

**Kirkwood Community College
CASTLE Project**

Increasing Student Motivation, Interest, and Participation in World Film History

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INTRODUCTION

I am currently an adjunct instructor teaching Film Analysis, US Film History, and World Film History at the Iowa City Campus of Kirkwood Community College in Iowa City, Iowa. I've been employed at Kirkwood since August of 2001, and I teach the maximum allowable load for adjuncts, which includes three courses in the Fall semester (Analysis and US Film), two in the Spring (Analysis and World Film), and one in the Summer (Analysis). I've been teaching World Film History every Spring since 2007, when the Humanities Department decided to split Film History into two separate courses. All film courses at Kirkwood are introductory and require no prerequisites, so I see a wide spectrum of academic and interest levels in each one of my classrooms. Because of the unique challenges World Film History presents for student motivation, interest, and participation—as well as the fact that I only get one shot at teaching this course per academic year—I've decided to focus on this course for my CASTLE Action Research Project.

While I find teaching film to be a supremely satisfying and passion-filled endeavor, I do often come across the type of student most likely not encountered by instructors of subjects like chemistry or algebra. Let's call this student Pete. Pete love movies. Hell, he's seen thousands over his lifetime. He can quote every line of dialogue from *Scarface*, and his friends know he's the go-to guy for obscure trivia for every movie from *Adventures in Babysitting* to *Zoolander*. When he sees that Kirkwood offers film classes, he can hardly believe it. Getting college credit to watch movies? It sounds too good to be true. And World Film History? "Piece of cake," he thinks. "*Lord of the Rings* was made in New Zealand." But imagine the bummer Pete feels when he goes to class that first day and discovers that he's going to have to read a textbook and write papers, and actually think about the *meaning* behind movies (or "films," as his prof calls them) and even worse—these films are *foreign*, where you have to read subtitles and the movies are really old and made not only in New Zealand or England but in other strange places like Senegal or Czechoslovakia. Right now, Pete's probably kicking himself. "But I need the Humanities credit," he tells himself. "Just do the minimum amount of work to pass, and it will all be over soon."

Of course I'm being a little hard on poor Pete here. I do consider myself extremely blessed to be teaching a subject which elicits any sort of passion (or even a passing personal interest) from students at all. As an instructor, it's my responsibility to harness that interest and lead the classroom into new horizons of interaction and engagement. My goal with this project is to design an effective set of teaching and learning strategies in order to cultivate an environment that successfully raises my students' motivation, interest, and participation in World Film History. No longer can I bear to stand in front of thirty-five blank, bored faces while I try in vain to rouse some iota of curiosity or personal investment in just how punk rock Luis Buñuel's 1929 *Un Chien Andalou* was then and still is today. I must now take action. As McKeachie warns, "Enjoyment of teaching is important not only for the enthusiasm professors

communicate to their students, but also in determining their interest in continued improvement. Both of these important values are likely to be lost if teaching becomes so routinized and depersonalized that it is no longer fun” (1978, 284).

1. What are the important classroom teaching/learning issues in this case?

Who are my students?

The data for this project was collected during the Spring 2011 semester of World Film History, for which thirty-five students initially enrolled and twenty-three remained in all semester. Of those remaining twenty-three students, fifteen were male and eight were female. Two were what Fritschner (2000) would classify as “nontraditional” (over age 24). In addition, one nontraditional student did not consider English to be his first language. Six students had taken a previous film class, either at the college level or in high school.

On the first day of class, each student completed a short survey that asked about their reasons for taking the course. The results are as follows:

Table 1.1: First Day Survey
Result of all students originally enrolled in course
(34 out of 35 responding)

I took this class because:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am interested in the subject matter		1 3%	1 3%	6 18%	12 35%	8 24%	6 18%
I needed a general education/elective course.		2 6%	1 3%	8 24%	6 18%	8 24%	9 26%
It sounded like an easy course.	4 12%	4 12%	3 9%	17 50%	5 15%	1 3%	
It sounded like a challenging course.	1 3%	3 9%	8 24%	13 38%	5 15%	4 12%	

Note: Scale ranges from 1 (Not true at all) to 7 (Very true).

