

Grading Rubric

Religion and Film, Winter 2021

- 1) Participation:** Appropriate participation is timely and demonstrates your preparation and engagement. At the end of each week, I will award up to three points.

What I am looking for:

- At least one post in each discussion thread. To enable class discussion, your posts should be up by the end of the day of the discussion.
- Follow up posts in at least two of the week's discussion threads that extend the conversation by commenting on a colleague's post, responding to a question or comment on your original post, or be reflecting further on a relevant issue.
- Reading discussions should demonstrate your grasp of the material, comment on the ideas and concepts in the reading, and/or raise thoughtful questions about these ideas and concepts. Connections to other readings and/or applications of the reading to one of the films we have seen are valued.
- Film discussions address the question of whether and what you liked about the film but go further. They suggest and interpret an over-arching theme or narrative or the film's style and discuss how it is developed in a particular scene or scenes. Your discussion should often identify and apply ideas from the readings or the instructor's comments to the film.

Points: 3 pts for the week indicates you were present in each thread, made responds that demonstrate engagement with the readings or film, and made follow-up comments in at least two conversations. 2pts, suggests less than full participation and/or limited engagement with the readings and film. 1 pt., limited presence and engagement with readings and film. (30pts total/30% of grade – to translate points to a letter grade, see the grading scale below.)

- 2) Close Analysis:** A six-to-eight-page paper on *Babette's Feast* due Feb 3rd. This paper should reflect your own careful viewing and analysis of the film, demonstrating how understanding the film's visual and narrative form inform your interpretation of the film. For many of you, this will be your first effort at written film analysis. I am not expecting this to be highly polished or reflect past film study. You are simply trying out the tools of analysis we are starting to develop. Relax and have fun trying your hand. JM

What I am looking for:

- Spend two to three pages laying out an overall interpretation of the film,
- then offer a close reading of one or two key scenes demonstrating how the images, narrative, and performances lead you to your interpretation.
- Please note: You should be engaged directly with the primary text, the film itself, applying skills developed in the early weeks of the class. Do not consult secondary sources such as the writings of film or religion scholars or reviewers.

Points: Up to 3 pts for paper structure (i.e., the right length, follows the outline, grammatically clear.) Up to 3 pts for a well argued and convincing over all interpretation of the film. Up to 4 pts for an interpretation of how the images, narrative, and performances in a scene or scenes contribute to your interpretation. (10 pts/10% of grade – to translate points to a letter grade, see the grading scale below.)

- 3) Research Paper:** Write a ten-twelve-page paper (doctoral students, fifteen-to-eighteen page) on one of the films viewed in class. This paper should draw your own viewing and analysis as well assigned course material and reflect research that put the film in its historical/cultural context and offer a theological or religious interpretation of the film rooted in visual and narrative analysis. Draw both on your own close analysis of the film and on and outside critical resources. Due: Friday of Week Nine. Submit on Canvas. (30 points/30% of grade – to translate points to a letter grade, see the grading scale below.)

What I am looking for:

- Laying out an overall interpretation of the film,
- then offer a close reading of several key scenes demonstrating how the images, narrative, and performances lead you to your interpretation.
- Demonstrate how you draw on course material, presentation, and/or discussions in shaping your interpretation of the film.
- Drawing on reviews and articles about the film to put it in its historical/cultural context and discuss how it has been evaluated. Demonstrate how your interpretation agrees or challenges these interpretations.

Points: Up to 8 pts for paper structure (i.e., the right length, follows the outline, grammatically clear, cites sources.) Up to 8 pts for a well-argued and convincing over all interpretation of the film. Up to 8 pts for an interpretation of how the images, narrative, and performances in a scene or scenes contribute to your interpretation. Up to 6 pts for engagement with outside reviews, articles, or other sources that shows how they support your interpretation and/or where and why you differ. (30 pts/30% of grade – to translate points to a letter grade, see the grading scale below.)

4) Group Presentation:

Masters Students: With a group of peers, prepare to introduce and lead the discussion of *Jesus of Montreal* (Jan 21), *Hallelujah!* (Jan 28), *Children of Heaven* (Feb 18) or *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter ... and Spring* (March 4). This is a group assignment; you must participate in preparing and/or presenting to get credit. Each person who participated will receive a shared grade.

What I am looking for:

- Prepare for posting a presentation on the film and filmmaker that introduces the class to ways the film has been analyzed and interpreted and which prepare them to engage the film and email it to jmahan@iliff.edu for posting in Canvas. Some things you might include:
 - Tell us something about the filmmaker, their background, and the sort of films they make.
 - Put the film in historical context, perhaps talking about movements in the cinema at the time or events in the world the film responds to.
 - Offer an interpretation of the film narrative and analyze a key scene.
 - reviews and report on the reception when the film was released. Look for later studies of the film, what do they say and did opinion change over time? Forward the group presentation to jmahan@iliff.edu at least 48 hours in advance for posting in Canvas.
 - Separately, email discussion prompts to [jamahan@iliff.edu](mailto:jmahan@iliff.edu) including questions about the film, the way it engages religion, etc. Include a prompt that invites a visual and narrative analysis of at least one scene. Identify this scene, or any others you raise questions about, by its time location in the video.
 - Follow up in the Canvas discussion, responding to the class's reflection on the film and/or adding further insights from your research and engagement with the film.

Doctoral Students: With your doctoral program peers, meet digitally to read and discuss the two assigned books. Then prepare to teach the class about Martin and Ostwalt's *Screening the Sacred* (Jan 10) and Lyden's *Film as Religion, 2nd edition* (March 2)

What I am looking for:

- Prepare brief presentations on these works that introduce the authors, their locations, methods, and contexts. Provide an overview of the authors contributions to the discussion of religion and film.
- Prepare an introduction to the section of the work included in *The Religion and Film Reader* and created discussion prompts for that reading.
- Email your presentation and discussion prompts to jmahan@iliff.edu at least 48 hours in advance for posting in Canvas.
- Follow up in the Canvas discussion, responding to the class's reflection on the reading and/or adding further insights from your research and engagement with the reading.

Points: Up to 10 pts for the technical and creative quality of the presentation. That is, that it is clear, attractive, and engaging. Up to 10 pts for the content of the presentation. That is that it provides the class with a helpful background to engage the film or book, following the outline above, and which puts the book or film in context and provides a preliminary interpretation. Up to 5 pts for discussion prompts that draw the class into the film they saw or essay they read, and which help them draw on your presentation. 5 pts for engaged and encouraging management of the discussion feed). (30pts/30% of grade – to translate points to a letter grade, see the grading scale below.)

Religion and Film Grade Scale

Total Points for term	30% assignments Participation Close Analysis paper Organize and lead discussion	10% assignment Close Analysis
A 93 – 100	29 – 30	9.5 - 10
A- 89 – 98	27 – 28	9
B+ 85 – 89	25 – 26	8.5
B 81 – 85	24	8
B- 77 – 81	23	7.5
C+ 73 – 77	22	7
C 69 – 73	21	6.5
C- 65 – 68	19 – 20	
D 60 – 64	18	6
F less than 60	less than 18	less than 6