

It's The Only Class With Credits

CAST OF SPEAKERS

STEPHANIE ZACHAREK Film Critic, Time Magazine
MARK HARRIS Movie Journalist & Author ("Mike Nichols: A Life")
JOHN KNOLL VFX Supervisor, Industrial Light & Magic
ASHLEY LEE Associate Editor, Hollywood Reporter
STEPHANIE GOODMAN Film Editor, The New York Times
BROOKS BARNES Hollywood Beat Reporter, The New York Times
BILL THOMPSON VP, Theatrical Sales, Cohen Media Group
KELLY BUSH NOVAK Founder and CEO, ID Public Relations
BARRY DALE JOHNSON National Publicity, Searchlight Pictures

PETER BECKER, President
Criterion Collection

DENNIS LIM, Artistic Director
Film at Lincoln Center

MARGARET BODDE, Executive Director
The Film Foundation

CLASS ASSIGNMENT TECHNICIANS

MOLLY HASKELL Film Critic & Author ("From Reverence to Rape")
ERIC KOHN Executive Editor, IndieWire
DEVIKA GIRISH Co-Deputy Editor, Film Comment
ELENA HOWE The Envelope Editor, The Los Angeles Times
AVIVA DOVE-VIEBAHN Staff Writer, Ms. Magazine
BILGE EBIRI Film Critic, New York Magazine

GLENN WHIPP, Critic & Columnist
The Los Angeles Times

PHILLIP LOPATE, Critic & Author
"Totally, Tenderly, Tragically"

The professor wishes to thank the following for their contributions

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Learn every aspect of film journalism, from criticism to obits,
and cover the 2024 Tribeca Film Festival

 **NYU** Arthur L. Carter
Journalism Institute



Film Taught by Craig Barboza Journalism



Watch, think, talk and write about movies

Session 1 May 21 to June 27 | Tues. & Thurs. 3:30 to 7 p.m.

Register Now | Course No. Jour-UA 202.001 | Albert No. 4946

Film Journalism | 2024

New York University

Summer Journalism

Course No. SS1: JOUR-UA 202.001 | **Albert No.** 4946

Class Schedule & Location

Session 1 | May 21 to June 27, 2024 Tues. & Thurs. 3:30 to 7 p.m.

20 Cooper Square, Room 655

Instructor

Craigh Barboza

New York University | 20 Cooper Square #647

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Office hours: Wednesdays: 11 a.m. to noon & 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Course Description

This course is designed for students with a serious interest in writing about movies for print and digital media. A capacity to laugh at deadline pressure – or at quips and witty retorts coming from the back row of the movie theater – is also required. Students collaborate with peers on key projects, pitch in to shape stories and come up with ideas for their own articles, reporting on a variety of film topics. Beyond screening contemporary and essential films, students will be asked to engage in close readings of important critical works by François Truffaut, Pauline Kael, Peter Bogdanovich, Molly Haskell and Donald Bogle that will deepen their understanding of cinema as an art form. This course equips students with a working knowledge of the film industry they will report on, as well as the ability to identify and describe major movements and pioneering artists. Students attend and cover the 2024 Tribeca Festival. (The class is pre-approved for press credentials.) Other planned class trips include Film at Lincoln Center, home of *Film Comment* magazine, and the Criterion Collection, a catalog that's come to function "as a kind of film Hall of Fame." We do topic-inspired lessons, presentations and pop-up workshops on journalism skills and ethics. Guest speakers will offer guidance on reporting techniques, the forces transforming modern film and the purpose of criticism. By the time the course credits roll, students will have raised their cinema I.Q. and completed several publishable, well-sourced articles.