Table 1.2: First-Day Survey
Results of students remaining in course the entire semester
(22 out of 23 responding)

I took this class because:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am interested in the subject matter		1 5%		2 9%	7 31%	8 36%	4 18%
I needed a general education/elective course.		2 9%	1 5%	5 23%	1 5%	5 23%	8 36%
It sounded like an easy course.	4 18%	1 5%	2 9%	11 50%	4 18%		
It sounded like a challenging course.	1 5%	1 5%	7 31%	7 31%	3 14%	3 14%	

Note: Scale ranges from 1 (Not true at all) to 7 (Very true).

I found these results quite surprising for a couple of reasons. First of all, no students labeled the statement “I am interested in the subject matter” a 1 (not true at all). Second, no

students labeled the statement “It sounded like an easy course” a 6 or a 7 (the “very true” end of the scale). This totally contradicts the general impression of World Film History students I’ve developed over the past five semesters. Were these results due to students not wanting to give a bad first impression to the instructor, or had I gotten a particularly positive batch of pupils this semester? Or worse: was my impression totally wrong, and what I perceived as lack of inherent interest in the subject really was a lack of motivation or participation due to poor teaching strategies?

I was also surprised to note that between the original thirty-five students and the final twenty-four, the percentages of interest level in the subject remained pretty consistent. I would have expected more drops from students who had expressed little interest, but that does not appear to be the case here. It will be interesting to see if this remains so over the course of future semesters. Retention of low-interest students could be a potential area for future research projects.

The first-day survey also asked students to consider their personal relationship to foreign films. The results are as follows:

Table 2.1
First-Day Survey
Results of students originally enrolled in course
(34 out of 35 responding)

Regarding foreign films:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I’ve never seen one.	24 71%	3 9%	1 3%	3 9%	1 3%		2 6%
I’ve seen maybe one or two.	10 29%	2 6%		7 21%	3 9%	7 21%	5 15%
I enjoy watching them.		4 12%	5 15%	9 26%	5 15%	7 21%	4 12%
I avoid them at all costs.	18 53%	2 6%	9 26%	3 9%	1 3%	1 3%	
I think they’re boring.	12 35%	4 12%	7 21%	9 26%	1 3%	1 3%	
I think they aren’t as good as Hollywood films.	9 26%	1 3%	5 15%	6 18%	7 21%	6 18%	
I think they’re better than Hollywood films.	5 15%	7 21%	10 29%	7 21%	3 9%		2 6%

Note: Scale ranges from 1 (Not true at all) to 7 (Very true).

Table 2.2
First Day Survey
Results of students remaining in course the entire semester
(22 out of 23 responding)

Regarding foreign films:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I've never seen one.	18 82%	1 5%	1 5%	1 5%			1 5%
I've seen maybe one or two.	8 36%	2 9%		4 18%	2 9%	3 14%	3 14%
I enjoy watching them.		3 14%	4 18%	3 14%	4 18%	4 18%	4 18%
I avoid them at all costs.	12 55%	1 5%	6 27%	2 9%	1 5%		
I think they're boring.	7 31%	4 18%	5 23%	5 23%	1 5%		
I think they aren't as good as Hollywood films.	6 27%	1 5%	4 18%	5 23%	5 23%	1 5%	
I think they're better than Hollywood films.	3 14%	4 18%	6 27%	4 18%	3 14%		2 9%

Note: Scale ranges from 1 (Not true at all) to 7 (Very true).

Again I was pleasantly surprised by these results. Not only had the vast majority of students seen at least one foreign film before, they also largely enjoyed them (74%/68% at least somewhat). Only 32%/28% found them at least somewhat boring, and not one student fessed up to absolutely avoiding them at all costs. Even taken with a grain of cynicism, these results in themselves were a huge eye-opener. I had a pool of students ready and willing to learn. It was now up to me to take advantage of my good fortune and convert this interest into motivation and participation.

What are the intersocial preconditions in the class?

As Fassinger (1995) points out, a positive emotional climate in the classroom can enhance the likelihood of class participation. Such climates occur when students are cooperative and supportive of each other and develop friendships with other classmates. I observed a number of friendships (five pairs) already established at the beginning of the semester. Usually I notice perhaps one or two pre-formed friendships, so this number seems unusually high. By the end of the semester, four of the five pairs were still enrolled in the course, and one pair had dropped.

