

**First-Year Seminar I**  
**Section 036: Moving Image and Arguments**  
 ENGLISH 1001-036 | Fall 2016

**Tuesday, 9:00 AM–12:00 PM, Spertus Building, Rm 423B**

**Instructor:** Ian Bryce Jones, Department of Liberal Arts  
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Office hours: by appointment, at designated times during the semester  
 13<sup>th</sup> floor seating section of the MacLean Center Café

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Following the general mission of First Year Seminar, this course teaches English writing, close reading, and composition, with an eye towards the unique needs of writing about moving images. From only a few years into its existence, cinema has been used rhetorically, to persuade audiences of the truth of its images and the self-evidentness of its arguments. How is this done? How is the work of a filmmaker different from that of someone who makes arguments using the written word—or, alternately, arguments through any of the other art forms? Tearing through a broad swath of moving images, including documentaries, essay films, experimental cinema, animation, and interactive video works, this course examines the ways in which skilled image-makers can use their talents and raw material to foment ideas and make clear and incisive claims. As a compliment to understanding how moving image artists can forward arguments without traditional written language, this course also examines what it means to argue *about* visual works *using* the written word, as students will be expected to marshal the task of description in service of putting forward supportable, contestable, and non-obvious claims about the moving images in question.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS OVERVIEW**

- **Attendance and class participation.** Students are expected to attend all classes regularly and on time. Unexcused absences for more than **two** class sessions will put students in jeopardy of receiving no credit for the course. A string of unexcused and unexplained absences will be call for immediate failure of the course. (*Attendance is not included as a component of the course credit breakdown—it should be considered a separate rule set by which one can receive no credit in the course.*)
- **Nine substantial posts** on the course’s discussion board, in response to weekly prompts. By substantial, I mean somewhere **in the range of 300-400 words**. Ideally, by the end of the course, this will tally up to somewhere around 3,100 words, or **the equivalent of nine double-spaced pages**.
- **First written assignment**, a five-page deep comparison-and-contrast. **First draft** due **October 12th**, electronically. **Revised and final draft** due **October 26th**, again electronically.
- **Second written assignment**, a seven-page research paper, to be written on one or more films shown in the course, with three required sources (including some outside of course reading). **First draft** due **November 30th**, electronically. **Revised and final draft** due **December 21st**, again electronically.

See the *Course Credit Breakdown* at the end of this syllabus for an exhaustive review of assessment policies, and how the exact division between credit/no credit will be managed.

## **COURSE POLICIES: WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

- Page numbers for the two written assignments refer to **double-spaced** pages, in **12 point Times New Roman** font, with margins not exceeding **1.25 inches**.
- All writing should consistently include **proper citations**, following the guidelines of either MLA or the Chicago Manual of Style. References for proper citation will be provided for the course.
- All papers are due electronically, by 11:59 PM on the due date listed on the syllabus. **Preferred formats include .doc, .docx, and .rtf**. PDFs are allowed, but discouraged, as they are more difficult to add marginalia to. **Mac users:** Please convert .pages format files to a different standard before sending them. **Google Drive users:** Sharing a paper via Drive is great, but make sure that you share it in a way that allows me to comment on it. We'll troubleshoot this as necessary.

## **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

From the SAIC Student Handbook: Academic misconduct includes both plagiarism and cheating, and may consist of: the submission of the work of another as one's own; unauthorized assistance on a test or assignment; submission of the same work for more than one class without the knowledge and consent of all instructors; or the failure to properly cite texts or ideas from other sources.

Academic integrity is expected in all coursework, including online learning. It is assumed that the person receiving the credit for the course is the person completing the work. SAIC has processes in place, including LDAP authentication, to verify student identity.

