

COM 4000 Sundance Film Festival
Department of Communication Studies
Spring 2023
Section 1
Classroom: PLNU and Park City, Utah

Dr. James Wicks
jwicks@pointloma.edu
Extension: 2590
Office: Cabrillo 203
Office Hours: See Canvas

Sundance Film Festival Course

Students critically analyze the aesthetics and themes presented in Sundance Film Festival films while attending the festival in Park City, Utah. Participants pay a course fee on top of block tuition, attend film screenings and forums, and complete course assignments including a final project.

This course includes explorations of film production technique, content, financing, exhibition and distribution, and the ethical dimensions of film in our society. This course will include attending the 2023 Sundance Film Festival (SFF) in Park City, Utah. The course will also include participating in the Windrider Institute, joining university students and faculty from other Christian institutions across the country. The forums will include lectures and discussions, screenings of several selected independent films, and participating in post-screening discussions with filmmakers.

Required Texts

Materials posted on Canvas. In addition: required films and various recommended readings and handouts distributed by both the professor and peers

Recommended:

Bordwell, David, and Kristin Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013. Print.
Hayward, Susan, and Susan Hayward. *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts*. London: Routledge, 2000.

For more Information

See the two websites below regarding the Priddy Brothers and the Windrider Forum Park City/Sundance event:

<https://www.windriderinstitute.org/>

<https://festival.sundance.org/>

Course Learning Outcomes

As a result of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of writing, producing, and the aesthetics of film production;
2. Demonstrate knowledge of independent film financing, film development, exhibition, and distribution;
3. Display the ability to analyze and interpret film images and narrative using film theory and terminology;
4. Display an understanding of how a Christian worldview and faith perspective is applied in filmmaking and film consumption; and
5. Conceptualize and write a short film script.

PLNU Mission: To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Program Cost

Students register for this COM 4000 Sundance Film Festival class as part of their block tuition. The additional charge for the program covers Park City transport, lodging, tickets for select Sundance film festival events plus Windrider program events and film screenings. All program costs (other than RT air and food) will be paid to PLNU.

Course Policies and Requirements

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy: Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation.

Class Preparation: All assignments must be completed prior to the assigned due date and time. Some assignments will be discussed in class while others will be completed individually but not discussed.

Class Participation: *Regular* contributions to class discussion are expected, including but not restricted to discussions of weekly readings, related experiential exercises, and open dialogue. Despite the size of the class, I want everyone to feel compelled to share their thoughts on course assignments. Enthusiastic and responsible participation in assigned group projects (in-class and outside of class) is expected of all.

E-Mail: Please use e-mail (not Canvas email) for simple, logistical questions or clarifications. Write: "COM 4090" in the subject line. Allow 24 hours/ 1 business day for a reply.

Canvas Messages: Please use Canvas messages (not Canvas email) for all information regarding assignments submitted to Canvas.

Public Discourse: Much of the work we will do in this class is cooperative, by nature of the class discussions and general feedback given to written work and/projects; thus you should think of all your writing and speaking for and in class as public, not private, discourse. By continuing in this class, you acknowledge that your work will be viewed by others in the class.

Inclusive Language: All public language used in this course, including written and spoken discourse, will be inclusive. This standard is outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and is the norm in university-level work. These academic style guides provide background information and good examples of how to maintain non-sexist language use in your writing.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy: Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another

person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy: PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC.

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination: Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students. If you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, it is required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office. If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/title-ix

Final Examination: *The published time for the final examination is one of the considerations when enrolling for a course. Students are expected to arrange their personal affairs to fit the examination schedule.* Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

FERPA Policy: In compliance with federal law, neither PLNU student ID nor social security number should be used in publicly posted grades or returned sets of assignments without student written permission. Also in compliance with FERPA, you will be the only person given information about your progress in this class unless you have designated others to receive it in the "Information Release" section of the student portal. See Academic Policies in the (undergrad/ graduate as appropriate) academic catalog.

PLNU Copyright Policy: Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

Grading Scale

94-100	A	78-79	C+
90-93	A-	74-77	C
88-89	B+	70-73	C-
84-87	B	60-69	D
80-83	B-	0-59	F

Grading

10%	Pre-Festival Assignment: Attend Intro. To Film Art Lecture
10%	Pre-Festival Assignment: Research Sundance Film Festival (2 pages)
30%	Five (5) 1-1.5 page (325-375 word) Sundance Film Reports
20%	Two (2) 1-1.5 page (325-375 word) Windrider Forum Reports
30%	Sundance Term Paper or Sundance Film Project

Assignment Descriptions: Note Canvas assignment due date times.

Paper Format: Papers must be written in MLA Style or Chicago Style. Papers must be typed and double-spaced. Submit assignments in black ink on 8.5"x11" white paper. Use a non-decorative 12-point font, such as Times New Roman, and use 1" margins, .75" at the bottom. Do not include title pages. Include page numbers.

Course Assignments

1. Attend the field trip to the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah and participate in all regular (ticketed) SFF screenings and the additional group screenings and forums sponsored by The Windrider Forum.
2. Complete pre-festival assigned textbook readings and attend LIT 3051 World Cinema as follows:
 - Attend the LIT 3051: World Cinema Lecture during week 2
 - Submit a 1.5 page history of Sundance and .5 page history of Windrider: single-spaced cut-and-pasted online material with a Works Cited. Note: assignments that do not meet the word/page count requirement will receive a "0."
3. Write and submit **five (5) 1-1.5 page Sundance Film Reports** and two **(2) 1-1.5 page Windrider Forum Reports** by 11:59pm on the day the assignment is due. Your reports will highlight your reflections and learning. Your reports are to be posted online to Canvas. Note: assignments that do not meet the word/page count requirement will receive a "0."
4. Write a six (6) page **Sundance Term Paper** that includes a focused analysis and critique of one or two films and displays an understanding of the different course topic areas included in the course objectives. This will be due by/before spring break (at the end of week 8). Note: assignments that do not meet the word/page count requirement will receive a "0."
Or complete a **Sundance Film Project**.

Students will demonstrate knowledge and skill in shooting video footage for a short documentary about the Sundance Film Festival. This includes one or more of the following documentary production styles: poetic mode, expository mode, participatory mode, observational mode, reflexive mode, performative mode, and experimental film mode.

Course Schedule

Subject to Change -- the below was modified during week 4 of the semester

Week	Schedule // Theme	Assignment Due
1-2	Film Narrative Lecture and Festival Preparation	And attend the LIT 3051: World Cinema Lecture during week 2 1.5 page history of Sundance and .5 page history of Windrider: single-spaced with Works Cited
3	<i>Attend the Sundance Film Festival</i>	Monday: Report 1 Tuesday: Report 2 Wednesday: Report 3 Thursday: Report 4 Friday: Report 5 Saturday: Report 6 Sunday: Report 7
4-8	Complete Term Paper or Film Project	Complete term paper or film project and meet after spring break to discuss the course.