Over the course of the semester, I observed two additional friendship groups developing, each involving three students who were not previously involved in any friendship pairs. Some of the students were already high-interest and high-participation students, and it seemed to me that these students had a positive effect on the lower-performance students they interacted with. I witnessed a number of moments that supported this, including note-sharing, study group formation, and informal discussion before class about the subject. Just how much of an impact these newly-formed relationships had on students' overall achievement in the course is hard to gauge, but this could be a potential area of study for a future research project.

The seminal study of college classroom participation published by Karp and Yoels (1976) established many significant theories which have since been supported by a number of later

studies. They found that in classes with less than forty students, only four to five accounted for more than 75% of total interactions per session. Karp and Yoels label these students “talkers.” Once this group of talkers gets established, the remaining students develop an expectation that they will carry the burden of participation for the rest of the class. Non-talkers both rely on talkers in this sense and find them generally annoying if they “talk too much” (425). There is also the fear that these enthusiastic participants may commit “linguistic rate-busting,” i.e. raising the professor’s expectations of participation from the other students (430).

Karp and Yoels identify a number of behaviors that indicate other students’ annoyance with talkers, including “smiling wryly at their efforts, audibly sighing, rattling their notebooks, and, on occasion, openly snickering” (431). In this particular case, I observed one definite talker that regularly tested the fine line between reliance and annoyance from other students. I would categorize two additional students as talkers that did not draw such negative reactions from their peers. These two students generally stayed on subject when they spoke, kept their comments concise, and did not attempt to answer every question posed by the instructor.

On the other side of the participation spectrum, I observed two students that I would call *isolators*: students who avoid classroom participation at all costs. I have had both of these students in other classes, so I was immediately familiar with and observant of their lack of participation. According to Rau and Herman Heyl (1990), “Isolated students do not learn as much or as well as students who are embedded in a network of informal social relations” (144). I was curious whether or not this research experiment could break them out of their shells and allow them to benefit from more in-class social interaction with their peers.

2. What teaching/learning strategies might be helpful? What learning theories might support or inform these strategies?

Past strategies that were not helpful

According to Christensen (1995), students are most likely to participate in class when they are interested in the course and the topic of discussion, when they are prepared for class, when the class is small, and when they are graded for participation (5). In the past, I have focused most heavily on trying to motivate students to prepare for class. Overall, I have experienced much frustration and seen little improvement from this strategy.

The semester prior to this one, I required students to answer four to five short essay questions over the reading each week through the online ANGEL course site. I expected that this assignment would make students more likely to come to class having done the reading, and that it would have three benefits. One: I wouldn’t have to waste precious class time repeating this information in lectures. Two: students would have a clearer idea what I considered the most important topics to study for exams. And Three: having prepared for class, students would be more willing to participate in discussion.

I’d tried this assignment in another class (two sections of US Film History), and found similar negative results. Not only did I see none of the expected benefits, I saw very little actual completion of the assignment overall. I would estimate that at most, the highest completion week of any of the sections I tasked with this assignment was 60%. Sometimes it got as low as 30%. Completely at a loss for why this was, I cornered an A student I’d had in a previous course and asked her why she wasn’t consistently submitting these assignments. She expressed shame

and embarrassment in her lackluster performance, but she also admitted that she found the assignment dull enough not to bother doing it. I must also admit that I found grading these assignments to be extremely tedious and time-consuming. Usually when I see an otherwise stellar student struggling or frustrated with something in my class, I immediately suspect that the assignment or my design and execution of it is at fault. This was enough of a reason for me to cease this particular assignment and seek out something more engaging and rewarding from both teaching and learning perspectives.

Another thing I've tried in the past in an attempt to cultivate not only preparation, but also participation, was to require every student to submit one discussion question online based on the assigned reading prior to class. The understanding was that we'd use these questions, formed either by the need for further clarification or a genuine interest in the topic, to direct class discussion. Within two weeks, it was clear to me that this idea was a complete failure. Based on the questions received, I ascertained that most students were skimming just enough of the reading to formulate a passable question. I also witnessed a strange phenomenon wherein the majority of students—even those who asked really insightful or interesting questions—could not remember those questions by the time that class rolled around. Even when I good-humoredly suggested that they, you know, *write their questions down and bring them to class*, few of the students seemed very excited about sharing those questions. I made sure to provide as much encouragement as possible (“Mary, you had a great question. Why don't you share it with the class?”), but I just could not get the students motivated enough to genuinely *care* about them. This experiment was such a failure that I didn't even bother to give it another trial semester before chucking the idea in the trash.

