COURSE OUTLINE

English 222 Motion Picture Film Analysis

I. <u>Catalog Statement</u>

English 222 is a course designed to give students a firm understanding of feature film structure. The course also teaches students how to break down and analyze a wide variety of films with an emphasis on American film structure. The class consists of a detailed study of different film genres, selected to present diverse narrative techniques, story patterns, styles, and tones. Students will learn structural elements, mechanics, and terminology, applying that knowledge through analytical writing assignments that break down the essential structural components within feature films.

Total Lecture Units: 3.0 **Total Course Units: 3.0**

Total Lecture Hours: 48.0

Total Faculty Contract Hours: 48.0

Prerequisite: Eligibility for ENGL 101.

Recommended preparation: ENGL112 or equivalent.

II. Course Entry Expectations

Skills Level Ranges: Reading 6; Writing 6; Listening/Speaking 6; Math 1

Prior to enrolling in this course, the student should be able to:

- 1. analyze short essays to identify thesis, topic, transitional, developmental and concluding sentences;
- 2. evaluate selected prose works dealing with important contemporary issues;
- 3. organize and write thesis-based essays which address the topic as directed by a thesis statement and show a basic understanding of essay organization through an introduction, body, and conclusion;
- 4. illustrate awareness of critical thinking: i.e., through thorough, thoughtful, question-asking and judgment-forming, separation of elements into their parts, inference to draw conclusions, and synthesis of elements to link them into a new whole;

- 5. summarize, analyze, and synthesize information, express and apply standards for judgment, compare and contrast, and evaluate evidence in order to form and state reasoned opinions;
- 6. show ability to provide detailed examples, facts, logical explanations, library research, and other appropriate evidence to support claims;
- 7. demonstrate a command of grammar, diction, syntax, and mechanics sufficient for college level work as specified by the English 120 rubric;
- 8. understand basic elements of feature film three act structure.

III. Course Exit Standards

Upon successful completion of required coursework, the student will be able to:

- 1. analyze, synthesize, and evaluate feature films in three-act structure;
- 2. identify and break down the 5 major plot points of a feature film;
- 3. identify and break down the essential 8 sequences within a feature film;
- 4. identify 8 sequence exceptions (particular genres can be structured around 9 sequences, sometimes 10 sequences);
- 5. illustrate major elements of story: world/location, protagonist, objective, situation, obstacles, genre, dramatic premise, main plot, sub-plots;
- 6. dissect character essentials: introductions, identification, likability, sympathy and empathy, arcs (growth vs. change).

IV. Course Content

Total Faculty Contact Hours = 48

A. Film Genres 9 hours

- 1. Film genre identification
- 2. Genre sub-categories
- 3. Structure elements specific to particular genres
- B. Screenplay/Motion Picture Terminology

9 hours

- 1. Planting and payoff
- 2. Style and rhythm
- 3. Tension and conflict
- 4. Preparation and aftermath
- 5. Mystery and suspense
- 6. Revelation and recognition
- 7. Twists
- 8. Future and advertising
- C. Viewing, Reading, Analysis, and Discussion of Films/Scripts 30 hours
 - 1. Understanding three-act structure
 - 2. Identification of the five major plot points
 - 3. Analysis of eight-sequence design

- 4. Illustration of character arcs
- 5. Exploration of themes
- 6. Examination of character introductions

V. Methods of Instruction

The following instructional methodologies may be used in the course:

- 1. classroom lecture and discussion;
- 2. evaluation and analysis of scenes, plot points, sequences and three act structure:
- 3. demonstration and application of specific screenplay terminology;
- 4. analysis of feature length scripts and films;
- 5. collaborative learning, including in-class writing workshop sessions that provide critical evaluation and analytical feedback of student work;
- 6. student presentations;
- 7. guest speakers;
- 8. educational technologies, including word processing, internet, and electronic presentation.

VI. Out of Class Assignments

The following out of class assignments may be used in this course:

- 1. essay assignments (e.g. an analytical essay in which students demonstrate their ability to identify, analyze, and evaluate feature film structure);
- 2. genre identification (e.g. a writing assignment in which students identify different genres as well as audience expectations specific to those genres);
- 3. individual presentations (e.g. an individual project including a written outline and presentation dissecting the essential 5 plot points of a feature film);
- 4. group presentations (e.g. a group project including a written outline and presentation illustrating 3 Act Structure and 8 sequence design of a feature film).

VII. Methods of Evaluation

The following methods of evaluation may be used in this course:

- 1. quizzes;
- 2. midterm examinations;
- 3. instructor and peer evaluation of student work;
- 4. peer review or critique of student work;
- 5. small group case study analyses followed by class presentations of analyses;
- 6. class presentations of group projects;
- 7. instructor evaluation of individual assignments presented to class;
- 8. practical examination (e.g., in-class viewing of a feature film followed by inclass examination of its structural elements);
- 9. final examination.

VIII. Textbooks

Field, S. Screenplay, The Foundations of Screenwriting. 5th Edition.
 Delta, 2005. Print.
 14th Grade Reading Level . ISBN 0385339038

McKee, Robert. Story: Substance, Structure, Style and The Principles of Screenwriting. Methuen Publishing, 2005. Print. 14th Grade Reading Level. ISBN 0413715604

Newmarket Press Shooting Script Series. Print.

Selected screenplays. (e.g. Little Miss Sunshine, Sideways, Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind, Magnolia, Traffic, Erin Brockovich, American Beauty, The Shawshank Redemption, among others).

Snyder, Blake. *Save the Cat! The Last Book on Screenwriting You'll Ever Need.*Michael Weise Productions, 2005. Print.

14th Grade Reading Level. ISBN 1932907009.

The Script Lab, Online Screenwriting Resource (www.thescriptlab.com)

Truby, John. *The Anatomy of Story: 22 Steps to Becoming a Master Storyteller*. Faber & Faber, 2008. Print. 14th Grade Reading Level ISBN 0865479518.

Vogler, Christopher. *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers*, 3rd Edition. Studio City: Michael Wiese Productions, 2007. Print. 14th Grade Reading Level. ISBN: 978-1-932907-36-0.

*NOTE: The textbooks listed above are the most recent texts in this field of study.

IX. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion, the student will be able to:

- 1. Critically view films and read screenplays from a variety of genres in order to identify, examine, and evaluate feature film structure fundamentals.
- 2. Write critical essays and/or answer test questions based on reading and viewing of specific feature film(s) and/or film clip(s) that analyze elements of three act structure, major plot points, and sequence design.

Justification for Need

English 222 is a critical thinking and analytical writing course. It is also part of the expanding Screenwriting progression within the English Division that

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complements both English 112 (Screenwriting) and English 212 (Advanced Screenwriting). English 222 is a course that will articulate to other colleges and Universities. In addition, English 222 will become an elective option course for an Associate in Arts for Transfer (AA-T) degree in English and will be included as an elective option in the English AA degree.