

English 689.001 (82875), Independent Study: Theory of Teaching Literary Adaptation to Film
Fall 2012 / Instructor: Gerald Duchovnay

Description:

Independent studies most often develop as a result of a student's desire to continue studies pursued in a course or a new interest that is not accommodated by normal course offerings. This independent study has developed as a result of an interest in synthesizing literary studies with film and film theory as related to filmed adaptations. This independent study will involve, then, an understanding of literary adaptations to film.

Plan of Study: The student and I will meet and discuss the readings and the writings on the topic of film adaptations twice a week and will link it to both study, theory, and pedagogy. Since this is an independent study, the student will work on readings and writings suitable to what might be taught in a literature and film undergraduate course, but being studied at a graduate level.

Objectives:

- 1) To achieve an overview and understanding of the theories related to adaptation of literature to film;
- 2) To understand how fiction, in particular, is adapted to the screen;
- 3) To examine the theories and adaptation processes by applying them to an examination of a particular filmed version (or versions) of a literary text;
- 4) To complete a sustained written text based on these objectives;
- 5) To demonstrate an application of the knowledge gained by teaching a class of undergraduates studying filmed literature.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Student will demonstrate an understanding of key aspects of adaptation theory of texts to film;
2. Student will demonstrate analytical skills in visual literacy and reading filmed texts;
3. Student will demonstrate a familiarity with ways of discussing and evaluating films as reflections of cultures and source texts based on presentation of materials;
4. Student will demonstrate an understanding of the elements involved in adapting texts to film;
5. Student may participate in a "community" interested in discussing/analyzing films beyond the surface level of narrative or character.

Required Work:

- 1) A bibliographical essay analyzing adaptation studies based on readings related to theoretical and practical aspects of the process of converting a text to film and the teaching of such. This essay will cover the theoretical aspects as applied to all forms of adaptation and will include, in particular, readings that discuss pedagogical aspects of teaching adaptations.
- 2) A paper (approximately 15 pages) applying some of the theories related to pedagogical aspects of film adaptation to one filmed text.
- 3) A presentation and discussion of an adapted text to an undergraduate film and literature class

By doing this research and applying it to one film that has been adapted to the screen, the student will go from the general (theory) to the more specific (adaptation of a text), to the very specific (application of theory and text to specific film). The focus, then, will be to merge theory with practical application. Also, as a result of this research, the student has the opportunity to teach a class related to adaptation, thus bringing together the theoretical, practical, and pedagogical.