New strategies tested this semester

I experimented with a number of strategies this semester in an attempt to establish a positive emotional climate early on, in hopes that this would foster social interaction and lead to improved interest, motivation, and class participation.

Name Tags: As Nunn (1996) has shown, students consider an instructor's use of student names to be a relatively strong encourager of participation (255). I know that I am absolutely horrible at learning names, whether it's in a one-on-one social situation or as an instructor standing before thirty-five new students. While teaching two to three sections that only meet once a week, figuring out who everyone is can take me at least a month (four class periods). This semester I decided to have every student make and wear a name tag. Not only did this cut down my name-learning time by half (two weeks), but it let the students know that I was making a concerted effort to learn their names and that I actually *cared* who they were.

The semester before I executed this research project, I got a gut-wrenching critique on one of my teacher evaluation forms. “She never called me by my name. Not even once. That would have gone a long way in making me think she cared.” I'd like to apologize to that student personally, whoever he or she is, but I can only make a concerted effort never to allow that to happen again. So not only did I focus on learning names this semester, but I made sure to *use* them as much as possible. It's not quite what I'd call a habit yet, but I'm definitely getting there.

In-Class CLG Activities: Raul and Herman Heyl advocate the use of collaborative learning groups (CLGs) in college classrooms. Their study shows that CLGs allow students to get to know each other, make new friends, develop a sense of comfort and comradery in class,

teach each other, pool knowledge and share perspectives, and generate a deeper interest in the subject (151-2). They also have the benefit of less scapegoating of faculty, as students get more of a chance to compare their work to the work of others in the class.

In previous semesters, I had very few (if any) CLG activities in World Film History. The structure of a typical three-hour course was one hour of lecture (which included clips, individual exercises, and an attempt at class discussion) and a two-hour film. Not surprisingly, it was very hard to sustain an enthusiastic environment under these conditions over the entire period. At best this structure attained what Karp and Yoels term “civil attention” (appearing committed enough not to alienate the instructor, but not enough to risk direct involvement) (435). At worst, I found myself in a room full of completely bored individuals (me included). This semester, I eliminated full-film screenings and focused more on interactive learning. This plan included four major in-class CLS activities focused on either the reading or a portion of a screening (See Appendix A). I chose activities geared towards personal reflection, debate, and cooperative research, assigning five to ten points for completion of a worksheet and five points for participation. Students spent the majority of the activity completing the worksheets with their partners, then we gathered together as one big group and shared results. Students knew that if they shared just one comment, they would get the full five points of participation for the activity.

Table 3
In-Class CLG Activity Results

	Students who completed the activity	Students who participated in class discussion
Activity 1 (Week 3)	24	21 (87.5%)
Activity 2 (Week 5)	24	22 (91.7%)
Activity 3 (Week 9)	21	18 (85.7%)
Activity 4 (Week 12)	17	17 (100%)

Fritschner posits six identifiable levels of student participation in the undergraduate classroom: Breathing and staying awake (level one), coming to class, taking notes, and doing the assignments (level two), writing thoughtful and reflective papers (level three), asking questions in class, making comments, and providing input for class discussions (level four), additional kinds of research or coming to class with additional questions (level five), and oral presentations where the students themselves became the teachers (level six) (354). Whereas in previous semesters I was lucky if I got level three participation out of my students, it is clear that these activities generated an amazingly high number of level four participation. This seems to support Rau and Sherman Heyl’s theory: “Even shy students, who normally would not speak up in class, will volunteer comments during class review of group reports. They will articulate a position developed in their group, knowing that their group will back them up” (148).

While I still had just a handful of repeat participators in each of the activities, I am very satisfied with the overall results of this teaching/learning strategy. And I think 100% participation for Activity Four is nothing to sneeze at! But could I hope to push this participation further into levels five and six?

Auteur¹ Presentation: Stephen (1981) conducted a study in which the instructor assigned a research and presentation project that allowed for each student to act as an expert on a particular topic. Students admitted that the project consisted of a heavier workload than usual, but overall they liked it. They reported that it allowed for increased involvement, interaction, participation, and learning when compared to the basic lecture style of teaching (176). In this study, the teacher played the role of a fellow student rather than an instructor. McKeachie suggests role-playing and improvisation as a way to facilitate active student involvement (136). I incorporated both of these ideas in the design of the final auteur presentation (See Appendix B).

