

# Sul Ross State University – Behavioral and Social Science Department

## PSY 4310 Course Syllabus – Summer 1 2024

Course Title:	Psychology of Movies
Prerequisites:	General Psychology (PSY 1302)
Contact Information:	Alicia M. Trotman, PhD, <a href="mailto:alicia.trotman@sulross.edu">alicia.trotman@sulross.edu</a> ,
Office Hours:	By appointment: <a href="https://calendly.com/amtsulross/summer-office-hours">https://calendly.com/amtsulross/summer-office-hours</a>

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*“May the Force be with you.” Star Wars*

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### Course Description and Goals

Welcome! The aim of this course is to expose you to psychological theories that manifest themselves in the world of movies – American and International. How do psychological topics portray themselves in movies? Psychology topics can be memory, personality, disorders, illness, learning, therapy, institutionalization, legal defenses, obedience and authority, labeling and stigmatization, and they can manifest via Jungian archetypes. The primary goal is to use your sensory and intuitive abilities to discern how these archetypes are played out among sentient beings and objects, that ground psychological theories. The secondary goal is to utilize critical thinking and experience to determine the validity of these film portrayals, and how they may lead to knowledge or misconceptions in the real world. Our readings and class discussion will focus on the prevalence and accuracy of these topics as illustrated via the archetypes in the movies and/or anime, and its impact on shaping the discipline of psychology. We will read some background material on each topic from various textbooks and scholarly articles, write critical thinking reaction papers to each film, and will be responsible for creating a short film script for the final project.

### Student Learning Outcomes

1. Identify and describe the archetypes as manifested through behaviors (verbal and non-verbal) in pictures.  
**Method of Assessment:** Reading Exercises and Response Posts
2. Contextualize the representation of these behaviors and roles examining their prevalence with present society.  
**Method of Assessment:** Reading Exercises and Response Posts
3. Apply the archetypal roles to disentangle the complexity of psychological theories in such ways to distinguish the subjectivities of those that are diagnosed, those that perform the diagnosis, and those that become enmeshed with the diagnosis (e.g. caregivers).  
**Method of Assessment:** Reading Exercises and Response Posts
4. Create a script that utilizes (and distinguishes) the archetypes highlighting psychological details or influences.  
**Method of Assessment:** Short Film Script

### Text

Readings will be provided for this course. However, you are required to rent or purchase movies at your own expense. All required films can be viewed via Amazon or Netflix or Vudu (or Youtube if available).

### Course Requirements

1. Respect for students and lecturers must be maintained at all times when we meet online and in person. Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the

viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. We will do our best to embrace the difficulty of fruitfully discussing controversial and sensitive issues. Respect is a basic human characteristic that entitles each person to their own rights and identity. It also helps to nurture a healthy learning environment. If you recognize that respecting others may be a problem, please be courteous and alert me or more suitable personnel (e.g. Sul Ross State University psychologists, family members, lecturers, close friends) and or refer to the Student Conduct and Discipline section of the [SRSU Student Handbook](#).

2. During the course of this class, you may have strong emotional/psychological reactions to the course material and/or discussions. If you feel that you are having difficulty with the learning environment, please discuss this with me immediately before continuing the course. Counseling and Accessibility Services (<https://www.sulross.edu/counselling-and-accessibility-services/>) can provide brief, short-term individual and group counseling or refer you to off-campus providers. You have already paid for these services through your Student Service Fee, whether you use them or not.

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*“In this life time, you don’t have to prove nothing to nobody, except yourself. And after what you’ve gone through, if you haven’t done that by now, it ain’t gonna never happen.” ~ Fortune, from Rudy*

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## SRSU Disability Services - AMERICANS with DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT:

SRSU Disability Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Alpine Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mary Schwartz, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203 (please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can during working hours), or email [mschwartz@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartz@sulross.edu). Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall (Suite 112), and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine. Texas, 79832

Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/356 support by visiting [Timelycare/SRSU](#). The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and RGC students.

