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### Gardner-Webb Offers Class for Film Lovers

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# Gardner-Webb Offers Class for Film Lovers

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Office of University  
Communications

December 11, 2017

## *Students in GWU's Film Critic Class Put Their Skills to Work in Real World Settings*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—With the recent release of numerous year-end entertainment honors and recognitions, excitement is brewing in the Film and Television world. Awards season is here, and audiences pay close attention to nominations and critic reviews to decide which movies to catch in theatres. With so much weight resting on their reviews, critics must watch movies a little differently than general audience members, looking for elements of the film to both praise and critique. Gardner-Webb University offers a class in film criticism that not only teaches students how to watch movies like a critic, but also gives them several unique opportunities to put these skills into practice.

The class is taught by GWU Adjunct Communications Professor and Associate Vice President for Communications and Marketing, Noel T. Manning II, who is also a voting member of the Broadcast Film Critics Association (BFCA) and the North Carolina Film Critics Association. In the film critics class, students learn about various aspects of filmmaking and discuss why some movies succeed while others are instant box-office flops. They write film reviews for a blog throughout the semester and practice impromptu reviews for in-class dialogue, and participate in a live radio movie review roundtable show. Haley Walker ('18), of Casar, N.C., a senior broadcast journalism major who took the class this semester, stated, "I enjoyed this class because it takes something I love doing and teaches me how to make a living off of it."

Jen Guberman ('17), of Huntersville, N.C., a Broadcast Film Critics Association (BFCA) scholar for Fall 2017, had the chance not only to cohost Cinemascope but also to appear with Manning on C19TV's "Meet Me at the Movies" television show, a partnership with Cleveland Community College in Shelby, N.C.

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The GWU Film Critic Class participated in a live radio movie review roundtable show.

Through his BFCA membership, Manning provides opportunities for the students to attend advanced movie screenings and put their skills to work in a real-world situation. These screenings take place anywhere from a few days to several weeks before a film's wide-release date. After watching the film, students get to talk to film studio representatives, just like official critics, and provide their feedback on the film. "It's very different for each screening," Walker noted, "but at each one we have reserved seats and get a chance to talk to the film publicists afterwards."

After taking this class, several students also have the opportunity to apply for the BFCA scholarship, a program designed for students

Film Critic Class

interested in becoming film critics. This scholarship is given to one student each semester who co-hosts a weekly radio segment, “Cinemascene,” with Manning for Gardner Webb’s online radio, WGWG.org. The scholarship provides film-reviewing experience as well as a monetary stipend for the student. Manning revived the BFCA scholarship program at GWU earlier this year with Mallory Moore (’18) of Maurertown, Va. “I learned so much about writing film reviews in the film critic class, but I was still nervous about recording audio reviews,” Moore shared. “The BFCA scholarship was the perfect opportunity for me to overcome that fear. It’s a really relaxed environment—I got to pick some of the topics for each week and explore films that really interest me.” Moore is planning to pursue film studies in graduate school upon leaving Gardner-Webb next spring.

Jen Guberman (’17), of Huntersville, N.C., BFCA scholar for Fall 2017, had the chance not only to cohost Cinemascene but also to appear with Manning on C19TV’s “Meet Me at the Movies” television show, a partnership with Cleveland Community College in Shelby, N.C. “I was definitely a bit nervous for my first appearance, and I ended up talking so fast my brain couldn’t keep up,” she remarked, “but it didn’t take long for me to feel totally at ease. It’s so much more than just talking about movies—it’s being involved in this sort of film critic community. It’s about expanding your understanding of film and your appreciation of genres you normally would never touch.”

Christian Jessup (’18), of Boiling Springs, took the film critic class in the fall of 2016 and has been selected as the BFCA scholar

Film Critic logo

for the spring of 2018. A double major in music composition and communications, Jessup plans on becoming a film composer and found that the class gave him a deeper understanding of movies. “I wanted to learn as much about film as I could so that I could go into film composition feeling prepared and knowledgeable,” he said. “I can tell a huge difference in the projects I’ve composed before and after I had thoroughly studied film. It completely alters the approach I take, and I think it will be incredibly beneficial for my career moving forward.”

*The Gardner-Webb Department of Communication & New Media offers three majors with several different concentrations: Communication Studies with concentrations in Video/Film, Photography, and Public Relations, Graphic Design, and Journalism with concentrations in News-Editorial (print and web), Photojournalism (still, video, and multimedia), and Broadcast (talent).*

*Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university that prepares students to become critical thinkers, effective leaders and compassionate servants in the global community. Emphasizing a strong student-*

*centered experience and rigorous academics, Gardner-Webb ignites learning and service opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.*