A quick guide provided by the Flaxman library on how to avoid plagiarism is accessible here: [http://www.saic.edu/media/saic/pdfs/campusresources/academicadvising/plagiarism\\_quickGuide.pdf](http://www.saic.edu/media/saic/pdfs/campusresources/academicadvising/plagiarism_quickGuide.pdf)

A longer, more in-depth detailing of school policy is available here: [http://www.artic.edu/webspaces/portal/library/plagiarism\\_packet.pdf](http://www.artic.edu/webspaces/portal/library/plagiarism_packet.pdf)

## **ACCOMMODATIONS STATEMENT**

SAIC is committed to full compliance with all laws regarding equal opportunities for students with disabilities. Students with known or suspected disabilities, such as a Reading/Writing Disorder, ADD/ADHD, and/or a mental health condition who think they would benefit from assistance or accommodations should first contact the Disability and Learning Resource Center (DLRC) to schedule an appointment. DLRC staff will review your disability documentation and work with you to determine reasonable accommodations. They will then provide you with a letter outlining the approved accommodations for you to deliver to your instructors. This letter must be presented before any accommodations will be implemented. **You should contact the DLRC as early in the semester as possible.** The DLRC is located within the Wellness Center on the 13th floor of 116 S Michigan Ave. and can be reached via phone at 312.499.4278 or email at [dlrc@saic.edu](mailto:dlrc@saic.edu).

Please note that accommodations can **never be applied retroactively**. They must be submitted to the instructor as early as possible to ensure that they are taken into account when assessing students.

## **FURTHER ELABORATION ON THE SCHOOL'S ATTENDANCE POLICY**

SAIC policy states that students are expected to attend all classes regularly and on time. Students should miss class only with reasonable cause. If a student needs to miss class with reasonable cause, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to receive instruction for how to make up for the missed class. It is the instructor's responsibility to give this information to the student as his/her/their schedule permits. Missing class for other than a reasonable cause may jeopardize the student's academic standing in the class.

## **REQUIRED READING MATERIALS**

Students are not required to purchase any reading materials. All course readings will be posted on Canvas. Students should check Canvas regularly, as some readings may be slightly changed.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **Week 1, 2016-09-06**

#### **Introduction**

Review syllabus, student introductions

#### **Watch in-class:**

*Strike* (Sergei Eisenstein, USSR, 1925) 89 min

### **Week 2, 2016-09-13**

#### **The Vocabulary of Moving Images**

#### **Read for this class session:**

Sergei Eisenstein, "The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram"

Sections entitled "Mise-en-scene" and "Cinematography" on the Yale Film Analysis website

#### **Watch in-class:**

*A Movie* (Bruce Conner, USA, 1958) 12 min

*Scorpio Rising* (Kenneth Anger, USA, 1964) 28 min

### **Week 3, 2016-09-20**

#### **What Is an Argument? (No, really)**

#### **Read for this class session:**

P. Adams Sitney, selections from "The Magus" (in *Visionary Film*)

#### **Watch in-class:**

*O'er the Land* (Deborah Stratman, USA, 2009) 53 min

### **Week 4, 2016-09-27**

#### **Nonfiction Films and the Assertive Stance**

#### **Read for this class session:**

Carl Plantinga, "What Is a Nonfiction Film?," from *Rhetoric and Representation in Nonfiction Film*

Carl Plantinga, "The Limits of Appropriation: Subjectivist Accounts of the Fiction/Nonfiction Film Distinction"

**Watch in-class:**

<i>Schichlegruber – Doing the Lambath Walk</i> (Charles A. Ridley, UK, 1941)	2 min
<i>Pierre Vallieres</i> (Joyce Weiland, Canada, 1972)	33 min
<i>The Subconscious Art of Graffiti Removal</i> (Matt McCormick, USA, 2001)	16 min

**Week 5, 2016-10-04****Ironic Narration, Lying Photographs**

D.N. Rodowick, selections from “Two Futures for Electronic Images” (in *The Virtual Life of Film*)  
 selections from Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, “*They Say / I Say*”: *The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*

**Watch in-class:**

<i>Land Without Bread</i> (Luis Buñuel, Spain, 1933)	28 min
<i>No Lies</i> (Mitchell Block, USA, 1972)	16 min

**Week 6, 2016-10-11****Irony and Lies, continued****Read for this class session:**

Vivian Sobchack, “Synthetic Vision: The Dialectical Imperative of Luis Buñuel’s *Las Hurdes*”  
 Kevin B. Lee, “*24 City* Review”

**Take-home viewing assignment to complete by this class session:**

<i>24 City</i> (Jia Zhangke, China, 2008)	106 min
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**Watch in-class:**