## Library Services Statement

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library’s website, [library.sulross.edu](http://library.sulross.edu). Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email ([srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu)), or by phone (432-837-8123).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting [library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/](http://library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/) or ask a librarian by emailing [srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu).

## Honoring Academic Integrity

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared, and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Other instances of academic misconduct are lying in connection with your academic work, cheating, misrepresenting facts and/or collusion and **using open AI** sources unless *permission is expressly given* for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall. All these are contrary to the purpose of any educational institution and will be dealt with **most severely** to the extent of the university's disciplinary policy and/or through legal action if indicated. An instructor who determines that a student has been dishonest academically can at a minimum issue no credit for the assignment/exam, and/or pursue more severe penalties, including but not limited to failing the course. Further information about *Academic Honesty* can be read in the [SRSU Student Handbook](#).

## Marketable Skills:

1. Speaking Effectively: Students will demonstrate competency in public speaking and communicating scientific information to diverse audiences.
2. Describing Feelings: Students will demonstrate empathic or active listening and conversational skills, and/or write clearly about their affective stance, respectfully attuned to the needs of their audiences.
3. Identifying Resources: Students will demonstrate the aptitude to locate, organize and evaluate the credibility of information from multiple sources.
4. Analyzing: Students will demonstrate ability to examine the underlying issues of a scientific problem, attending to the pertinent details and creating a plan of action, recognizing ambiguity and complexity as essential components.

## Observing Class Guidelines

### Class Attendance and Participation

This is a course that requires in class, hands on experience and discussion. **Class attendance IS REQUIRED and participation is important.** Class participation and attendance will be worth **20%** of the final grade. The percentage is considerable so your presence will *help* your ability to complete all of assignments for this class.

**Participation:** This is an online course. However, your active, daily participation in this course is essential and required in order to be successful, including checking email daily, checking for Black Board announcements and messages, staying up with readings and participating in Blackboard Discussion meetings.

**Distance Education Statement:** Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires a secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the student handbook [SRSU Student Handbook](#).

**Regular communications with the professor:** It is essential that you keep me current on your progress and any difficulties you may be having so that I can respond in real time to support your success. The most efficient way of

contacting me is by email or scheduling a meeting with me at <https://calendly.com/amtsulross/summer-office-hours> which provides you with contact hours for the rest of the Summer I semester.

**Course Behaviors** - Respect and Disruptions: Watch the VIDEO on NETTIQUETTE -

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWMk\\_Zv7nB8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWMk_Zv7nB8) and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80uRE972uQ0>. You are encouraged and expected to openly engage in discussions, ask questions, share ideas, and express your thoughts in this web-based course in the same manner as in a face-to-face course. Please treat each other with dignity and respect and avoid disruptive behaviors. You are responsible for knowing what behaviors are acceptable versus unacceptable as referred to in the Student Conduct and Discipline section of the [SRSU Student Handbook](#).

**Communicating with the Professor:** The best way to contact me is by email or scheduling a meeting with me at <https://calendly.com/amtsulross/summer-office-hours>. GENERAL QUESTIONS are to be posted to a discussion board for all. For PERSONAL or PRIVATE ISSUES email me at [Alicia.trotman@sulross.edu](mailto:Alicia.trotman@sulross.edu) or text me. I strive to respond as soon as possible. If you do not receive a reply within 24 hours during the work week, please resend your email or text me.

### Late Assignments/Projects 📅

You are expected to meet assignment deadlines. An **individual single reaction paper** less than two pages (without reference page) will automatically be considered the same as if you did not turn in a paper at all and will cause you to Fail the course. You must also turn in every individual reaction paper by the deadlines (**shown in the schedule below**), uploaded to the appropriate link on Blackboard. A **group reaction paper** less than three pages (without reference page) will automatically be considered the same as if you did not turn in a paper at all and will cause you and your partner to Fail the course. You must also turn in the group reaction paper by the deadline (**shown in the schedule below**). For excused absences (university-authorized, legal or medical issues), speak with me **before the absence** so arrangements can be made.

