’s page on www.imdb.com. Some of these films may be available on Netflix, but Netflix often rotates their instant streaming titles. If you are using their DVD system, be sure you get the DVD in advance. Amazon instant Streaming carries most of the titles as well as most local video stores.

You will also be required to have access to a computer that is capable of viewing Quicktime Movies and YouTube videos. In the Top of the Topics Outline section of this class on Moodle you will find **Introductory Videos** that will test your computer's ability to play videos. If you can view those movies, you’ll have no problem with any of the media in the class.

Course Objectives and Outcomes:

Students will develop the abilities to...

- Articulate how the Horror Film (and the Genre as a whole) Functions.*
- Understand the Change that Horror Films Have Undergone Since 1960.*
- Critically Analyze the Selected Films for Common Themes and Iconography.*
- Critically Analyze the Selected Films for Sociological Relevance and Importance.*
- Communicate Film Specific Ideas and Concepts About What Horror Is.*

Course Requirements:

There are 200 points possible in this class. These points are divided into four categories.

1. Online Discussions

2. Weekly Assignments
3. Exams and Quizzes
4. Final Paper

Grading Guidelines:

I have sought to make grading as clear as I can. If you have any questions, please contact me.

1. Online Forums.

The Forum Discussions will be graded as follows:

•**Participation** – you will be required to make a certain amount of posts for each discussion as well as a certain amount of responses. Each discussion will list the requirements for participation at the start.

•**Vocabulary** – You will be expected to communicate your ideas using terms and ideas we have discussed in readings, assignments, and film lectures.

2. Weekly Assignments.

You will be expected to complete the assigned Learning Units within the given dates (usually a 7 day period). Each assignment is different but all of them are exercises used to gauge your understanding of the Horror Genre so I will be looking for...

•**Completion** – The Learning Units will be made available for a certain amount of time on Moodle and you will have until the Units are taken offline to complete them. Everything will be submitted on Moodle OR through Email. It will be clear in each assignment how that assignment should be submitted.

•**Vocabulary and Coherence** – You will be discussing ideas and concepts relating to the films we have watched. Be clear and concise.

3. Exams and Quizzes.

You will have Quizzes after every lecture and reading assignment. These are self-explanatory and are simply there to make sure you have a solid understanding of the material before we get into

discussions. Quizzes will be “Multiple Choice” or “Fill in the Blank” type tests, while the Exams (a Mid Term and Final) will be Essay.

4. Final Papers.

Papers will be assigned at the Mid Term. You will be doing a Synopsis, a Breakdown of the film based on readings, and an analysis of a Horror Film that we HAVE NOT covered in the class. Similarly to discussions and assignments, you will be expected to use Vocabulary and Concepts introduced in the class and articulate common themes and iconography.

Grade Breakdowns Are As Follows:

Grade	Points	Percent
A	186 - 200 points	93 % and above
A-	180 - 185 points	90 - 92 %
B+	174 - 179 points	87 - 89 %
B	166 - 173 points	83 - 86 %
B-	160 - 165 points	80 - 82 %
C+	154 - 159 points	77 - 79 %
C	146 - 153 points	73 - 76 %
C-	140 - 145 points	70 - 72 %
D+	134 - 139 points	67 - 69 %
D	120 - 133 points	60 - 66 %
F	119 points and below	59 % and below

EXTRA CREDIT:

There will be a one time Extra Credit assignment at Mid-Term that

entails a small paper. It will be the only Extra Credit in the class and I encourage EVERYONE to take advantage of it.

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS CLASS

1. Visit this Moodle Page several times per week. Make sure you check for all recent announcements and **DOUBLE CHECK** that you have turned in all assigned work before the deadline. If you are unsure of whether or not an assignment or quiz has been turned in (as the gradebook can be difficult to read sometimes) feel free to email me and ask.
2. Devote time to your work. Not only should you be committing to **THINK** about what you write, but you should also proof your work before you turn it in to me. If I can't understand what you've written, then you won't get a grade for it. Also, be aware that if you misspell a filmmaker's name, or a vocabulary word, **YOU WILL BE DOCKED POINTS**.
3. Contact the instructor. Never feel as though you are bothering me with emails. It is my responsibility to answer your emails and help you with problems relating to this class, but it is **YOUR** responsibility to ask the questions. In fact, I recommend you email me at the start of the class just to make sure I am receiving your emails and responding to you.

Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at <http://www.umt.edu/SA/vpsa/index.cfm/page/1339>

Students with disabilities

“Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). “Reasonable” means the University permits no

fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. For more information, please consult <http://www.umt.edu/disability>.”