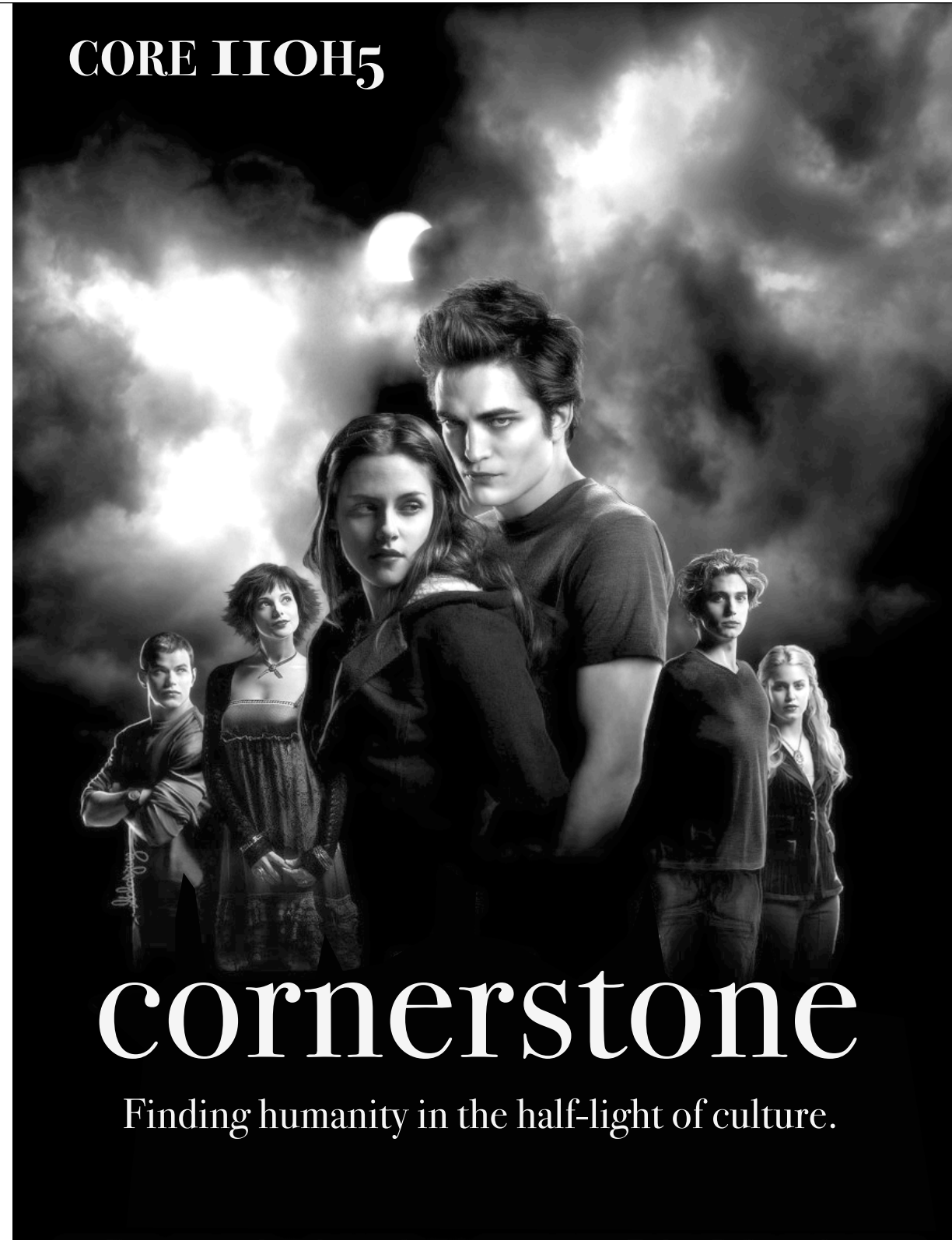


CORE II OH5



# cornerstone

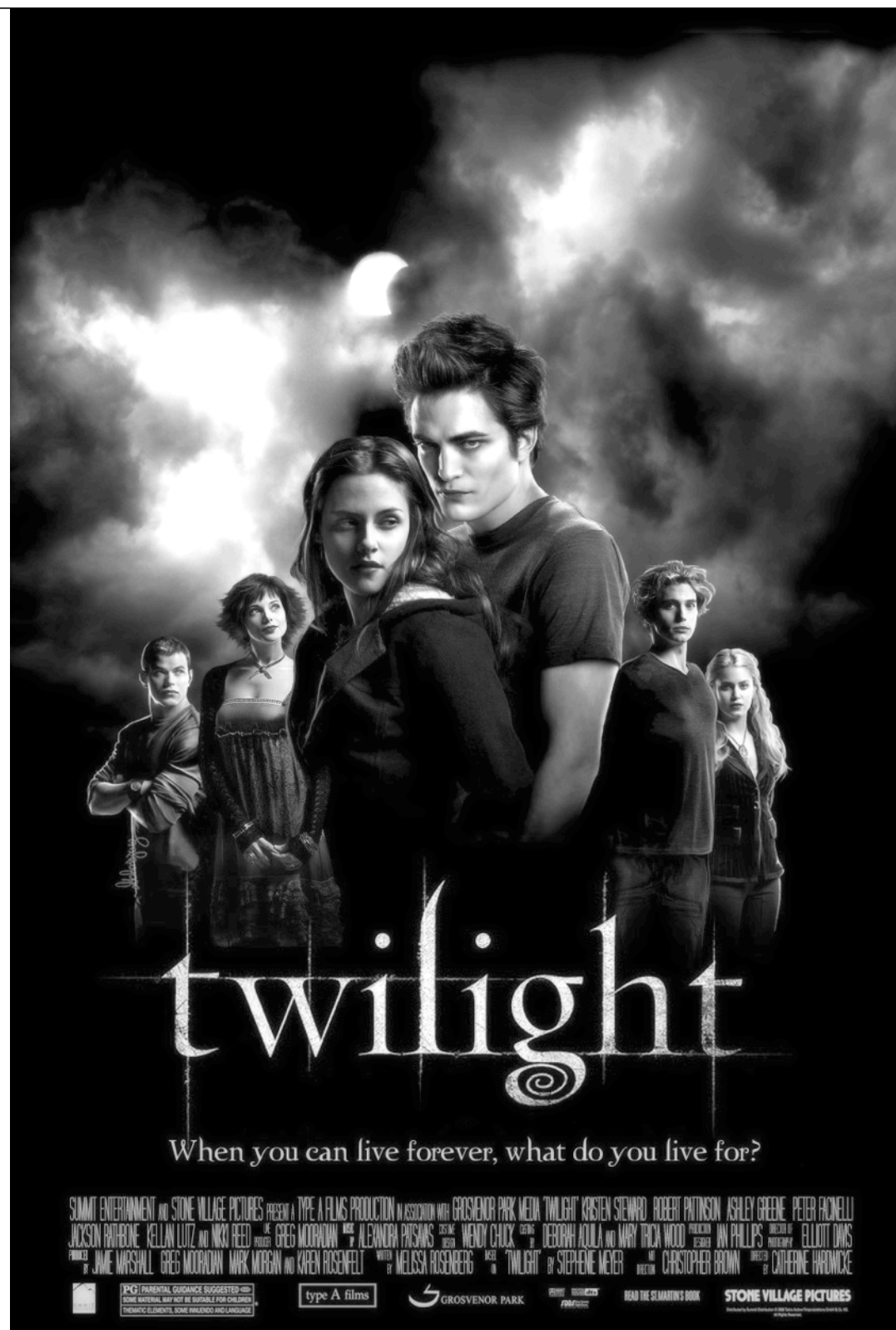
Finding humanity in the half-light of culture.



iBooks Author



*Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter* (2012)



Dr. Kyle Dickson  
(325) 513-9116  
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## **CORE 110. H5: Cornerstone**

### **ACU's Mission**

The mission of Abilene Christian University is to educate its students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world. The Cornerstone course aims to begin addressing this goal by teaching students to start thinking critically, globally, and missionally, and in the process help new students acclimate to the rigor of academic excellence and university life at ACU.

### **Course Resources**

**Cornerstone Portal**

**myCornerstone Blog**

Heath, Elaine. **The Gospel According to Twilight: Women, Sex, and God.** 2011.

### **Overview**

One definition of the term “cornerstone” is “a set of fundamental assumptions from which something is begun or developed.” This course is called a “cornerstone” class because it will build on what you have learned and experienced thus far in order for you to establish a foundation on which to build a successful academic experience. Thus, the ACU Cornerstone course is a three-hour, integrative course for first-year students that introduces a set of fundamental principles from which you will begin a holistic approach to education as Christian scholars.

This course begins your journey towards ACU's 21st Century Vision which states that ACU will provide you resources and experiences to "teach . . . [you] to think critically, globally, and missionally." These fundamental principles acknowledge that, while different disciplines have knowledge, the mind is not apart from the spirit, and scholarship informed by faith provides a robust intellectual experience. While most first-year students are well aware of the concept of knowledge acquisition, few have been exposed to the concepts of connecting and applying knowledge to other ideas, and how their assumptions and experiences influence their thought processes. Together, we will think and re-think, exploring intersections between assumptions, experiences, knowledge, and faith.

