CMST 2012 Syllabus
Introduction to Film (Fall 2013)

Course Description
"Nature and function of film as a mode of communication; film theory and criticism; historical and technological development of the film industry; selected films screened and studied" (LSU General Catalog). In order to gain a deeper understanding of how films communicate, you will also learn and practice basic digital video making skills.

Goals
1) Gain a deeper understanding of how moving images communicate meaning.
2) Gain an understanding of the various languages of film and the vocabulary used in filmmaking and film studies.
3) Develop an appreciative and critical capacity for watching films and analyzing how they communicate.
4) Develop a functional understanding of the technological elements necessary to create digital videos.
5) Increase your confidence and experience working with digital video technology.
6) Develop your ability to communicate with moving images and sound through course projects.

Expectations, Participation, and Attendance
This is a 4-credit course that includes a lab. Your enthusiastic attendance at all meetings (including Tuesday evening screenings) is expected. In addition, you will be working in groups on several of the graded projects for this course. You should anticipate that a considerable amount of outside labor (i.e. developing, planning, shooting, and editing the major group projects) will be a part of your workload for this course. Failure to commit fully to these course components assures a performance that is lackluster at best.

Class: Tues/Thurs 12-1:20pm (Coates 130)
Lab: Tues. 6-8:50pm (Coates 151)
Instructor: Lyndsay Michalik
E-Mail: lmicha4@lsu.edu
Office: 318 Coates Hall
Office Hours: Tues. 1:30-2:30pm,
Thurs. 11am-12pm and by appointment

Textbooks and Materials
- You will also need several mini-DV tapes and DVD-Rs.
- Additional articles and assignments will be posted to Moodle.

Moodle & Email
Please check Moodle for announcements and assignments. Your syllabus, schedule, readings, assignments, and other information will be posted here. It is your responsibility to access this information. Also, please check your posted grades throughout the semester and let me know immediately if there has been an error in your posted grade. You must notify me of the error within two weeks of the grade being posted to Moodle. Otherwise, the grade in question will remain as it appears.

If you email me with a question about an assignment or any other question concerning the class, please allow at least 24 hours for a reply. If you email me the night before an assignment is due, there is no guarantee I will read and respond to your email before class. There is also no guarantee that I will check my email over the weekend. If you have an assignment due on Tuesday, please do not wait until Monday night to email me with questions.
Class Decorum
Feel free to roll out of bed and come to class as you are, but please don’t be late; it slows us all down, and is especially disruptive during evening movie screenings. You will be expected to come to class prepared, and constructively engage in class discussions. Controversial topics, images, and language are often a part of films and will be a part of this classroom experience. If you are concerned that the scheduled films may somehow interfere with your ability to learn, please contact me to discuss this in person.

Late Work/Missed Exams
In accordance with university policy, make-up exams will only be granted with a university excused absence and must be scheduled as close to the regular exam date as possible. Make-ups will be different from the regular exam. Late work, in general, will affect your group’s ability to move forward on a given project.

Major Assignments
Projects: You’ll work in teams to create three short video projects. Detailed descriptions and parameters for each assignment will be posted to Moodle and discussed in class. Each project has a number of steps, such as the creation of storyboards and shot logs. These materials and steps are graded, along with the final video your group creates.

Show and Tell & Screening Responses: Once during the semester you’ll be asked to find a short clip that illustrates a particular concept, and prepare a brief (2-3 minute) discussion, to help the class make connections to course material. This requirement is split into 3 days over the course of the semester—you will only be required to present once. During each Tues. night screening, you will also write a short and immediate response to the film in question. These can’t be made up; you must be present at the screenings to complete these assignments. No exceptions.

Know Thine Honor Code, particularly as it relates to plagiarism. Plagiarizing a written assignment or cheating on a quiz or exam is grounds for failing the assignment and/or the course. Just don’t do it. Consult your student handbook for guidelines about academic misconduct.

The end of semester temporary empathy lapse
The last two weeks of the semester are stressful for all of us. Please keep in mind that I am significantly more able to help you raise your grade early in the semester than I am later on. A lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on mine.

The Americans with Disabilities Act and The Rehabilitation Act of 1973
If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a Coordinator in the Office for Disability Affairs so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the necessary provisions.

Quizzes and Exams:
You are expected to keep up with the assigned readings, and be prepared for class discussions and projects. Assigned readings should be complete before class; you should come prepared to discuss the readings or ask specific questions. There are six reading quizzes designed to assess your attention to this requirement. When calculating your final grade, I will drop your lowest quiz grade. Quizzes will be given at the beginning of the class period, and can only be made up with a university excused absence, documentation of which should include the reason for your absence, date, and time. This course also includes a midterm and a final examination.
Evaluation

**NOTE:** Please check Moodle for your recorded grades throughout the semester and notify me immediately of any errors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cut-out storyboard</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project #1</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Project #2</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project #3</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading quizzes (30 points each)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening responses (10 points each)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show and tell clip &amp; discussion</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>100</td>
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**Total Possible Points** 1000 points

This class is split up into 1000 points, and uses a standard A – F grading scale:

- **A** = 900 - 1000
- **B** = 800 - 899
- **C** = 700 - 799
- **D** = 600 - 699
- **F** = 0 - 599

"A" work indicates outstanding achievement, above and beyond the requirements of the assignment. This reflects near-perfect technical execution, creativity that exceeds expectations, and excellent contributions to class discussions.

"B" work indicates achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet the requirements of the assignment.

"C" work meets (but does not exceed) the requirements of the assignment in every way.

"D" work is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet the requirements of the assignment.

"F" work fails to meet the basic parameters of the assignment.