

**MT. DIABLO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
COURSE OF STUDY  
DRAFT**

**COURSE TITLE:** ADVANCED FILM STUDY  
**COURSE NUMBER:** 0844 English/Language Arts  
0845 Visual and Performing Arts  
**DEPARTMENT:** English/Language Arts & Visual and Performing Arts  
**LENGTH OF COURSE:** One Year  
**CREDITS PER SEMESTER:** 5  
**GRADE LEVELS (S):** 11-12  
**REQUIRED OR ELECTIVE:** Elective (E/LA fulfills 1 year of the fine arts graduation requirement and meets the UC “g” requirement; VAPA fulfills 1 year of the fine arts graduation requirement and meets the UC “f” requirement )  
**PREREQUISITES:** Introduction to Film Study, Video Production I, II, or teacher permission

**BOARD OF EDUCATION ADOPTION:**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is designed for students who have a serious interest in cinema as a major art form of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Students will use the language and tools learned in Introduction to Film Study to focus on the work of outstanding directors of the past and present. All of the directors studied have made a significant contribution to the development of film, have a compelling vision and unique style, and have a personal stamp that cuts across films, genres, and decades.

*“In films, the person responsible for the creative aspects of a motion picture is the director. In addition to orchestrating the action in front of the camera and guiding the acting and dialogue, the film director controls camera position and movement, sound, lighting, and all the other ingredients that contribute to the final look of a motion picture... It is the director who has the final word on all aspects of production during filming.” from **The Film Encyclopedia** by Ephraim Katz*

(This course is based on the MDUSD adopted Visual and Performing Arts Standards.)

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**1. MAJOR GOALS**

- 1.1 To explore the work of outstanding directors, past and present
- 1.2 To understand the historical and cultural context in which directors work
- 1.3 To compare and analyze the works of different directors
- 1.4 To develop critical awareness of the visual and aural elements that comprise a director’s unique signature and style

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- 1.5 To understand the influence of filmmakers on one another and on culture
- 1.6 To develop an understanding of the collaboration involved in the filmmaking process.

**2. PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES**

Artistic Perception

- 2.1 Interpret and analyze the visual and aural elements of a director's films, using film vocabulary appropriately.
- 2.2 Interpret and evaluate meanings, themes, and motifs in a director's films.
- 2.3 Identify and explore narrative elements used by directors.
- 2.4 Identify and analyze genre as illustrated by the works of directors

Creative Expression

- 2.5 Recognize the collaborative nature of filmmaking and understand the relationships between director, screenwriter, film editor, cinematographer, actors, and others involved in the filmmaking process.
- 2.6 Create film-related projects

Historical and Cultural Context

- 2.7 Place a director's films in cultural, historical, and social context.

Aesthetic Valuing

- 2.8 Compare the signatures and styles of different directors and explore their influences on one another.
  - 2.8.1 mise-en-scene
  - 2.8.2 editing
  - 2.8.3 lighting
  - 2.8.4 sound
- 2.9 Identify and explore the influence a director's films have on culture
  - 2.9.1 language
  - 2.9.2 behavior

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- 2.9.3 fashion
- 2.9.4 new media

2.11 Critically evaluate directorial choices

Connections, Relations, Applications

2.10 Research career opportunities in the film industry.

### **3. CONTENT COMPONENTS**

3.1 Advanced analysis and interpretation of the artistic elements of a director's work.

3.1.1 Film language literacy

3.1.1.1 technical vocabulary

3.1.1.1.2 shots, angles, lighting effects, framing, composition, camera movements, editing/*montage*, sound, music, and special effects

3.1.1.2 aesthetic vocabulary

3.1.1.2.1 mood

3.1.1.2.2 point of view

3.1.1.2.3 symbolism

3.1.2 Artistic contributions of the filmmaking team

3.1.2.1 production designer

3.1.2.2 screen writer

3.1.2.3 editor

3.1.2.4 costume designer

3.1.2.5 director of photography

3.1.2.6 executive producer

3.2 Motifs and themes

3.2.1 archetypes (i.e., the hero outlaw, the antihero, the innocent, the whistle blower)

3.2.3 themes (i.e., man vs. machine, man vs. nature, man vs. industry, man vs. society, love triumphant, coming of age)