<i>Schmeerguntz</i> (Guvnor Nelson and Dorothy Wiley, USA/Sweden, 1965)	14 min
<i>Take Off</i> (Guvnor Nelson, Sweden, 1972)	9 min
<i>Fake Fruit Factory</i> (Chick Strand, USA/Mexico, 1986)	22 min

**DUE ELECTRONICALLY, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12th:****First draft of written assignment 1****Week 7, 2016-10-18****The Personal and the Political****Read for this class session:**

Alexandra Juhasz, “They Said We Were Trying to Show Reality—All I Want to Show Is My Video: The Politics of the Realist Feminist Documentary”

**Watch in-class:**

<i>Tongues Untied</i> (Marlon Riggs, USA, 1989)	54 min
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**Week 8, 2016-10-25****Essay Filmmaking: Arguing from Lived Experience**

Sheila Petty, “Silence and Its Opposite: Expressions of Race in *Tongues Untied*”  
 Timothy Corrigan, selections from *The Essay Film: From Montaigne, after Marker*

**Watch in-class:**

<i>Damned If You Don’t</i> (Su Friedrich, USA, 1984)	55 min
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**DUE ELECTRONICALLY, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26:****Revised and final draft of written assignment 1**

**Week 9, 2016-11-01****Persuasive Fictions****Read for this class session:**

Noël Carroll, “Film, Rhetoric, and Ideology”

**Take-home viewing assignment to complete by this class session:**

*Perfumed Nightmare* (Kidlat Tahimik, The Philippines, 1976) 91 min

**Watch in-class:**

*Daisies* (Věra Chytilová, Czechoslovakia, 1966) 74 min

**Week 10, 2016-11-08****Ambiguity**

Peter A. Hames, “Věra Chytilová” (in *The Czechoslovak New Wave*)

James C. McKelly, “The Double Truth, Ruth: *Do the Right Thing* and the Culture of Ambiguity”

**Take-home viewing assignment to complete by this class session:**

*Do the Right Thing* (Spike Lee, USA, 1989) 120 min

**Watch in-class:**

*The Ax Fight* (Timothy Asch and Napoleon Chagnon, USA/Venezuela, 1975) 30 min

**Week 11, 2016-11-15****How Do Images Gain Authority?****Read for this class session:**

André Bazin, “The Ontology of the Photographic Image”

Mark J. P. Wolf, “Subjunctive Documentary: Computer Imaging and Simulation”

**Watch in-class:**

*Sinking of the Lusitania* (Winsor McCay, USA, 1918) 12 min

*What The Water Said, Nos. 1–3* (David Gatten, USA, 1997–1998) 16 min

*20Hz* (Semiconductor [Ruth Jarman and Joe Gerhardt], UK, 2011) 5 min

**Week 12, 2016-11-22****Animation and Rhetoric****Read for this class session:**

Paul Wells, “The Beautiful Village and the True Village”

**Take-home viewing assignment to complete by this class session:**

*Waltz with Bashir* (Ari Folman, Israel/France, 2008) 90 min

**Watch in-class:**

*The Death of Stalinism in Bohemia* (Jan Svankmajer, Czechoslovakia, 1990) 10 min

*Stranger Comes to Town* (Jacqueline Goss, USA, 2007) 29 min

**Week 13, 2016-11-29****Rhetoric and Interactivity****Read for this class session:**

Ian Bogost, selections from *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames*

**Play in-class:**

Various serious games and interactive art pieces (group work & presentations)

**DUE ELECTRONICALLY, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30th:****First draft of written assignment 2**

**Week 14, 2016-12-06****The Real and the Virtual****Read for this class session:**

David Montero, selections from *Thinking Images: The Essay Film as Dialogic Form in European Cinema*

**Watch in-class:**

*Parallels I-IV* (Harun Farocki, Germany, 2012)

43 min

**Week 15, 2016-12-13****Conclusion**

In-class presentations on final papers, wrap-up, student requested topics, makeup/overflow week

**Week 16, 2016-12-20****No class**

(Classes end Monday, December 19)

**DUE ELECTRONICALLY, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21st**

**Revised and final draft of written assignment 2**

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS**

**The Writing Center** provides one-on-one writing tutoring for students.

It is located in the MacLean Center Basement, 112 S. Michigan Ave., B1-03

Fall and Spring Semester Hours:

Monday–Thursday 9:00 AM–7:15 PM, Friday 9:00 AM–5:15 PM

4:15–7:15 PM are designated as walk-in hours.