I have assigned formal research papers in prior semesters, but I found that many of the students lacked knowledge of basic research techniques and proper bibliographic citation. Providing enough guidance to lower-level students while simultaneously challenging upper-level students (not to mention eagle-eyeing for both unintentional and blatant plagiarism) proved to be one gigantic headache with not much payoff. Perhaps if my course had a composition prerequisite that stressed basic research techniques, a formal paper would be a more practical assignment for this course, but I don't see that happening anytime in the future.

The crux of this auteur presentation is that the student not only functions as an expert on the material in order to teach something to the class, but the student must also *become* his or her chosen auteur through role-playing. To sweeten the deal, I offered five bonus points for creative role-playing, which included a variety of ways for students to further embody their auteur. Many students took advantage of this opportunity through one or more of the efforts outlined in Table 4 below.

Table 4
Students' Creative Role-Playing Efforts

Visual aids	12
Foreign language (writing/speaking)	2
Clothing	3
Attitude	4
Accent	1

Over half of the presenters used some sort of visual aid to enhance their speech, including photos, film stills, movie posters, and props. A smaller number of presenters dressed like their auteurs, wrote their auteur's name on the board in Chinese characters, or spoke short phrases using the auteur's native language. The two most memorable presentations were for Werner Herzog, in which the auteur's sarcastic humor and bizarre attitude were wonderfully rendered by the student, and Edgar Wright. This particular student maintained a pitch-perfect British accent throughout his speech. This was a risky choice and could have been a disaster (I did initially suggest to the class that fake accents are generally not such a great idea for this project), but he successfully pulled it off and the class really enjoyed it.

Presentations were conducted over the course of three class periods (seven to eight per class), and at the end of each period all presenters participated in a Q&A panel. Students not participating that day were expected to ask at least one question, either to an individual auteur or

¹ *Auteur* is a French term meaning "author." In film theory, this refers to the idea that certain film directors have a distinguishable style that is both artistically significant and unique. For instance, Alfred Hitchcock, Federico Fellini, and Akira Kurosawa are all widely considered film auteurs.

to the group in general. Doing so would merit five points for each period. Presenters would also get points for their ability to answer these questions sufficiently, which required them to be proficient enough with the material to be able to improvise.

Table 5
Auteur Q&A Panel Participation

	Present Students	Participating Students
Day 1	23	20 (87%)
Day 2	21	19 (90%)
Day 3	20	18 (90%)

In designing the Q&A panel, I was concerned about the types of questions students would ask of their peers. I wanted them to come from a genuine interest in the presentation—probing questions that would allow the presenters to elaborate further on the information they presented rather than just repeat it. To prepare students for the types of questions I desired, I had them work together to come up with what I called “appropriate” questions during the week twelve activity. This was also the week that I presented two auteurs in the style of which I outlined in the auteur presentation assignment, in order to present a model for their own projects (not to mention trying my hand at role-playing and improvisation myself). I think this activity successfully prepared them for their peer presentations, as I was quite satisfied not only with the percentage of students participating, but also with the care and interest they seemed to take in crafting thoughtful questions for their classmates. All three of the panels were lively and informative.

3. What research questions and hypotheses does this case raise that might be further investigated in a classroom research project?

While I found this study to be illuminating and surprising for a number of reasons outlined above, one semester of data is insufficient in showing whether these strategies will prove effective in raising student interest, motivation, and participation in future semesters. The only way to see the long-term effects is to continue to collect and tabulate data, which I definitely plan to do. Some other questions come to mind when considering future projects in this area.

Is there a positive relationship between topics covered in class discussions and test performance on those topics? I would expect there to be, but a closer study over a longer period of time could prove it.

Is there a significant difference between partner work and small group CLG activities, and how much control should I exert over how these groups are formed? Raul and Herman Heyl consider permanently-established groups of four to be most ideal for CLG activities. I chose to allow students to pick partners and work in groups of two. In future trials, I will try Raul and Herman Heyl’s recommendations more closely to see how class dynamics and participation are affected. Especially in classes where there are so many pre-established friendship pairs, I expect this would have a huge impact on students’ overall comfort level and relationship development.