## Discussing Evaluation

Students are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter and understanding of class material and discussions in the following ways:

### Reaction Papers (Individual)

1. **Written Pages:** Every week, you will watch two films. You will write a reaction paper for *one film* shown that week. Papers must be typed, with 1-inch margins, 12-point font, double spaced. These papers must be at least **two FULL pages** in length (not 1 page and a single line on the 2<sup>nd</sup> page).
2. **Cover Page:** You will have a cover page for each reaction paper that has your name and the name of the film.
3. **Reference Page:** You will have a reference page for each reaction paper referencing the film and any peer-reviewed article or credible source in APA style - [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/reference\\_list\\_audiovisual\\_media.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/reference_list_audiovisual_media.html)

What should be in the reaction paper? 📅

*The reaction paper should focus most on the portrayal of the archetypes in each movie, and whether the movie presented any aspect of psychology in a realistic way. You can address...*

- 📅 What were the archetypes characterized in the movie?
- 📅 What was realistic (possibly good) about the way this topic was portrayed in the movie?
- 📅 What is incorrect/misleading (possibly bad) about the way this topic was portrayed in the movie?
- 📅 When people unaware of psychological principles view this movie, what effect or impact do you think it has on their perceptions of both this particular topic and on psychology or psychologists in general? If psychologists appear as characters, was this portrayal positive, negative, accurate, etc.?

- ✚ If you were going to create a re-make/prequel/sequel of this movie, how would you change the archetypal character or the situation to make the portrayal more realistic, or include things that were left out of the movie? (If listing another movie, there should be a logical reason [with references] for the additional movie.)
- ✚ You may also discuss other things you think are relevant to the impact this movie has on general society, from a psychological perspective - *History* (e.g. where did it start? What is the source? Etiology?); *Media Portrayals*; *Research Study*; *Character's Life* (e.g. illustrate the person's life in the film); *Daily Lives of People* (e.g. illustrate a case study in current society).

What should **NOT** be in the reaction paper? 🖱

- ❖ Simply summarize the movie. There should be zero paragraphs which summarize the film without reference to any aspect of psychology (a symptom, concept etc.).
- ❖ Simply list/discuss aspects of the characters or situations **WITHOUT** reference to the movie at all.

**In order to answer these questions**, you should rely heavily on the topic presentation that precedes the film, attend or view our Blackboard Collaborate recorded meetings and view the scoring rubric. However, you are welcome to add information for your papers from other classes or reputable websites you have learned at the university that are relevant to the topic of the day. If you do this, be sure to properly cite your sources on a separate page (references do not count toward your three-page minimum). **If you plagiarize, you will automatically Fail the ENTIRE course.** Each weekend, you will get your previous paper back with a grade of “Check Plus,” “Check,” or “Check Minus.” As long as you get “Checks” and “Check Pluses,” you’ll be fine. If you receive more than five grades of “Check Minus,” you will fail the course.

### Reaction Papers (Group)

1. **Written Pages:** We will watch at least eight films for the entire semester. You and your partner will conduct a peer assessment of each other's reaction paper for **one film** shown for the entire semester. You will use the same rubric that assessed the individual reaction papers. **These papers follow the same format as your individual reaction papers, but the movies selected for your group reaction papers are not the same movies that you selected for your individual reaction papers.**

### Screenplay (Short Movie Script)

During the semester, each student will write a screenplay that will be shown/demonstrated on the final day of class. You have two options:

1. **Original Story.** The highest potential grade for this script is an A. You will create an original story, remembering to use the elements of narrative we will review in class (setting, character development, cause and effect, climax, resolution, etc).
2. **Adaptation of a Movie.** The highest potential grade for this script is a B. You will create a screenplay as an adaptation of one of the films shown in class. The screenplay that you write must stand outside of the original movie. In other words, it must be a completely new narrative or story. I reserve the right to reward exceptional adaptations with a higher grade, but this is less than likely because adaptations require less creativity than originals. If this option is chosen, you must cite the original work in accurate APA format.

