

# ENGLISH 223

## Film and Difference, Power, and Discrimination (DPD)

Tue/Thu 1:00-1:20 PM (North Santiam 206)

<b>Instructor:</b> Stephen Rust <b>CRN:</b> 33216	<b>Email:</b> rusts@linnbenton.edu <b>Office:</b> IA 222	<b>Office Hours:</b> T/Th 12-12:50pm
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**THE PURPOSE OF THIS SYLLABUS:** This syllabus contains all the vital information about this course—what you’ll be learning, what will be expected of you, and what you can expect from me. Essentially, this syllabus is a contract that states what is required of both of us during the term. Since this is a valuable document, you should study it and refer to it often. **The better you know the syllabus, the better the chance that you’ll do well in the course.**

**COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** The course will investigate cinematic representations of femininity and masculinity and analyze how film, as a commercial art form usually geared toward mass consumption, can reinforce or challenge socially constructed notions of gender. The course will also explore film representations of gender’s intersections with other forms of identities--primarily sexuality, race, class, and ability. Using both “classical” Hollywood and contemporary films, this course will introduce students to the central tenets of relevant film and critical theory and illustrate the ways in which film representations can perpetuate and subvert aspects of dominant ideologies. 3 credits.

*Like any story, a movie plot is told through the lives of characters, which raises the question of not only what is the story about, but whose lives are used to tell it. Who are the human beings having these human experiences? And who, in being left out and made invisible, are not?*

--Allan Johnson, sociologist

**PREREQUISITE:** A grade of “C” or better in Writing 121 is **required** before taking this class. If you are not sure that you meet this prerequisite, please speak to me at the end of the first class.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Students who complete this course will be able to:

- Explain how difference is socially constructed.
- Describe how perceived differences, combined with unequal distribution of power across economic, social, and political institutions, result in discrimination.
- Analyze ways in which the interactions of social categories, such as race, ethnicity, social class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and age, are related to difference, power, and discrimination in the United States.

**REQUIRED READING AND CLASS DISCUSSION:** Reading assignments are a major component of this course. It’s simply not possible to do well if you don’t do the readings, which means *taking notes* while reading. There is no physical textbook required, but we will do several readings from *America on Film: Representing Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality at the Movies* (2nd ed.) by Benshoff and Griffin, which you can **access for free online through the LBCC library** (a link is posted on Canvas). A physical copy of this book is also in the reserves section of the library. In addition to the selections from *America on Film*,

there will be several other required online readings. This is a discussion-based course, and your active participation will be expected. Our classroom will be a space to respectfully and productively exchange ideas--some of which you may find controversial and/or uncomfortable--and to evaluate (and reevaluate) your own viewpoints on these important, thought-provoking issues. Note that some of the films we watch in class may contain offensive language, nudity, violence, and/or sexual situations.

**CANVAS:** Important course materials—such as assignment instructions, class agendas, and grades—will be posted on our course site on Canvas. You will receive an email via you LBCC email account at the end of Week 1 with a link to sign up for the Canvas site.

#### **ASSIGNMENTS & ACTIVITIES:**

- ***Reading/Viewing Responses and Quizzes (30% of final grade):*** Written responses to our reading and film selections will take various forms throughout the term, including typed out-of-class analyses, in-class quizzes, and/or online discussion forums. For all out-of-class responses, specific instructions will be posted on Canvas. For all in-class quizzes, you must be present in class to take them. The best way to prepare for these responses is to carefully read, re-read, and take notes that define key terms and summarize important concepts, and be sure to be present in class. All responses will be evaluated on a 10-point scale, which will sometimes be multiplied by 1.5, 2, or 3 depending on the rigor of the assignment:
  - 10-9 = excellent (A level)
  - 8.5-8 = good (B level)
  - 7.5-7 = minimally passing (C level)
  - 6.5 and lower = not passing (D/F level)
- ***Film Noir Genre Analysis Essay (25% of final grade):*** This 4-6 page essay will ask you to analyze specific issues of gender representation in two of our film selections. You will have the option of revising this paper for the chance at a higher grade, as long as the original paper is submitted on time.
- ***Group Presentation (20% of final grade):*** The class will be divided into 6 groups. Each will select a reading for the class, design a short quiz on it for the class, lead a class discussion of it, and prepare supplementary instructional materials and activities that illustrate key ideas from it. Groups will also be required to show a related film clip as part of their presentation.
- ***Final Exam (25% of final grade):*** Our final exam is scheduled for **Tuesday, December 4th**: the exam period is 2:30-4:00pm on Tuesday March 19. The exam will be an in-class essay-based in which you will be asked to connect major course concepts and themes to our final selections.
- ***Extra Credit:*** Everyone has the chance to **earn up to 20 extra points (2%)** by finding and writing a summary of any news article published this term that is related to our course content. There is a discussion forum on Cavas with more specific instructions about this. There may also be occasional film-related events in the community that I may make extra credit opportunities.