What makes “talkers” tick, and what is the best way to manage them? One thing I’ve repeatedly noticed over many years in relation to “talkers,” is that way too many of those

students are also what I would call “talkers-not-doers.” I don’t know if this is typical of this type of student in general, or if film is a subject that particularly cultivates this unsettling phenomenon. But all too often, the person who speaks most in my class and seems most interested in the subject is also turning in little to no actual written work. The major talker in this semester’s study did poorly on exams and even disappeared for three weeks straight with no explanation. He did seem highly invested in his auteur presentation, but it was barely enough for him to squeak by with a passing grade in the course.

4. What classroom assessment data could be collected to test out these research questions or hypotheses?

In addition to charting data over the course of future semesters in order to see how various collections of individuals interact and benefit from my course design, I may consider tweaking survey questions and activities to see which produce more effective results. I may also consider recruiting an outside observer or videotaping discussions to capture a closer analysis of how class participation plays out (including number/type of comments from students, my reactions to them, etc.) to catch things that I may not be aware of or capable of recording as a participant in the discussion.

CONCLUSION

I’d like to present one final table of survey results to conclude this study.

Table 6
Mid-Semester Survey
(18 students participating anonymously)

Mid-Semester Survey	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I Feel motivated to learn		1 5%	1 5%	1 5%	4 18%	8 36%	3 14%
I feel more motivated in this course than others I’ve taken	2 9%		2 9%	4 18%	3 14%	6 27%	1 5%
I’m more interested in subject now than when began				1 5%	4 18%	4 18%	9 41%
I feel encouraged by instructor to participate			1 5%		4 18%	6 27%	7 31%
I participate in this course more than other courses			4 18%	2 9%	4 18%	4 18%	4 18%

Note: Scale ranges from 1 (Not true at all) to 7 (Very true).

I think it’s safe to say that, at least this particular semester of World Film History, the teaching and learning strategies I utilized successfully raised the motivation, interest, and participation of my students. I never got my two isolators to completely break out of their shells, unfortunately, but I can’t be Anne Sullivan to every Helen Keller that walks into my classroom. I can say that for me, this was the most exciting, engaging, and personally satisfying World Film History course I’ve ever taught. And I have a feeling it’s going to keep getting better.

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APPENDIX A

Activity points: ___/5 Participation points: ___/5

**World Film History
Week 3 Activity
January 24, 2011**

Name _____

Directions: Consider the film movements we discussed today (Spaghetti Westerns, Bollywood, Hong Kong cinema, Nollywood) and answer the following questions. Support your arguments with as much detail as possible.

Which film movement do you think seems the most similar to Hollywood?

Why?

Which film movement do you think seems the most unlike Hollywood?

Why?

(more on back)

What elements do you think are most important for a film movement to be considered entertaining, and why?

Activity points: ___/5 Participation points: ___/5

World Film History
Week 5 Activity
February 7, 2011

Name _____

Do you believe Leni Riefenstahl's account of her involvement with *Triumph of the Will*? Why or why not?

Should filmmakers be held accountable for the effects of film propaganda? If not, why not? If so, to what extent? Support your argument.

World Film History
Week 9 Activity
March 7, 2011

Your name(s):

Activity points: ___/10 Participation points: ___/5

[Auteur Name (David Cronenberg or Atom Egoyan)]

Country/countries of production:

Significant films:

Influences:

Frequent Collaborators:

Relevant background:

Favorite themes/motifs:

Filmmaking style:

Quotes:

Sources: [Online: cut and paste web address. Print: List title/author/page number.]

Activity points: ___/5 Participation points: ___/5

World Film History
Week 12 Activity
March 28, 2011

Name _____

Asking Appropriate Questions

During each of the student presentation panel discussions, each audience member will be expected to ask at least one question to the auteurs. Questions should stimulate further elaboration of presentation content rather than just repetition of it. Practice crafting questions below for the presentations you saw today. Consider questions for specific individuals as well as broader group questions.

What questions do you have for Jan Svankmajer?

What questions do you have for Peter Greenaway?

What questions could you ask both auteurs to respond to?

APPENDIX B

World Film History Auteur Presentation Assignment

Auteur Proposal due: April 4, end of class, 10 points

Auteur Source List due: April 11, end of class, 10 points

Auteur Information Sheet due: individual presentation day, 15 points

Presentation dates: April 18, 25, and May 2

Exam 2: May 9 (6pm)

BE THE AUTEUR

For the final project, each student will give a 15-minute presentation on an auteur of their choosing. The presentation will be given in the first person—you will *be* this auteur, introducing your background, your style, and your point of view to the world. At the end of each of the three presentation days, all of that day's presenters will participate in a question and answer panel with the rest of the class. The presentation will be worth 80 points total. See page 6 for the grading rubric.

