

**STUDENT: CC**

**ASSIGNMENT: FINAL META RESPONSE**

### Recurring Trends

Over the semester, my film responses have usually dealt with the universality of the storylines of each film or a concern for the storyline in general. Also, I tend to focus on the differences between American culture and the Chinese culture portrayed in most of the films.

Before re-reading my responses, I thought that only my last several were going to have more overarching themes of the American influence or the elements of narrative transparency that were prevalent in most of the last films we watched. I was wrong about that self-assessment. In 8 of the 13 responses I wrote, the universality of the storylines, in relation to American or foreign audiences, were brought up in one way or another. I, for some reason, have been stuck on the how the story of each film translates to how I process the entirety of each film for the entire semester. This is not a bad thing; these films have made me realize how much the story does matter for each film. Also, it caused me to have a sort of duality when watching some of the more historically themed films because the history we learned about China helped me develop a sort of empathetic role when watching the films. I think the class in general has made me look at humanity in a whole new way, and I greatly appreciate that.

### Changes

As for the changes in my writing, I did see an improvement overall. I think I became more focused as the semester went on. I still focused on the storylines of the films, but I became more specific about what ideas I was trying to get across.

In the beginning of the semester, particularly with *Shadow Magic*, I feel like I was trying way too hard. I think I felt like it was the only way to make an impression. However, as the semester went on, I figured out a balance of sorts, even if there were a couple of lazy responses. After spring break, my responses became more about how I see each film individually, but all the while considering all of the other films we watched as well. I feel like I noticed certain things about each film that I may or may not have picked up on before the semester began.

### Evaluation of the Assignment as a Learning Tool

For me, these film responses allowed me to not procrastinate as much as I would have liked to. Most of the responses were not typically turned in until the day each assignment was due, but it could have been worse. The assignment each week allowed me to think and apply what I was learning through my writing in a way that seemed very low-stakes and non-stressful to me. This is one element of the responses that was invaluable to me. The way in which it was presented at first stressed me out, but after the first response, I was not as concerned about the assignment as a whole. A part of me feels that if I was able to be in class the first day, I would have felt like I had a better grasp of the assignment at the get go. I could have asked for clarification at the beginning of the semester, but at that point I felt like I was not in a position to do so for my own personal reasons. I read the description of the assignment in the syllabus a few times and it made more sense to me.

The page length was one of the best elements of these assignments. It allowed me to narrow down what I was trying to say and really get to the point of what I needed to

say. I appreciated this because I feel that it had a definite impact on how I write for my other classes. I was able to connect elements that needed connecting in a shorter way than I had in the past. There was a realization that I had about writing throughout this semester, and it was that I actually do not mind writing all that much. I actually do not mind putting my thoughts into a form that is simple and not as stressful. I still kind of have an issue with writing 5+ page term papers, but the structure of the film responses allow me to look at those larger papers in chunks.

In comparison to the film responses, a 5 page paper seems tedious and almost overkill. I think it is ridiculous to have the entirety of a semester basically rest on a research paper. I think both a research paper and these film responses do the same thing. They both reinforce the material learned and discussed in the class. However, I think the weekly nature of the film responses allows the material to be reinforced more frequently and effectively. A research paper can be put off until the last possible moment at the end of the semester when students are viciously trying to remember everything they have learned in the semester. I do not think that is a good way to measure the success of the students' retention of information. It also has to put a sort of restraint on the instructors as well because there is usually a long turn-around to receive grades.

I found the feedback useful when writing my responses. There were times I would feel like I did a bad job, and the feedback would reflect it. I would get slightly defensive, but was able to take a step back and realize that the feedback was only going to make me more focused for the next response. When I felt I did well, but not spectacular, and the feedback was almost overwhelmingly positive, I felt as if I was being encouraged. There were also times where the positive feedback challenged me in my writing, and I felt I was

able to use it to my benefit. The feedback allowed me to think more thoroughly about my writing.

I do not really have anything negative to say about the film responses. I actually enjoyed the structure of these assignments, and they really helped me improve my writing by building on it each week. Throughout my responses, I feel like I have discovered what I am most interested in looking at for films in general, and that possibly may be the screenplay of films. I am now strongly considering looking at screenwriting as a viable option in my future.

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