

## FILM STUDIES 101

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Guidelines:

In writing your essay, you should draw on the assigned readings and focus on a particular, narrow topic. Do not simply provide a plot summary! Focus on a particular issue, analyze it, link it to the readings, and discuss its importance. You should demonstrate your awareness of the work's argument. What point does it try to make? Make sure that you consider how the work may provide "unintended" insights into the subject.

A few hints:

1) Keep plot summary to a minimum. Make sure that every detail you include is there for a reason. Steer clear of sweeping generalizations. Use specific examples/evidence to support precise/limited assertions.

2) This paper is not the place to be subtle. Begin with a clear, concise statement of your argument in a thesis paragraph. You don't have a great deal of space, so be direct. State your points clearly and explicitly. Make good use of topic sentences. Organize your answer in such a way that YOUR argument is readily apparent. Use strong verbs, and avoid passive voice. Write in present active tense!

3) You do NOT HAVE to cite sources, use a bibliography or footnotes, though you may if you wish. Indicate direct quotations with quotation marks. Make sure you give page numbers. If you are citing sources and you draw on any additional sources (*even if you don't quote them directly*), you must provide a full citation. Click here for some guidelines from *The Chicago Manual of Style*.  
<http://www.library.wvu.edu/ref/Rehome/chicago.html> Remember. For this assignment, you are NOT allowed to use any ONLINE sources for content of paper. You may use IMDB.COM to confirm spellings, dates, technical info, etc. You are welcome to incorporate material from printed material (books, journal articles).

4) Edit rigorously! Using the spell/grammar checker does not constitute editing. Print out a copy. Sit down with a pen/pencil and read for content, organization, and style. Be critical. Don't hesitate to make major changes. Repeat this process as needed. Although the film essay will explicitly demand that you write a revised paper, you should get used to writing multiple drafts of all of your written work.

### PAPER GUIDELINES – FOMAT:

1. 5-7 pps.
2. Staple - make sure paper is stapled
3. Paper title, don't be creative with fonts-don't underline, cap., bold, or use quot. Marks
4. Title page do not use title page or folder—title goes on 1<sup>st</sup> page
5. Thesis- one or two sentences that describes the purpose/argument of the paper - often a clear/concise opinion stated as fact that can be supported with evidence. Usually found at the end of the first paragraph.
6. Underline or italicize ALL film titles (ex. *The 39 Steps* or *The 39 Steps* )
7. Use standard Times New Roman, 12 pt font.
8. Do not use colors other than white paper/black text.
9. 1" inch margins top, bottom, sides

10. Double Space.
11. No extra space between paragraphs.
12. Avoid using “being”—weakens sentence.
13. Do not use slang.
14. Contractions best to write out (ex. Can’t use cannot).
15. Do not spell out intentions. Ex “I will be analyzing...”
16. Do not use second person “you”—or 1<sup>st</sup> person “I”--USE third person “the viewer or the audience” or “One sees in this...”, etc.
17. Tense use present verb tense for film discussion
18. Ing verbs avoid using ING verbs—use simple active, present tense
19. Always make reference clear. Ex. “This shot...”
20. Do NOT retell story. If you find yourself writing HE DID THIS, THAN HE DOES THAT, THAN THIS HAPPENS....STOP!!!! Analyze film, don’t retell.
21. ½, ¾, Written page does not equal a full page.

#### GUIDE TO MARKS ON PAPER:

- Apos.- Use apostrophes to show possession
- Awk.- Badly constructed sentence
- Cap.- Capitalized incorrectly
- Cont. - Contractions best to write out (ex. Can’t use cannot).
- Confusing – Structure is confusing, references are unclear.
- Cs. Comma splice-comma between 2 complete sentence, use period.
- ! avoid using exclamation mark—make words do the work
- Frag.- Fragment-incomplete sentence
- V insert missing word/sentence
- long cut up full-paged paragraphs
- ¶ - symbol for paragraph/backwards P- needs paragraph.
- ? what does this mean exactly- confusing?
- Quot.- marks punctuation inside quot. marks
- R.O.- run on- no punctuation between complete sentences
- ; semi-colon—only use between complete sentences
- SL do not use slang
- SP incorrect spelling
- Unclear - construction makes sentence unclear
- V.P. ? over vague pronouns: this, it, he, she, they.
- Verbs use precise verbs ---expand vocabulary---avoid: get, has, is
- Wf - incorrect word form ex. Anxiety not anxious
- Wordy - cut out needless deadwood words- they weaken sentences
- Ww - wrong word