PRESENTATION STRUCTURE

(15 minutes total)

Prepare your DVD clip and hand out your Auteur Information Sheet to the class (1-2 min)

- See page 4 for details regarding Auteur Information Sheet requirements.

Screen a clip (5-7 min)

- Select a clip that exhibits both your visual style and your point of view.
- Clips must not exceed seven minutes in length. Any clips that do will be cut off and points will be lost.
- Clips should be on DVD and easily cued up via DVD remote. The Internet on the classroom computer is not dependable, so do not count on Youtube working.

Introduce yourself (8-10 min)

- Discuss your childhood, filmmaking influences, and other relevant background information.
- Describe your personal style and point of view, and how it has developed or evolved over the course of your career.
 - Refer to your clip to illustrate these points.
 - You may use Power Point for visual materials only (i.e. photographs, posters, film stills).
- You may use one index card for notes in addition to your Auteur Information Sheet.
 - Know your auteur well enough that you can present him/her comfortably without reading to us.

Group Q & A panel (20-30 minutes at the end of the class period)

- Field questions from members of the class.
- See page 4 for more details.

AUTEUR PROPOSAL—DUE APRIL 4

An Auteur Proposal is due by the end of class on April 4. This form will be available on ANGEL to complete and print out. (See page 3 for example.)

Your selected auteur must be:

- A feature film director
- Non-American

Your selected auteur must have:

- Completed at least one film somewhere other than the US
- A distinct point of view and directorial style
- A significant body of work in which that point of view and style has been established

If you have any questions about whether or not a potential auteur fits these requirements, please see the instructor.

Students will have the entire April 4th class period to do research and complete the proposal. The computer lab in room 205 and various print resources will be made available to aid in your research of potential auteurs. The instructor will also be available to answer questions or offer suggestions.

THE AUTEUR SELECTION PROCESS

Each student will present a unique auteur—there will be no duplicates. To ensure fairness in selection, students will complete the Auteur Proposal with their top three choices. As long as the proposal selections fulfill the requirements outlined above, students should receive their #1 choice.

In the event that more than one student selects the same auteur, preference will be given to the most interesting and informed proposal.

Students who are absent from class on April 4th must complete the proposal on their own and email it to me at efoster@kirkwood.edu. Students who do not complete the proposal or whose selections do not meet the requirements outlined above will be assigned an auteur of my choice.

The final auteur list will be posted on ANGEL by Friday, April 8.

**World Film History
Auteur Proposal**

Name: _____
Points: ____ / 10

Fill in your top three choices for your auteur presentation below. In the event that two students have the same first choice, I will select the student who gives the most informed and interesting proposal.

Choice #1:

What makes this director an auteur, and what interests you most about him/her?

Choice #2:

What makes this director an auteur, and what interests you most about him/her?

Choice #3:

What makes this director an auteur, and what interests you most about him/her?

AUTEUR SOURCE LIST AND INDIVIDUAL MEETING—DUE APRIL 11

April 11 will be another in-class work day during which students will complete an Auteur Source List. (See page 5 for example.) There is no minimum number of sources required, as available resources may vary from auteur to auteur. Students should seek out as many as possible to develop an accurate and detailed presentation. IMDb.com and Wikipedia are not sufficient sources on their own.

At some point during the April 11 class period, each student will meet with the instructor individually to do the following:

- Submit the completed Auteur Source List for approval
- Discuss the student's progress on the project
- Sign up for a presentation slot.

Students may sign up for a presentation slot only after receiving approval of their Source List from the instructor. Students are expected to utilize the entire class period for research. Attendance will be taken, and students who leave early will lose attendance points for the day.

Students who are absent on April 11 should contact the instructor ASAP to schedule an individual meeting outside of class.

AUTEUR INFORMATION SHEET—DUE ON DAY OF INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION

On the day of the student's presentation, he/she will bring a completed Auteur Information Sheet for every student in the class (30 copies). This sheet will be worth 15 points (see grading rubric for details) and should be formatted similarly to the auteur sheets handed out in class during weeks 8-12 (all of which are available on ANGEL).