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- 3.3 Advanced analysis and interpretation of the narrative elements of a director's work
  - 3.3.1 flashback
  - 3.3.2 montage
  - 3.3.3 non-linear narrative
  - 3.3.4 subjective vs. objective point of view
- 3.4 Genres (i.e., *film noir*, western, combat, musical, romantic comedy, science fiction, documentary)
- 3.5 Collaboration between the director and others involved in the filmmaking process.
  - 3.5.1 Cinematographer
  - 3.5.2 Film editor
  - 3.5.3 Actors
  - 3.5.4 Scriptwriter
- 3.6 Film-related projects
  - 3.6.1 Director profiles
  - 3.6.2 Independent study project and presentation (See assignment section p-6)
  - 3.6.3 Film journals
  - 3.6.4 Video production
  - 3.6.5 Production simulation
    - 3.6.5.1 Set design and model construction
    - 3.6.5.2 Storyboarding
    - 3.6.5.3 Script writing
    - 3.6.5.4 Costume design
    - 3.6.5.5 Shot list
- 3.7 Historical and cultural influences on film.
  - 3.7.1 Eras (i.e., post WWII, Vietnam, Depression, Hollywood studio system, Cold War, digital age)
  - 3.7.2 Movements (i.e., German Expressionism, Italian Neorealism, New Wave, Surrealism, Western Expansion)
- 3.8 Comparison of directors' signatures and styles  
(Selections can be made from following list, from additional lists, and updated as needed.)
  - 3.8.1 Allen, Woody

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- 3.8.2 Almodovar, Alejandro
- 3.8.3 Altman, Robert
- 3.8.4 Anderson, P.T.
- 3.8.5 Bergman, Ingmar
- 3.8.6 Brooks, Mel
- 3.8.7 Burton, Tim
- 3.8.8 Capra, Frank
- 3.8.9 Casavetes, John
- 3.8.10 Chaplin, Charlie
- 3.8.11 Coen, Ethan and Joel
- 3.8.12 Coppola, Francis and Sofia
- 3.8.13 Crowe, Cameron
- 3.8.14 DeSica, Vittoria
- 3.8.15 Eastwood, Clint
- 3.8.16 Eisenstein, Sergei
- 3.8.17 Fellini, Federico
- 3.8.18 Fleming, Victor
- 3.8.19 Ford, John
- 3.8.20 Forman, Milos
- 3.8.21 Gilliam, Terry
- 3.8.22 Griffith, D.W.
- 3.8.23 Hawks, Howard
- 3.8.24 Hitchcock, Alfred
- 3.8.25 Huston, John
- 3.8.26 Kazan, Elia
- 3.8.27 Keaton, Buster
- 3.8.28 Kubrick, Stanley
- 3.8.29 Kurosawa, Akira
- 3.8.30 Lang, Fritz
- 3.8.31 Lee, Ang
- 3.8.32 Lee, Spike
- 3.8.33 Lupino, Ida
- 3.8.34 Lumet, Sydney
- 3.8.35 Lynch, David
- 3.8.36 Marshall, Penny
- 3.8.37 Miyazai, Hayao
- 3.8.38 Moore, Michael
- 3.8.39 Murnau, F.W.
- 3.8.40 Nichols, Mike
- 3.8.41 Parker, Alan
- 3.8.42 Payne, Alexander
- 3.8.43 Peckinpah, Sam
- 3.8.44 Polanski, Roman
- 3.8.45 Ray, Nicholas
- 3.8.46 Ray, Satyajit

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- 3.8.47 Renoir, Jean
- 3.8.48 Scorsese, Martin
- 3.8.49 Solondz, Todd
- 3.8.50 Spielberg, Steven
- 3.8.51 Stone, Oliver
- 3.8.52 Tarantino, Quentin
- 3.8.53 Truffaut, Francois
- 3.8.54 Von Tier, Lars
- 3.8.55 Welles, Orson
- 3.8.56 Wyler, Wiliam

3.9 Comparison of the work of directors across decades and cultures

- 3.9.1 Influence of one generation of filmmakers on another.
- 3.9.2 Cross-cultural and linguistic influences among directors (i.e., Ford to Kurosawa to Lucas)
- 3.9.3 Director’s influence on language, behavior, fashion, and new media

3.10 Directorial decisions and their evaluation

- 3.10.1 Pre-production process
- 3.10.2 Production process
- 3.10.3 Post-production process

3.11 Careers in filmmaking

- 3.11.1 Special screening fieldtrips
- 3.11.2 Speakers from the industry
- 3.11.3 Biographical studies
- 3.11.4 Job shadowing and internships
- 3.11.5 Investigation of film-related careers

