



FILM 121 - Film Comedy Course Outline

Approval Date: 03/12/2020

Effective Date: 08/14/2020

SECTION A

Unique ID Number

Discipline(s) Film Studies
Theater Arts

Division Arts and Humanities

Subject Area Film Studies

Subject Code FILM

Course Number 121

Course Title Film Comedy

TOP Code/SAM Code 1007.00 - Drama and Dramatics/Theatre Arts, General /
E - Non-Occupational

**Rationale for adding this course to
the curriculum** add distant education

Units 3

Cross List N/A

Typical Course Weeks 18

Total Instructional Hours

Contact Hours

Lecture 54.00

Lab 0.00

Activity 0.00

Work Experience 0.00

Outside of Class Hours 108.00

Total Contact Hours 0.00

Total Student Hours 108

Open Entry/Open Exit No

Maximum Enrollment

Grading Option Letter Grade or P/NP

Distance Education Mode of Instruction On-Campus
Hybrid
Entirely Online

SECTION B

General Education Information:

SECTION C

Course Description

Repeatability May be repeated 0 times

Catalog Description This course offers an in-depth examination of the comedy film through an analysis of its historical evolution, major theories, aesthetics and conventions, and its role as a reflection of culture and society.

Schedule Description

SECTION D

Condition on Enrollment

1a. **Prerequisite(s):** *None*

1b. **Corequisite(s):** *None*

1c. **Recommended:** *None*

1d. **Limitation on Enrollment:** *None*

SECTION E

Course Outline Information

1. Student Learning Outcomes:

- A. View comedy films more analytically.
- B. Recognize the cultural and social implications of comedy films.
- C. Show an aesthetic appreciation of the comedy film.

2. Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Recall the historical evolution of the comedy film, and its many subgenres.
- B. Compare and contrast the different subgenres of the comedy film, and the eras in which they became popular.
- C. Identify the major codes and conventions of the comedy film in general, and its subgenres in particular.
- D. Demonstrate an understanding of the major theories related to the comedy film through written analysis of specific films screened in class.
- E. Think critically about the significance of the popular comedy film as a reflection of culture and society.
- F.

3. Course Content

- A. Introduction
 - a. Course outline & expectations
 - b. Early film comedy pioneers
 - c. Lumiere, Mack Sennett, Fatty Arbuckle, Mabel Normand
- B. Silent Comedy Pioneers in the 1920s & 30s
 - a. Buster Keaton
 - b. Harold Lloyd
 - c. Charlie Chaplin
- C. Genres, Forms & Narrative

- a. Screwball Comedy
- b. Black Comedy
- c. Romantic Comedy
- d. Parody
- e. Mockumentary
- D. Comedy and Culture
 - a. Hispanics in comedy
 - b. African Americans in comedy
 - c. Representations of Gender
 - d. Comedy as Performance Art
 - e.

4. Methods of Instruction:

Activity: Watch feature length films screened in class.

Critique: Written essays about films shown in class.

Directed Study: Selected essays to be read in preparation for the class lectures.

Discussion: In-class discussion of the films and reading materials.

Lecture:

Online Adaptation: Activity, Directed Study, Discussion, Group Work, Individualized Instruction, Journal, Lecture

7. Methods of Evaluation: Describe the general types of evaluations for this course and provide at least two, specific examples.

Typical classroom assessment techniques

Quizzes -- Quiz after each unit of study. Quizzes may include both objective and essay style questions.

Research Projects -- Research paper or other writing project that develop a related topic.

Final Exam -- Final may include both objective and essay style questions.

Mid Term -- Midterm may include both objective and essay style questions.

Letter Grade or P/NP

8. Assignments: State the general types of assignments for this course under the following categories and provide at least two specific examples for each section.

A. Reading Assignments

Selected readings from textbook, course reader, library resources, and in-class handouts.

Example:

1. Read "I Can Take a Hint" by William Ian Miller, in your textbook The Film Comedy Reader by Greg Rickman.

2. Read "Comedy and Narrative" in your textbook Popular Film and Television Comedy by Steve Neale and Frank Krutnik.

B. Writing Assignments

Written evaluations of films viewed in class.

Example:

Choose one of the following questions and answer in a 4-5 page essay.

1. Discuss The King of Comedy as an example of the black comedy sub-genre. What

taboo subject matters does the film address, and how does it depict them as funny?
How does the film's aesthetic contribute to its classification as black comedy?

2. Analyze the comedic representation of Pedro and Anthony in Cheech & Chong's Up In Smoke. How would these two characters be classified according to Charles Ramirez-Berg's breakdown of Hispanic stereotypes?

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C. Other Assignments

Research paper or other writing projects that develop a related topic.

For example:

Students are to select a paper topic covering a critical analysis and evaluation of the artistic elements of Comedy covered in the course this semester. This paper is designed as a research project and students are expected to go beyond the level of information found in the course textbook. Students must find a minimum of five sources for this paper. Of those five, no more than two may be periodical sources and no internet sources are allowed, except where students can demonstrate the academic verifiability and validity of a source. Paper will be in the MLA format using parenthetical citations. The body of the text must be a minimum of 7 pages and no more than 15. Work will be graded on a 50 point rubric that evaluates format; development of the body of the text including a thesis, relevant examples, integration of research, conclusion and merit of original premise; punctuation; grammar; bibliography; citations; and use of images.

9. Required Materials

A. EXAMPLES of typical college-level textbooks (for degree-applicable courses) or other print materials.

Book #1:

Author: Christopher Beach
Title: Class, Language, and American Film Comedy
Publisher: Cambridge University Press
Date of Publication: 2008
Edition:

Book #2:

Author: Christopher Lamont
Title: Great Comedy Films Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Funny Movies
Publisher: Kendall/Hunt
Date of Publication: 2018
Edition:

B. Other required materials/supplies.

- Course reader with selected articles, various handouts and library reserve readings.