

# ENGL 28600-001 DIS: The Movies



## Course Information

ENGL 28600-001 DIS (CRN 35849) is a three-credit asynchronous course. This course will take place online June 10–August 2, 2024, and will be facilitated through its Brightspace course site. All times associated with this course (student hours, due dates, etc.) refer to Eastern Daylight Time (EDT).

You can access our course calendar, which includes due dates for all assignments, at the end of this syllabus and through weekly modules posted to Brightspace.

## Instructor Information

Name: Alex Anderson (Students are welcome to address me as Alex.)

Email: [ande1204@purdue.edu](mailto:ande1204@purdue.edu)

Student Hours: Tuesdays, 10:00–11:30 a.m. over [Zoom](#) (meeting room linked).

## Course Description

ENGL 28600: The Movies offers a comprehensive introduction to the aesthetic and cultural histories of movies. In this course, students will learn how films are constructed, how they represent and challenge cultural and aesthetic values, and how they are produced and distributed.

This iteration of The Movies has been organized around the theme “Other Worlds.” We will explore how six narrative films transport viewers to distant, foreign, or otherwise unusual spaces. These films challenge conceptions of home, family, and safety and prompt us to pay closer attention to our surroundings. In exploring these ideas, we will also examine the co-expressibility of film as a medium by analyzing how images and sounds work together to create a movie. To accomplish these goals, this course highlights a selection of foundational filmic techniques, including cinematography, editing, mise-en-scène, acting, and sound. Using this knowledge, we will consider what narratives these films attempt to convey and how those narratives reveal new insights about the world(s) that produced them.

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### **Learning Outcomes**

- Define key terms related to the film medium and deploy those terms in analysis of a film’s formal construction and cultural context
  - Identify the key elements of film’s audiovisual format in comparison to other mediums
  - Employ close reading and analysis to explain how a film’s formal elements influence its narrative
  - Employ close reading and analysis to explain how a film responds to and/or articulates social and cultural concerns
  - Compare and contrast films based on their similar or different formal and generic elements and cultural contexts
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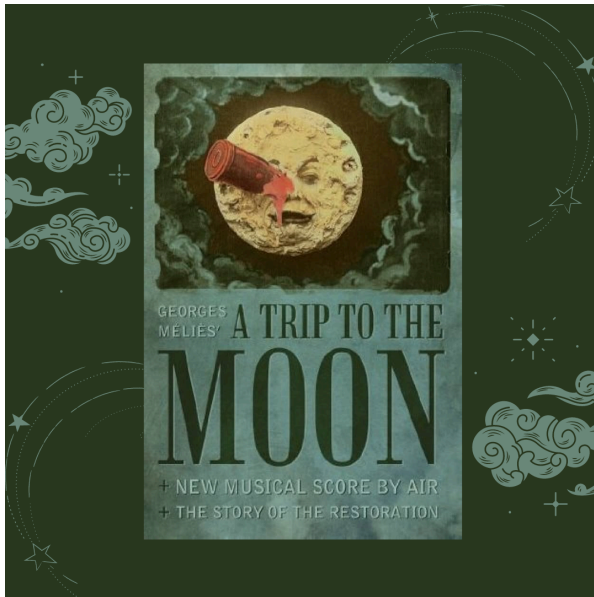
### **Required Texts & Materials**

#### **Texts**

Below you will find a list of the films we will watch this semester including their Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) rating and where they are available to stream. Three of these films are available on Kanopy, a streaming service that is free for Purdue students. You can log into your Kanopy account [here](#).

The other films will need to be purchased on streaming services. I recommend purchasing these films, as opposed to renting them, so that you can access them at any time throughout the semester. You will need consistent access when you write

about these films and should include timestamps and other details from specific scenes.



### **A Trip to the Moon (1902)**

Rated TV-G

Available on [Kanopy](#)



### **The Wizard of Oz (1939)**

Rated PG for some frightening moments.

Available on Max, Prime, Apple TV, and YouTube.



### **Pan's Labyrinth (2006)**

Rated R for graphic violence and some language.