**KEY ASSIGNMENTS**

Assignment Title	VAPA Domain	Process
Director Profiles	Historical and Cultural Context	Students research the life and career of a director, then write a detailed profile of him/her covering the director’s early life, education and training, career stages, influences of other films and filmmakers, influence of the culture and times, etc.
Signature Project	Artistic Perception	Students view several movies by a director and then, as a class, compile a list of 6-10 signatures of that director’s work. Then class is divided into small groups to apply

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		same methods to analyzing a director's different signature styles. (Later in the course, students will individually discern a director's signatures vis-à-vis the key assignments entitled "Director Homage" and "Director Project")
Director Homage	Creative Expression	Students review the production process and review director signatures. Each student chooses a director, identifies ten signatures of that director, and produces a 5 minute film that pays homage to that director. As an alternative, students review the production process, and review director signatures. Each student chooses a director, identifies 6-10 signatures of that director, and produces a storyboard, script, shooting schedule, and editing guidelines for a 10 minute film.
Director Project	Aesthetic Valuing	Students choose a director to study on their own for a semester (one NOT being studied as a class). They view at least 4 movies by the director, research his life and career, write a detailed 6-7 page paper, and do a presentation to the class, including clips from the 4 movies and the signatures they have found in that director's work.
Film Journals	Artistic Perception; Aesthetic Valuing	Students keep an ongoing response to, and analysis of, each film watched in class. They respond to the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Content analysis</li> <li>2) Character analysis</li> <li>3) mis-en-scene</li> <li>4) Editing</li> <li>5) Sound</li> <li>6) Plot</li> </ol> This journal is turned in at the end of each director unit. The suggested length is 2-3 pages per film.

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**4. TIME ESTIMATES**

The five components are interwoven into the total instructional program throughout the course. The percentage of time spent on each component is an estimate and may vary from day to day and over the course of the year.

- 4.1 Artistic Perception – 30%
- 4.2 Creative Expression – 15%
- 4.3 Cultural/Historical Context – 15%
- 4.4 Aesthetic Valuing – 30%
- 4.5 Connections, Relations, Applications – 10%

**INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

**Recommended for teachers:**

*American Cinema*, John Belton, Glencoe-McGraw Hill, ISBN: 0-07-004466-X

*Best 1,000 Movies Ever Made*, Edited by Peter Nichols, Three Rivers Press, ISBN: 0-8129-3001-0

*Screenplay*, Syd Field, Del Publishing, ISBN: 0440576474

*The Art of Watching Films*, Joseph Boggs and Dennis Petrie, Glencoe-McGraw Hill, ISBN: 0-07-255626-9

- 5.1 Media technology
  - 5.1.1 VCRs
  - 5.1.2 TVs
  - 5.1.3 DVDs
  - 5.1.4 Cameras
  - 5.1.5 Other viewing and editing technology

**Recommended for students:**

- 5.2 District-adopted textbooks
- 5.2 Supplementary materials



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- 5.3 Reference materials, magazines, newspapers, screenplays
- 5.4 Internet
- 5.5 Library of films
- 5.6 Artifacts and realia

**6. EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS:**

Performance-based and Ongoing

Evaluation will be based primarily on class discussion and written assignments. Students will demonstrate comprehension and competence primarily through the following:

- 6.1 Classroom participation
- 6.2 Writing assignments (e.g., journals, notes, critiques, essays, et al)
- 6.3 Quizzes and tests
- 6.4 Projects and presentations

**RESOURCES**

[www.filmsite.org/directors](http://www.filmsite.org/directors) and [www.filmsite.org/moredirectors](http://www.filmsite.org/moredirectors)

DVDs: AFI series on directors

A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese Through American Movies

The Cutting Edge: the Magic of Movie Editing

Visions of Light: The Art of Cinematography

Books: textbooks already adopted for Introduction to Film Study:

*Understanding Movies* by Louis Giannetti

*Scorsese on Scorsese* (and other titles in this director series, published by Faber and Faber)

**Committee Members:**

Grant Bergland	Teacher	CVHS
Joan Lopate	Teacher	CPHS
Dan Reynolds	Teacher	MDHS
Carolyn Bryant	Teacher	NHS
Jan Bergamini	Teacher	(retired)
Marlowe Boyd	Teacher	(retired)

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