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate an understanding of the film industry and how it is covered by the press
- Write clear, accurate and engaging prose in an audience-appropriate manner
- Interview subjects, conduct research, and evaluate information
- Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diverse perspectives

Grading System

This class uses letter grades, which will be based on the following criteria:

- 40% homework assignments and papers
- 25% final project
- 25% class participation and familiarity with the assigned readings
- 10% in-class assignments

Grades can be lowered for unmet deadlines, lateness or absence from class. Plagiarism, invented sources or other ethical breaches can result in an automatic F. A breakdown of numeric grade to letter grade:

Outstanding work, publishable as is

A (100% to 94%)

A- (93% to 90%)

Good work, in need of minor revision

B+ (89% to 87%)

B (86% to 83%)

B- (82% to 80%)

Ordinary work, needs significant revision

C+ (79% to 77%)

C (76% to 73%)

C- (72% to 70%)

Major problems with facts, reporting, writing

D (69% to 65%)

Issues with plagiarism, etc.

F (64% to 0%)

Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. The Moses Center website is www.nyu.edu/csd. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

Diversity Statement

The Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute is committed to creating an anti-racist learning environment that embraces diversity, complexity, and honesty. We are an intellectual community enriched by diversity along a number of dimensions, including race, sex, gender identity, class, ethnicity, sexualities, abilities, religion, and culture. Our student body is excitingly international. We welcome a multiplicity of perspectives. We acknowledge that listening to other perspectives on some of these issues may be personally challenging, and we accept that challenge. We further acknowledge that our profession, journalism, and our home, New York University, have participated in the systemic racism that underpins U.S. history. We are committed to teaching and practicing fair, rigorous, and engaged journalism that helps all our communities move toward justice and equality.



Scene 1 | Rehearsal

Open with an introduction to the class and syllabus review. Getting to know each other through a writing exercise. Why film journalism is a (great) job. Screen and analyze a clip from a film classic about a newspaper baron then discuss media coverage of Hollywood, from spotlights on emerging talent to obits and anniversaries. A breakdown of the film journalist's standards and essential skills, as well as how to pick subjects and identify key elements of a story.

Homework — Read + Response: Packet on film writing, and viewing assignment TBD. Write a short “in memoriam” column on TBD (approximately 200 words).

Scene 2 | Establishing Shot

A Zoom-enabled “class cameo” by Paul Dergarabedian, a top media analyst at ComScore, a company that compiles box-office data and measures the effectiveness of Hollywood studio campaigns. Dergarabedian will talk about the biggest issues facing the movie industry. Student presentations and a peer editing workshop. A primer on reporting techniques and news writing followed by a survey of the Hollywood beat. (Who knows who's being hired, or fired, and how much films cost? What are the major talent agencies and guilds? How do you handle story tips?) A screening and analysis of a clip from a documentary about American movies.

Homework — Research and write a box-office report (350 words) based on this weekend's results, using original quotes by Dergarabedian and at least one other source. Viewing assignment TBD.

Scene 3 | What's the Pitch?

Student presentations and a freeform discussion of movie ideas and topics. An A to Z guide to film coverage. (What's the difference between *Cineaste* and *The Hollywood Reporter*? How do I track down a contact for the costume designer on *Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga*?) A group exercise followed by a review of grammar, syntax and punctuation. Screen and analyze a clip from a comedy about a magazine writer with commitment issues and talk story pitching. Then, sure, Kubrick may have condensed the entire history of mankind into a single shot during the opening sequence from *2001: A Space Odyssey*, but we'll give you a careening tour of movie coverage since the early days of cinema, plus look at a few of the pivotal moments and transformative figures in film journalism.

Homework — Read + Response: chapter from the book “The Art of the Interview,” and viewing assignment TBD. Compose a sample celebrity interview request.

Scene 4 | Access Hollywood

Class exercise on story pitching. An in-person cameo by Sarah Peters, the head of publicity at Searchlight Pictures, who will discuss the nature of her job inside the Hollywood PR machine and give us her take on the various outlets she works with as part of her job, both to make the system work and to work the system. Peters will also provide feedback on student interview requests. Students then will be assigned to a film publication, for weekly reports, as well as a movie industry expert who's agreed to offer their perspective and insights and be quoted in the student's final project: a long-form profile of a film personality. Watch a movie clip from a cynical drama about a corrupt reporter then discuss journalism ethics in the entertainment world. (What constitutes a conflict of interest? How do you keep an appropriate distance from the industry you cover? What if the studio wants to fly me out for a set visit?) How to pursue truth, accuracy, fairness and a diversity of perspectives in your work.