Available on Prime, YouTube, and Apple TV

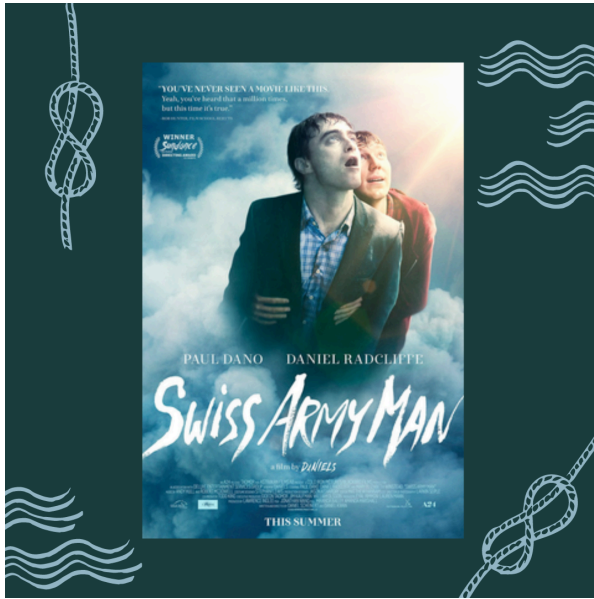


### **Black Panther (2018)**

Rated PG-13 for prolonged sequences of action violence, and a brief rude gesture

Available on Disney+, Prime, Hulu, and Apple TV





### Swiss Army Man (2016)

Rated R for language and sexual material

Available on [Kanopy](#)



### Everything Everywhere All at Once (2022)

Rated R for some violence, sexual material and language

Available on [Kanopy](#)

**A note about content warnings:** Because film is often inspired by or intended to portray real or realistic people, places, or situations, these films contain some themes, scenes, and ideas that may be upsetting to viewers. If you are concerned about the contents of these texts and would appreciate knowing about them before reading, feel free to seek content warnings through sites such as [The International Movie Database](#) (IMDB), [Does the Dog Die](#), or [Trigger Warning Database](#). Be advised that these websites may contain spoilers.

Additional materials, including film trailers and reviews, information about historical and cultural contexts, and filmic techniques will be available through Brightspace.

### **Technology**

- A high-speed internet connection, which you will access daily for course communication through email and Brightspace access
  - A laptop or desktop computer with Windows Vista or higher, or Mac OS 10.6 Snow Leopard or higher
  - A webcam with microphone or working smartphone with camera, for video discussion posts and virtual student hours
  - A program that can open PDFs (such as Acrobat or Preview)
  - Microsoft Office, Apple's Office suite, or open source equivalents (Save documents in .doc, .docx, or .pdf formats—no .pages files, please!)
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### **Course Expectations**

This course will be intensive and fast-paced, and you will need strong time management skills to succeed. Plan to commit several hours per week to viewing the assigned films, reading course materials, completing quizzes and discussion boards, and working on our two major projects.

**Do not let yourself fall behind on course material; it is very difficult to catch up.** I recommend that you maintain a calendar and to-do list for the class, schedule time each week to complete assignments and projects, and maintain a digital file management system like Box or Drive to organize your course materials.

### **Brightspace Etiquette**

Online courses provide an excellent opportunity for students to freely share ideas with each other. Many students who are uncomfortable speaking up in a traditional face-to-face classroom find that they prefer the online experience; however, sometimes this sense of freedom can be abused and lead to rudeness or disrespect in digital interactions. Because online courses afford us a relative amount of anonymity, this obscurity can sometimes embolden us to write things that we would not say to someone in person.

As Purdue students, you are expected to follow the university's [Code of Student Conduct](#), which includes respecting your classmates and their opinions.

**If you engage disrespectfully with your classmates or your instructor, you will receive a written warning via email. If the behavior continues, it will result in a 20% reduction to your final course grade.** It is always important to be concise, informative, and polite when communicating with your colleagues and your instructors, and, because we will be learning in digital spaces, it is especially important to be cognizant of your purpose, tone, and language.

### **Email Etiquette**

Most of your communication with me and your classmates will happen via email, on Brightspace, or during student hours. Throughout these interactions, you should approach me and your peers with specificity, respect, and kindness.

I am reachable via email Monday–Friday from 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Emails sent outside of these hours may not be answered until the next business day. I am usually quick to respond to emails, but, during busy points in the semester, it may take me up to 24 hours to respond. Please plan accordingly and refrain from sending last-minute emails regarding deadlines or project requirements.

Additionally, please note that the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA) prohibits me from discussing students' grades via email. Grades will be available in Brightspace's Gradebook throughout the semester, but, if you want to discuss your grade, please visit me during Student Hours.

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### **Assignments & Grading**

More detailed guidelines (including assignment sheets and assessment information) for these assignments are available on Brightspace. If you would like to discuss any of these assignments, I encourage you to email me or stop by Student Hours before their respective due dates.

**Quizzes (25%):** Weekly quizzes ensure students are keeping up with weekly work, including watching the assigned films, viewing instructor videos, and completing any supplementary readings. Students will have one attempt to complete these quizzes on Brightspace. Screening quizzes will typically be due Mondays by 11:59 p.m.; course content quizzes will typically be due Wednesdays by 11:59 p.m.