Monday–Thursday SAIC offers free, hour-long writing tutorials at the Writing Center, which is located in the basement of MacLean. Tutors are available to assist all currently enrolled students with any stage of the writing process.

Appointments: To schedule an appointment with a Writing Center tutor, students first need to create an account through the online sign-up system: <https://www.supersaas.com/schedule/saic/WritingCenter>.

Once students have set up their own account, they may sign up for appointments. Weekly standing appointments are available upon request. When students come to their tutoring appointments, they should make sure to bring their assignments with them and have any work printed out.

Online schedule instructions are available outside of the Writing Center suite (in the hallway outside of the MacLean Center B1-03).

Contact Information:

Leila Wilson, Writing Center Coordinator: [lwilson@saic.edu](mailto:lwilson@saic.edu) or 312.345.3588

Writing Center Suite: 312.345.9131 (Call to see if there are any last-minute openings.)

## Course Credit Breakdown

### Assessment of Student Progress

Assessment of student progress toward learning outcomes will be given on a 100-point scale. Achieving **70 or more out of these 100 points** will result in students **receiving credit** for the course. Achieving **less than 70** out of these points will result in students **receiving no credit** for the course.

There are no letter grades. There are no percentages. There are only points, and you receive them or you don't. The remainder of this document will break down where these points come from.

### Breakdown of the class's points

- 1) Discussion board posts: 3 points each x 9 = **27**
- 2) First written assignment: **31**
- 3) Second written assignment: **42**

#### **1) Nine substantial posts on the course's discussion board**

27 of these points come from postings on the course's discussion board. Students are expected to post nine times throughout the course of the quarter, in response to prompts. Each post is worth 3 points. Posting nine insightful posts, that address the topic of the prompt in 300-400 words, will net you all 27 of these points. Posting fewer posts, or shorter, less substantive posts, will net you fewer points, but still some. Not posting at all will not give you any points, which will make it very hard to pass the course.

#### **2) The first written assignment**

31 of these points come from the class's first written assignment. This assignment will be assessed via a rubric, clearly laying out expectations and learning goals for the assignment, allowing students to clearly see which points they are receiving, which points they are not, and why. Two drafts of this assignment are due. When reviewing the first draft, I will indicate how many points would be earned by the assignment in its current state. Points will not actually be distributed, however, until the second draft is reviewed, so students will have a chance to fix problems and earn more points.

#### **3) The second written assignment**

42 of these points come from the class's first second assignment. Again, this assignment will be assessed via a rubric. This rubric will be slightly different from the first assignment. The revision system will be identical: Two drafts of this assignment are due, and, when reviewing the first draft, I will indicate how many points would be earned by the assignment in its current state. Points will not actually be distributed until the second draft is reviewed.

## Syllabus Addendum: Content Warnings

Please note the following content warnings for material in this course.

*No Lies (Mitchell Block, USA, 1972)*

Explicit verbal recounting of the details of a sexual assault.

*Land Without Bread (Luis Buñuel, Spain, 1933)*

Cruelty towards the disabled, ill, and economically disadvantaged.

*Tongues Untied (Marlon Riggs, USA, 1989)*

Verbal recounting of homophobic verbal abuse. Verbal recounting of homophobic violent assault. Nudity and explicit depictions of consensual homosexual sex.

*Damned If You Don't (Su Friedrich, USA, 1984)*

Descriptive account of religious homophobia. Explicit recounting of a same-sex sexual encounter that the person recounting describes as non-consensual. (Given cultural pressures of the historic context of these events, the film presents reasons to be skeptical of this characterization of the acts as non-consensual. However, you should be aware that that is how they are explicitly described.)

*Do the Right Thing (Spike Lee, USA, 1989)*

Racist rhetoric, racial slurs, and police violence against Black bodies.

*The Ax Fight (Timothy Asch and Napoleon Chagnon, USA/Venezuela, 1975)*

Graphic violence captured on camera in a documentary context.

*Waltz with Bashir (Ari Folman, Israel/France, 2008)*

Religious killings/ethnic cleansing. War violence, PTSD.