It is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to discuss with the class your ideas about your screenplay, so you need to take this responsibility seriously.

Your screenplay can be physical or digital. Your final product will include the following three aspects:

1. Create a synopsis—write a summary of your story including the beginning, climax, and resolution.
2. Create a basic outline—using the format we will discuss for basic outlines, write what will happen in Act I, Act II, and Act III of your screenplay. Act I and Act III will have one or two scenes including plot points and Act II will have one to three scenes including plot points. Act I and Act III each should be around 25% of your story, while Act II is 50% of your story.

3. Write/Direct a screenplay—following the guidelines we will discuss proper format in class. If written, the screenplay is 7-15 pages double-spaced. If directed, the movie should be 7 – 12 minutes long.
4. At the end of the semester, YOUR PRESENTATION WILL BE BETWEEN 10-20 MINUTES. Your presentation entails reading your synopsis and reading/showing your screenplay. If it is shorter or longer, you will Fail the course.

## Grading

Students are expected to complete reading assignments prior to class sessions and to engage in thoughtful discussions online in light of these assignments. In addition, students will write reaction papers, which will help with the final movie script.

Grading:	1000 points total	Percentage
<b>Reaction Papers (6)</b>	<b>600 points total</b>	<b>60%</b>
Check Plus	90 points (5 individual) 150 points (1 group)	
Check	70 points (5 individual) 100 points (1 group)	
Check Minus	50 points (5 individual) 50 points (1 group)	
<b>Movie Script</b>	<b>200 points</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Participation</b>	<b>200 points</b>	<b>20%</b>

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*“You can’t handle the truth!” A Few Good Men*

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Day	Content
May 29 <sup>th</sup> , 30 <sup>th</sup> & 31 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Introductions</b>
<b>Homework</b>	Read syllabus... Learn about archetypes...
June 3 <sup>rd</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup>	Anime/Movie 1
<b>Homework</b>	Review
June 6 <sup>th</sup> to 8 <sup>th</sup>	Anime/Movie 2
<b>Homework</b>	Individual Reaction Paper 1
June 10 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup>	Anime/Movie 3

Homework	Individual Reaction Paper 2
June 13 <sup>th</sup> to 15 <sup>th</sup>	Anime/Movie 4
Homework	Individual Reaction Paper 3
June 17 <sup>th</sup> to 19 <sup>th</sup>	Anime/Movie 5
Homework	Group Reaction Paper 1
June 20 <sup>th</sup> to 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Anime/Movie 6
Homework	Individual Reaction Paper 4
June 24 <sup>th</sup> to 26 <sup>th</sup>	Anime/Movie 7
Homework	Individual Reaction Paper 5
June 27 <sup>th</sup> to 29 <sup>th</sup>	Anime/Movie 8
Homework	Individual Reaction Paper 1/2/3/4/5 and/or Writing your Final
July 1 <sup>st</sup> to 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Final: Screenplay (Short Movie Script)</b> <b><i>DUE Wednesday July 3<sup>rd</sup></i></b>

**YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY PASS THE COURSE IF YOU:**

1. PARTICIPATE IN EVERY BLACKBOARD COLLABORATE MEETING CLASS.
2. TURN IN ALL OF YOUR PAPERS ON TIME.
3. COMPOSE & SUBMIT YOUR MOVIE SCRIPT ON TIME.
4. TURN IN ANY PAPERS THAT ARE 3 FULL PAGES LONG OR LONGER FOR INDIVIDUAL & GROUP REACTION PAPERS.
5. ASSESS YOUR PARTNER'S REACTION PAPER FAIRLY USING THE RUBRIC.
6. RECEIVE MORE THAN FIVE GRADES OF "CHECK" OR "CHECK PLUS" ON THE PAPERS.

## Bibliography

Westerville City School District. (n.d.). *Screenplay assignment* [DOC file]. Retrieved from <http://www.wcsd.org/userfiles/3879/Classes/7879/Screenplay%20Assignment.doc>

Young, S. D. (2012). *Psychology at the movies*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.