**GRADING:** You can earn up to **1000 points** in this course:

ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS	% OF FINAL GRADE
Several Reading Responses/Quizzes	300	30%
Analysis Essay (can be revised once)	250	25%

Group Presentation	200	20%
Final Exam	250	25%
<b>POINT TOTAL</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>

Your final grade will be determined by the following point breakdown:

GRADE	TOTAL POINTS	DESCRIPTION
A	900 points (90% and up)	Passing work that is <u>excellent</u>
B	800 points (80%)	Passing work that is <u>proficient</u>
C	700 points (79.4% to 69.6%)	Passing work that is <u>adequate</u>
D	347 to 298 points (69.4% to 59.6%)	Non-passing work that is <u>below requirements</u>
F	297 and below (59.4% and below)	Non-passing work that is <u>incomplete</u>

#### **COURSE POLICIES AND CAMPUS RESOURCES:**

- **No-Show Policy:** Unless prior arrangements have been made with me, students not attending the first two class sessions will be withdrawn.
- **Attendance Policy:** Missing class means missing valuable instruction time, which means that you give yourself the best chance to do well by attending every class. If you must miss a class, it is your responsibility to contact me promptly. An absence is not an excuse for missing a due date, and in-class graded activities cannot be made up except in cases of documented medical emergency or CFAR accommodations. **Course grade drops one letter grade per absence for 3 or more absences.**
- **Student Printing:** You will be required to turn in printed hard copies of certain assignments. Be aware that LBCC uses a pay-to-print system called GoPrint that charges .10 cents per printed page. If you do not have a GoPrint account, you can sign up for one in any college computer lab. You can find more information at <http://www.linnbenton.edu/computer-resources-and-labs>.
- **Phones in the Classroom:** Silence your phone and put it in your pocket or bag--not in your lap or face down on your desk. Using your phone in class distracts yourself and others, including me. If there is a serious need to have your phone out, please speak to me privately at the start of class.
- **Laptops/Tablets in the Classroom:** I prefer that students do not use these devices in the classroom unless instructed to, but if you'd like to, please talk to me before doing so.
- **Policy on Late Work:** In fairness to all students, late assignments will be penalized. In-class assignments, such as quizzes, cannot be made up. Specific policies for late work will be included with assignment instructions; read them carefully.

- **Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:** Presenting someone else's ideas in writing as if they are your own is plagiarism, and it is a serious academic offense. **Any plagiarized elements in your writing will result in, at minimum, a zero for the assignment and, at maximum, automatic course failure.** If you ever borrow information from an outside source to put in an essay, you must cite it properly. If you're not sure how to do this, please ask me for help before submitting your paper. Once you submit a paper, the policy mentioned above will be enforced.
- **Office Hours:** Feel free to visit me during my office hours (listed at the top of this syllabus) to discuss any questions or concerns you have. It's best to schedule a time in advance, but I won't mind if you stop by unannounced.
- **LBCC Student Email:** Please make sure that you check your student email regularly throughout the term. Should I need to contact you, I will be emailing your student account. You can find information about accessing your LBCC email here: <http://www.linnbenton.edu/roadrunner-mail>
- **The LBCC Writing Center:** The LBCC Writing Center (WH-200) is a fantastic free resource for students. Tutors are available to assist you with all aspects of your writing assignments. The Writing Center also offers online tutoring services as well. Get more information here: <http://www.linnbenton.edu/learning-center/writing-center>
- **The LBCC Library:** The LBCC library is located on the first floor of Willamette Hall. Get more information here: <http://library.linnbenton.edu/home>
- **Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR):** LBCC is committed to inclusiveness and equal access to higher education. If you have approved accommodations through the Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR) and would like to use your accommodations in this class, please talk to me as soon as possible to discuss your needs. If you believe you may need accommodations, but are not yet registered with CFAR, please go to <http://linnbenton.edu/cfar> for steps on how to apply for services or call 541-917-4789.
- **Non-Discrimination Policy:** Everyone in the LBCC community has the right to think, learn, and work together in an environment of respect, tolerance, and goodwill, and we will honor that right in our classroom.
- **Food and Drink in the Classroom:** Drinks are fine in spill proof containers, but please do not eat during class.
- **Our Classroom's "Golden Rule":** To maximize learning by minimizing distractions from it.