Film titles must be italicized and include years in parentheses, i.e. *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* (1988). Frequent collaborators should include the role and number of films in parentheses (cinematographer, 9 films), and quotes should include the source in parentheses.

Exam 2 will consist of information from the auteurs covered in lectures (del Toro, Almodóvar, Egoyan, Cronenberg, Woo, Kurosawa, Greenaway, Svankmajer), as well as all of the auteurs presented by students. Use the Auteur Information Sheets as study guides, in addition to notes taken on your own.

GROUP Q & A PANEL GUIDELINES

All presenters will be expected to participate in a group panel discussion at the end of the class period in which they present (roughly nine students per panel). Students are expected to ask at least one question during each of the panels on days they are not presenting. (See grading rubric on page 6.)

Questions may be posed to the group at large (for anyone to answer), or directed at one or more specific auteurs. Questions that will be considered appropriate (i.e. will count towards points for the questioner and the responder/s) are ones that allow the responder/s to elaborate on presentation material, not just simply repeat it. We will be practicing appropriate questions in class on March 28, during class discussion of auteurs Peter Greenaway and Jan Svankmajer.

**World Film History
Auteur Source List**

Name:
Points: ____ / 10

Collect sources in each of the four areas below and complete the form. Use the examples provided for correct formatting, (and delete those examples before submitting). For book and film sources, please include where you plan on obtaining them.

EBSCOhost:

“Dr. Hobbes’s Parasites: Victims, Victimization, and Gender in David Cronenberg’s *Shivers*.”

- By Sanjek, David. *Cinema Journal*, Fall 1996, Vol. 36 Issue 1
- PDF Full Text

Interviews:

“David Cronenberg Interview (Part 1)”

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWJO0gCKoEE>

The Nerve Interview

- <http://www.nerve.com/content/the-nerve-interview-david-cronenberg>

Behind-the-Scenes with David Cronenberg

- *The Fly* DVD special feature

Books:

The Artist as Monster: The Cinema of David Cronenberg, by William Beard

- Google Books:
http://books.google.com/books?id=GudNMVZSsZAC&printsec=frontcover&dq=artist+as+monster&source=bl&ots=k17UIdIU2C&sig=O9MwK9FVRjh9FWKKVMSGCEdBO5s&hl=en&ei=mDKCTY2HDsX0tgfO6P3QBA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=3&ved=0CCcQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q&f=false

David Cronenberg: Interviews with Serge Grunberg, by Serge Grunberg

- Iowa City Public Library

Films:

eXistenZ (1999)

- Iowa City Public Library

Dead Ringers (1988)

- Netflix

The Fly (1986)

- Kirkwood Library

Videodrome (1983)

- Personal collection

PRESENTATION GRADING RUBRIC	Strong		Adequate				Needs Improvement				
Auteur Information Sheet (15 points total)											
• Information is correct	5	4	3	2	1	0					
• Information is rich in detail	5	4	3	2	1	0					
• Information is formatted correctly	5	4	3	2	1	0					
Clip (5 points total)											
• Clip was an appropriate length	2					0					
• Clip exhibited auteur's style and point of view	3		2		1		0				
Presentation Content (25 points total)											
• Presentation was the appropriate length	5	4	3	2	1	0					
• Information presented was factually correct	5	4	3	2	1	0					
• Presentation was informative and rich in detail	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
• Clip was discussed during presentation	5	4	3	2	1	0					
Presentation Style (15 points total +5 bonus points)											
• Presenter did not read from or heavily rely upon notes	5	4	3	2	1	0					
• Presenter seemed at ease and in control of the material	5	4	3	2	1	0					
• Presenter engaged audience with eye contact and appropriate voice	5	4	3	2	1	0					
• Presenter used creativity to embody the auteur (i.e. Power Point images, dress, personality, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1	0					
BONUS POINTS											
Group Q & A Panel and Audience (20 points total)											
• As a presenter, was able to answer the majority of appropriate questions addressed to him/her during the panel	5	4	3	2	1	0					
• Provided a good audience to other presenters (i.e. wasn't texting, sleeping, or exhibiting other inattentive behavior)	5	4	3	2	1	0					
• Asked at least one appropriate question per panel when not participating as a presenter											
Panel 1	5					0					
Panel 2	5					0					

TOTAL: ____ / 80