

ZERO-DAY ACTIVITIES

Each week, you will get a list of things to your gmail address (and posted to OpenLab) that you must do that week to maintain attendance in the course and get everything out of it that you signed up for.

Introduction

We are holding a class discussion on Thursday, August 25th from 6:00 to 8:30. p.m. During this time, we will review the syllabus, talk about the organization and work of the class. You do not need to attend, but it will be helpful. We will be watching a short film, testing our technology, answering your questions, and other first-day things. These meetings will be recorded and hosted in the Course Documents folder. I will hold office hours immediately afterwards for those of you with additional questions.

Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/99232791355?pwd=aENZU2ZzaIR1NHhnMkY0bno1MTlKZz09>
Meeting ID: 992 3279 1355
Passcode: 361627

Day 0: Email Your Professor, Yo (*Due: Now*)

Email me at plcorb@gmail.com and let me know what your gmail address is. You are also encouraged to join our Discord server, <https://discord.gg/C72Pwsr>. You can always ping me there.

Day 0: Introductions (*Due: Now*)

Join our class OpenLab at <https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/eng-2400-ol50-films-from-literature-fall-2020/>. Then go to the Introductions post and tell us a little bit about who you are why you are here (150 words).

Week 1: Forms to Fill Out (50 pts.; *Due 8/28-9/3*)

The following Google Forms are your first assignments for your ENG 2400 course. Start the semester off right and be sure to complete them in a timely manner and following all directions. Your grade for this first assignment will depend on completion so be sure to fill out all directions and provide substantive answers. Incomplete responses get incomplete credit.

Information Sheet (5 pts., *Due 8/28*): <https://forms.gle/cBNasw1bThjsD5nRA>

Self-Evaluation (5 pts., *Due 8/28*): <https://forms.gle/hjDX5g3KWxh3zfvX8>

10 Paragraphs (40 pts., *Due 9/3*): <https://forms.gle/Yeu9zeMdXGjZD8ER8>

Week 1: Prepare, Watch, and Write About Adaptation (dir. Spike Jonze) (35 pts., Due 9/3)

- 1) Go to the course documents folder on Drive and read "Literature versus Literacy" (Week 1). You should read it all, but you don't need to understand it completely. It's pretty dense, but it discusses the difference between film and literature, and gives us a way to talk about adaptations of stories that you will need to understand where this course will be headed intellectually. Take some notes on ideas that stick out to you. Let's see how much you can get out of this work. We will be discussing it in class, but don't skip this part of the homework—you will have a hard time understanding what we are doing if you do.
- 2) Read the beginning of the book, *The Orchid Thief*, by Susan Orleans. Pages 3-17 are available on Google Books [here](#). No need to take notes on this one. Just read it as if you were beginning a new story. Notice how the author tells the story. Look at how the characters and the action of the story is portrayed. This is necessary background to the film we will spend most of our time discussing.
- 3) Rent and watch our first film, "Adaptation" (see link [here](#) for Amazon Prime rental). *Adaptation*, written by Charlie Kaufman, directed by Spike Jonze, and starring Nicolas Cage is based on "The Orchid Thief." Please watch it on as big of a screen as possible. A high definition TV is best. A desktop monitor will also do well. If you watch films on your phone or tablet, you typically miss a significant amount of cinematic material. Those details count in a film class so watching on your phone or tablet should be your last option. Take notes on the film as you watch it. What stands out to you? What do you like the most, or don't understand? What questions do you have? What can you say about this film?
- 4) Using MLA formatting ([link here](#)), write your first film journal entry about *Adaptation*. What do you write about? Almost anything you want. I don't need a plot synopsis or re-telling of the movie because I know it well. Instead, why not try to make some sense of it through ideas from the "Literature or Literacy" reading. Or compare its style to the beginning of the book by Susan Orleans. Or, go in a different direction and compare it to our second film "The Disaster Artist," directed by James Franco, which is also a (fundamentally different) adaptation. Or, break away in completely your own direction and write about the film as a work of art, as a non-linear story, as a star vehicle of enormous proportions, as a poke in the eye of traditional Hollywood, or whatever else you want to do. My only requirement is that you attempt to make it insightful, which requires preparation and perhaps a bit of research, and it should be more than 250 words. Upload your film journal as a MS Word .doc(x) file to your individual Drive folder. You can name the file "Film Journal Entry - Adaptation." Don't worry about perfect formatting or writing—focus on the quality of your ideas.

Week 1: Watch and Write About "The Disaster Artist" (dir. James Franco) (35 pts., Due 9/3; optional)

- 1) Watch James Franco discuss the movie with Jimmy Fallon (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQWpA-9kmjQ>).
- 2) Watch the film "The Disaster Artist," dir. by James Franco, which is an adaptation of the "Citizen Kane of Bad Movies," "The Room," by Tommy Wiseau. It is currently on Netflix. You are not required to watch or do a film journal entry for this film, but if you do, you will get up to 35 pts. extra credit for your efforts.