Homework — Research and pitch two possible subjects for your final (300 words each).

Scene 5 | Movie Times

An in-person cameo by the film editor of *The New York Times*, Stephanie Goodman, who will provide tips on covering the movie beat, everything from navigating the industry to finding and developing stories with writers. Goodman will also provide feedback on student final project pitches. A review of story basics and an examination of the writing process. (How do I organize my material? What are some ways to add variety and texture to writing? Where do I go to fact-check my story?) Student presentations followed by a peer edit workshop. Discuss and plan upcoming coverage of the Tribeca Festival.

Homework — Read + Response: packet of clips on the contemporary film, including passages from the book "She Said," about the sexual harassment story from The Times that helped ignite the #MeToo movement.

Scene 6 | Close-Up

Student presentations and a freeform discussion of movie ideas and topics. How to investigate, research and ask around before settling on your subjects followed by a primer on the nuts and bolts of interviewing, including access and parameters. (How do I negotiate and conduct fruitful interviews? Who are good secondary sources? How do I ask the tough questions?) Devices and other ways to frame a story to make it relevant to the intended reader. Anatomy of an article and lesson on nailing the personality profile. In-class screening and discussion TBD.

Homework — Final project prep, including an interview with the student-assigned industry expert.

Scene 7 | On Location: Film at Lincoln Center

Class trip to Film at Lincoln Center, sponsor of the annual New York Film Festival, for a tour of the offices of *Film Comment*, a digital magazine devoted to the art of cinema. Writers and film programmers Devika Girish and Clinton Krute, who edit the magazine, will discuss the history and significance of film festivals, as well as the publication's coverage of them, and offer strategies for writing about events like panels and premieres.

Homework — Research, report and write the first draft of the festival report (500 words) and start preliminary work on the final project.

Scene 8 | On Location II: Tribeca Festival

Attend and cover the 2024 Tribeca Festival, whose lineup includes movies with Jenna Ortega, Kristen Stewart and Lily Gladstone, and documentaries on Diane von Furstenberg and Liza Minnelli.

Homework — Write the final draft of the Tribeca Festival report (500 words).

Scene 9 | Film Culture

Student presentations followed by a discussion of movie writing's golden age, in the 1960s and 1970s, when it seemed like almost every comment about a movie sparked wider discussion. A primer on descriptive writing, or how to give readers a sense of place, mood and character. Exercise and in-class screening TBD.

Homework — Read + Response: Packet of writing from and about the “Film Generation,” which began in the 1950s with the rise of campus film societies and included the writings of François Truffaut and Pauline Kael, whose work helped change the way we think about movies. Research and write a pocket guide to a film movement (150 words).

Scene 10 | Everyone's A Critic

Student presentations and a freeform discussion of film culture. An introduction to writing the movie review. (How do I capture the quality of an actor's performance? As a critic, how much should political sympathies or being a woman or person of color shape my work?) Write a capsule movie review in class.

Homework — Revise capsule review, then report and write a draft of the final profile (1,600 words).

Scene 11 | The Magic of Movies

Cameo by *Time* magazine film critic Stephanie Zacharek, who will speak about the year in movies and the role of the criticism. The Pulitzer finalist will also provide feedback on student capsule reviews. Workshop final project and student presentations. Screening and discussion TBD.

Homework — Revise profile project. Viewing assignment TBD.

Scene 12 | Wrap Party

Class trip to the headquarters of the Criterion Collection, whose catalog of important classic and contemporary films on DVD – which are packed with supplementary materials like a director’s commentary and liner essay that introduces the viewer to the cultural context surrounding a particular film, as well as the aesthetic qualities that set it apart – has earned them the title “the Louvre of movies.” A review of the work we produced and lessons we learned in class. Final student presentations followed by a special screening at Criterion’s private theater, introduced by the company’s president, Peter Becker. Closing statement. Roll class credits.

Homework — Final draft of profile.