**Discussion Board Posts (20%):** Throughout our course, students will submit five discussion board posts (~300–500 words) and eight peer responses (~150 words).

These posts will prompt you to respond to the week's course content, usually through analytical or reflective writing. Rest assured these posts are not busy work; rather, they have been designed to prepare students for the major projects. Initial posts will typically be due Wednesdays by 11:59 p.m.; peer responses will typically be due Fridays by 11:59 p.m.

### **Comparative Analysis Essay (25%)**

- **Final draft (90% of 25%):** For the first major assignment, students will select a scene from two of the films we have watched during Weeks 1–4 (*A Trip to the Moon*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Pan's Labyrinth*, or *Black Panther*) and compare specific storytelling and/or filmic techniques incorporated in those two scenes.
- **Rough draft (10% of 25%):** Essay topics will be approved by the instructor and workshopped through peer review facilitated through discussion boards.

### **Pitch Deck (30%)**

- **Final draft (90% of 30%):** In lieu of a final exam, students will create what the film industry refers to as a pitch deck. This assignment will showcase your creativity and filmmaking prowess by pitching an original film that engages with our course's theme of "Other Worlds."
- **Rough draft (10% of 25%):** Film pitches will be workshopped through peer review facilitated through discussion boards.

### **Late Work**

As someone who juggled many different responsibilities throughout college, I realize that sometimes life interferes with due dates. Therefore, I am open to granting one 24-hour extension on Project 1 or 2. If you would like to request an extension, please reach out to me at least 24 hours before the due date.

Daily assignments (such as quizzes and discussion boards) that are submitted any time after 11:59 p.m. on their respective due dates will be subject to a 10% penalty per day.

### **Grading Scale**

Grades for this class will be determined according to the scale below. Quantitative scores and qualitative feedback will be submitted to Brightspace's gradebook within seven business days of an assignment's submission. Please note that assignments and final grades will not be graded on a curve.

Percentage	Letter Grade
100–97 = A+	4.0 = A
96–94 = A	
93–90 = A–	3.7 = A–
89–87 = B+	3.3 = B+
86–84 = B	3.0 = B
83–80 = B–	2.7 = B–
79–77 = C+	2.3 = C+
76–74 = C	2.0 = C
73–70 = C–	1.7 = C–
69–67 = D+	1.3 = D+
66–64 = D	1.0 = D
63–60 = D–	0.7 = D–
59–00 = F	0.0 = F

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## Course Policies

You can find a thorough list of student resources [here](#). (These resources are also available through Brightspace.) I encourage you to be aware of and utilize these resources as you need. If you have questions regarding these resources or feel you have a need that is not being met by any of those available, feel free to reach out to me or to your academic advisor. If I do not know the answer to your question(s), I will do my best to put you in contact with someone who does.

To ensure your success in this course, please keep the following policies in mind:

### Statement on Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is unacceptable. “Dishonesty” here is a capacious signifier for acts including but not limited to: submitting someone else’s work as yours; using words, phrases, or sentences from the work of others; and using materials written by others after making slight changes (paraphrasing).

**Additionally, because this class has been designed to develop students’ critical thinking skills and inspire creativity, using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to generate ideas or compose essays is considered an instance of academic dishonesty.**

AI-generated essays often lack the kind of specific, evidence-based analysis that is required in this class, not to mention their tendency to fabricate sources. Don’t settle for a lackluster AI-generated essay; rather, take pride in your own work.



Any amount of plagiarism, even a short phrase that you've copied from a webpage without attribution, will result in an automatic zero on the assignment and may be reported to the Dean of Students. Please note that a 0% is far more damaging than an honestly earned F (up to 60%). I am available for questions if you have concerns about academic dis/honesty.

### **Statement on Disability**

Purdue requires that students who are eligible for academic accommodations due to a disability must be registered with the DRC before any accommodations may be provided. Please contact me ASAP if you are having trouble securing accommodations or if you have needs you would like to discuss. To be clear: I will honor accommodations dictated by the DRC and will ensure this class is hospitable to all students.

### **Statement of Emergency Preparedness**

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, assignments, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to change due to circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Should such an event occur, I'll be in touch with necessary changes.

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### **Course Schedule**

Below, you will find our course schedule organized by weeks as well as due dates for assignments.

More information about these assignments is available on Brightspace. All assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. EDT.

#### *Week 1: June 10–14*

Monday, 6/10:

- Complete introductory activities listed in the “Start Here” module on Brightspace.
- Read the “Context for A Trip to the Moon” submodule.

Tuesday, 6/11:

- Watch the “Welcome” and “Keys to Success” instructor videos.