**COURSE CALENDAR** (Scheduling changes will only happen with advanced notice)

DATE	TOPICS	WORK DUE BEFORE CLASS
<b>WEEK 1</b> Tue 1/8	Course introduction; Academic study of film; Analysis vs. entertainment; Power of the movies	None
Thur 1/10	<b>Response 1 due</b> , Discuss response papers; Ideology and representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Read:</b> <a href="#">"It's Just a Movie"</a> (links to all online readings also posted on Canvas)</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 2</b> Tue 1/15	<b>Reading quiz 1</b> and discussion History and structure of Hollywood film	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">America on Film Chapter 1</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">America on Film Chapter 2</a></li> </ul>
Thur 1/17	<b>Response 2 due</b> ; Discuss Difference and Stereotypes; Share discussion posts; Take <a href="#">Pew Research Center survey</a> in class; Preview readings for next class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">"Categorizing the Other"</a> (13-23)</li> <li>• <a href="#">"Privilege, Oppression, and Difference"</a> (12-21)</li> <li>• <a href="#">PCC Diversity Definitions</a></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 3</b> Tue 1/22	<b>Response 3 due</b> Discuss Social Construction of Gender; Start film #1 ( <i>Daughters of the Dust</i> , 1991)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">"The Social Construction of Gender"</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">"Sex Shocker!"</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">"Night to his Day"</a></li> </ul>
Thur 1/24	<b>Reading quiz 2</b> Discuss Women in classical Hollywood filmmaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">America on Film Intro to Part IV (446-455)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">America on Film Chapter 10</a></li> <li>• Watch <a href="#">Sex, Censorship, and the Silver Screen: The Early Decades</a> (50 mins)</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 4</b> Tue 1/29	Overview of film noir; Start film #2 ( <i>Mildred Pierce</i> , 1945)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Historical Overview of Film Noir</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Women in Film Noir</a></li> <li>• Watch <a href="#">The Rules of Film Noir</a> (60 mins)</li> </ul>
Thur 1/31	The Male Gaze; Finish film #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">America on Film Chapter 11</a></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 5</b> Tue 2/5	Masculinity in classical Hollywood filmmaking; Start film #3 ( <i>Where the Sidewalk Ends</i> , 1950); <b>Assign Analysis Essay</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">America on Film Chapter 12</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">"The Corpse on Reprieve"</a> (369-379)</li> <li>• Optional: <a href="#">"Jill Soloway on the Female Gaze"</a></li> </ul>
Thur 2/7	Finish film #3; Essay prep (if time)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">"Who's the Man?"</a> (read or listen)</li> </ul>

<b>WEEK 6</b> Tue 2/12	Meet in computer lab (room to be announced); <b>Analysis Essay Due; Assign Article Selection/Summary</b>	None
Thur 2/14	Share articles; <b>Finalize groups and presentation dates</b>	None
<b>WEEK 7</b> Tue 2/19	Gender in American film since the 1960s; The Bechdel Test; Recent research on “the gender gap” in film; Prep time for group presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">America on Film Ch. 13</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">“What’s An Inclusion Rider?”</a> (read or listen)</li> <li>• <a href="#">The Celluloid Ceiling</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">“Why the Bechdel Test Fails Feminism”</a></li> </ul>
Thur 2/21	Prep time for group presentations	None
<b>WEEK 8</b> Tue 2/26	<b>Group Presentations #1 and #2 In-class Quiz;</b>	<b>Reading for Group Presentations: TBD by students</b>
Thur 2/28	<b>Group Presentations #3 &amp; #4 and In-class Quizzes</b>	<b>Reading for Group Presentations: TBD by students</b>
<b>WEEK 9</b> Tue 3/5	<b>Group Presentations #5 #6 and In-class Quiz;</b>	<b>Reading for Group Presentations: TBD by students</b>
Thur 3/7	Abelism and the Future: Start Film #4 ( <i>Gattaca</i> , 1997)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Gene-edited Babies and 21<sup>st</sup> century Ableism</a></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 10</b> Tue 3/12	Finish Film #4	none
Thur 3/14	Study day for the final exam; no class meeting	
<b>WEEK 11</b> Tues 12/4	<b>FINAL EXAM - 2:30-4:00pm</b> on Tuesday March 19 <b>Optional revision of Analysis Essay due</b>	Bring a blank Green Exam Booklet (\$0.35 at the bookstore)