- A note regarding instructor videos: All instructor videos are available on Brightspace and on my YouTube channel [Alex M. Anderson @ Purdue](#). These short videos introduce students to our course's key concepts. You will typically be assigned three instructor videos per week and will be tested over them (as well as any other materials assigned that week) in weekly content quizzes.
- Watch *A Trip to the Moon* (runtime 16 min.; available for free on [Kanopy](#)) to prepare for Wednesday's discussion post and screening quiz.

Wednesday, 6/12:

- Submit initial post to Discussion Board 1: Introductions.
- Complete *A Trip to the Moon* Quiz.
  - A note regarding screening quizzes: To ensure that students are watching assigned films carefully, you will complete short comprehension quizzes about each movie. These quizzes will not be difficult if you have watched the film, but the questions are specific enough that you probably will not be able to Google the answers.

Friday, 6/14:

- Submit two peer responses to Discussion Board 1: Introductions.
- Complete Syllabus Quiz.
- Complete Week 1 Content Quiz.

Week 2: June 17–21

Monday, 6/17:

- Complete *The Wizard of Oz* Quiz (runtime 1 hr 42 min.; film is available on Max, Prime, Apple TV, and YouTube).
- Read the “Context for *The Wizard of Oz*” submodule.

Tuesday, 6/18:

- Watch the “What Is a Movie?,” “Reading Film,” and “Project 1 Introduction” instructor videos.
- Read the assignment sheet and rubric for Project 1: Comparative Analysis Essay.

Wednesday, 6/19:

- Complete Week 2 Content Quiz.
- Submit initial post to Discussion Board 2: Reading Film.

Friday, 6/21:

- Submit two peer responses to Discussion Board 2.

Week 3: June 24–28

Monday, 6/24:

- Complete *Pan's Labyrinth* Quiz (runtime 1 hr 58 min.; film is available on Prime, YouTube, and Apple TV).
- Read the “Context for *Pan's Labyrinth*” submodule.

Tuesday, 6/25:

- Watch the “PIE+T,” “Narrative,” and “Cinematography” instructor videos.

Wednesday, 6/26:

- Submit initial response to Discussion Board 3: Narrative and Cinematography.
- Complete Week 3 Content Quiz.

Friday, 6/28:

- Submit two peer responses to Discussion Board 3.

Week 4: July 1–5

Monday, 7/1:

- Complete *Black Panther* Quiz (runtime 2 hr 15 min.; film is available on Disney+, Prime, Hulu, and Apple TV).
- Read the “Context for *Black Panther*” submodule.

Tuesday, 7/2:

- Watch the “Mise-en-scène” and “Acting” instructor videos.

Wednesday, 7/3:

- Complete Week 4 Content Quiz.
- Submit Film Analysis Essay rough draft to “Project 1 Rough Drafts and Peer Review” discussion board.

Friday, 7/5:

- Submit peer review feedback to assigned partners via “Project 1 Rough Drafts and Peer Review” discussion board.

Week 5: July 8–12

Tuesday, 7/9:

- Watch the “Dialogue and Chemistry” and “Sound” instructor videos.

Wednesday, 7/10:

- Complete the Week 5 Content Quiz.

Friday, 7/12:

- Submit Film Analysis Essay final draft.

Week 6: July 15–19

Monday, 7/15:

- Complete *Swiss Army Man* Quiz (runtime 1 hr 37 min.; film is available for free on [Kanopy](#)).
- Read the “Context for *Swiss Army Man*” submodule.

Tuesday, 7/16:

- Watch the “Project 2 Introduction” and “Advertising” instructor videos.
- Read the assignment sheet and rubric for Project 2: Pitch Deck.

Wednesday, 7/17:

- Complete the Week 6 Content Quiz.
- Submit initial post to Discussion Board 4: Movie Poster Analysis.

Friday, 7/19:

- Submit two peer responses to Discussion Board 4.

Week 7: July 22–26

Monday, 7/22:

- Complete *Everything Everywhere All at Once* Quiz (runtime 2 hr 19 min; film is available for free on [Kanopy](#)).
- Read the “Context for *Everything Everywhere All at Once*” submodule.

Tuesday, 7/23:

- Watch the “Film and Representation” and “Reflecting on the Movies” instructor videos.

Wednesday, 7/24:

- Complete Week 7 Content Quiz.
- Submit Film Pitch rough draft to “Project 2 Rough Drafts and Peer Review” discussion board.

Friday, 7/26:

- Submit peer review feedback to assigned partners via the “Project 2 Rough Drafts and Peer Review” discussion board.

*Week 8: July 29–August 2*

Wednesday, 7/31:

- Submit Film Pitch final draft.

Friday, 8/2:

- Submit post to Discussion Board 5: Reflection.