Because the purpose of this course is to engage you as a first-semester student in thinking critically, missionally, and globally about the ideas which shape our current and future views of ourselves, our communities, and of the cosmos, the course will give special attention to a Christian perspective of liberal education as a foundation for lifelong integration of faith, ideas, and action. You will participate in a series of "Spotlight" presentations, mentored class discussion, and personal and collaborative writing to reflect on how individually and as a culture we have come to understand the world and how we might change our understanding now and in the future.

Cornerstone sections meet together on Mondays in Cullen Auditorium for an introduction to the weekly theme through presentations in a large venue called "Spotlight." Then, on Wednesdays and Fridays, you will meet in an assigned classroom with your peer leader and me. Your peer leader, an upper-level ACU student, served as your group leader during Welcome Week and will attend and support our class throughout the semester.

"Spotlight" theme presenters will prepare suggested activities and discussion questions and assessments for the various Cornerstone section meetings on Wednesdays and Fridays, and we will draw on

their resources to discuss your thoughts about the presenter's ideas. We will work to go beyond introductory knowledge and comprehension of the topic and into application, analysis, and synthesis.

### ***Course Competencies***

Upon completion of Cornerstone, you will be well-integrated into the social, academic, and spiritual aspects of the university and will demonstrate the characteristics of one who will persist and complete a college degree.

As a result of successful completion of the course, you will

1. Define and give examples of critical, global, and missional thinking.
2. Demonstrate the ability to apply multi-disciplinary skills to important questions and to individual perspectives and scholarship from different disciplinary perspectives.
3. Identify and describe strengths and weaknesses of various sources of knowledge and disciplinary approaches to ways of knowing.
4. Define and describe self-awareness of one's own mental inventory or worldview.
5. Apply class lectures and materials to the student's personal worldview of knowledge.
6. Demonstrate basic oral and written skills in becoming better prepared for the intellectual, writing, and speaking challenges of the Integrated Core courses.

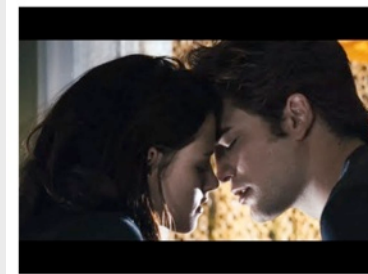




Bela Lugosi as *Dracula* (1931)



TRAILER  
*Dusk till Dawn* (1996)



TRAILER  
*Twilight* (2008)



TRAILER  
*Being Human* (2008)

## **CLASS ASSIGNMENTS**

### ***Quizzes and Weekly Assignments***

A quiz or assignment over the weekly reading and/or Spotlight presentation will be administered each Wednesday to engage you with the weekly material and enrich our class discussions on Wednesdays and Fridays.

### ***Discussion Blog Posts***

To foster learning outside of the classroom supported by mobile devices, we will be engaged in online discussions with each other within our section as well as with other university faculty, all Cornerstone faculty and/or the entire freshman class using the mobile blog interface. Do note that what you share on the blog will not be available for public access beyond ACU, and what we share with each other in our class will not be available for other professors and students to read. We will write a minimum of 5 blog posts.

### ***Oral Presentation***

For the oral presentation, you will select an experience that represents an important moment in your life and prepare a 2-3 minute speech about that experience. Your specific goal is to help your audience understand how you view human nature and the way your personal values and beliefs helped you process the event.

### ***Ways of Thinking Assignment***

Writing is both a means of expressing thought to others, but it is also a means by which we learn. This assignment is designed with both types of writing in mind: writing as learning and writing as communication to others.

This assignment will have four “scaffolding” assignments to prepare you to complete the final assignment, an annotated bibliography. Each

scaffolding assignment will use the two types of writing as well as honing your research skills and introducing you to research resources.

### ***Theatre Performance Response***

This assignment asks you to reflect on the experience attending a live theatrical performance as part of the Cornerstone class. The ACU Department of Theatre will present *Time Stands Still* a 2009 play by Pulitzer-Prize winner Donald Margulies about relationships, life transitions, and the ties of friendship. Your response will take the form of a short essay or blog post.

### ***Final Podcast***

One of the central themes of the Cornerstone course is learning to think about topics from different points of view. For the final project, you will create a short written paper or podcast (audio or video) that will challenge you to continue to engage this practice of thinking from multiple perspectives.

You must write the final exam essay to pass the course; you may not write the essay early. If the final examination is missed with permission, a grade of “I” will be assigned, and the final must be taken within the first six weeks of the following semester.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

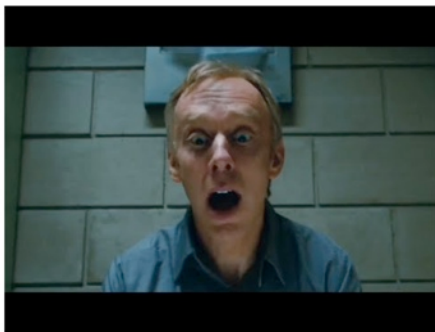
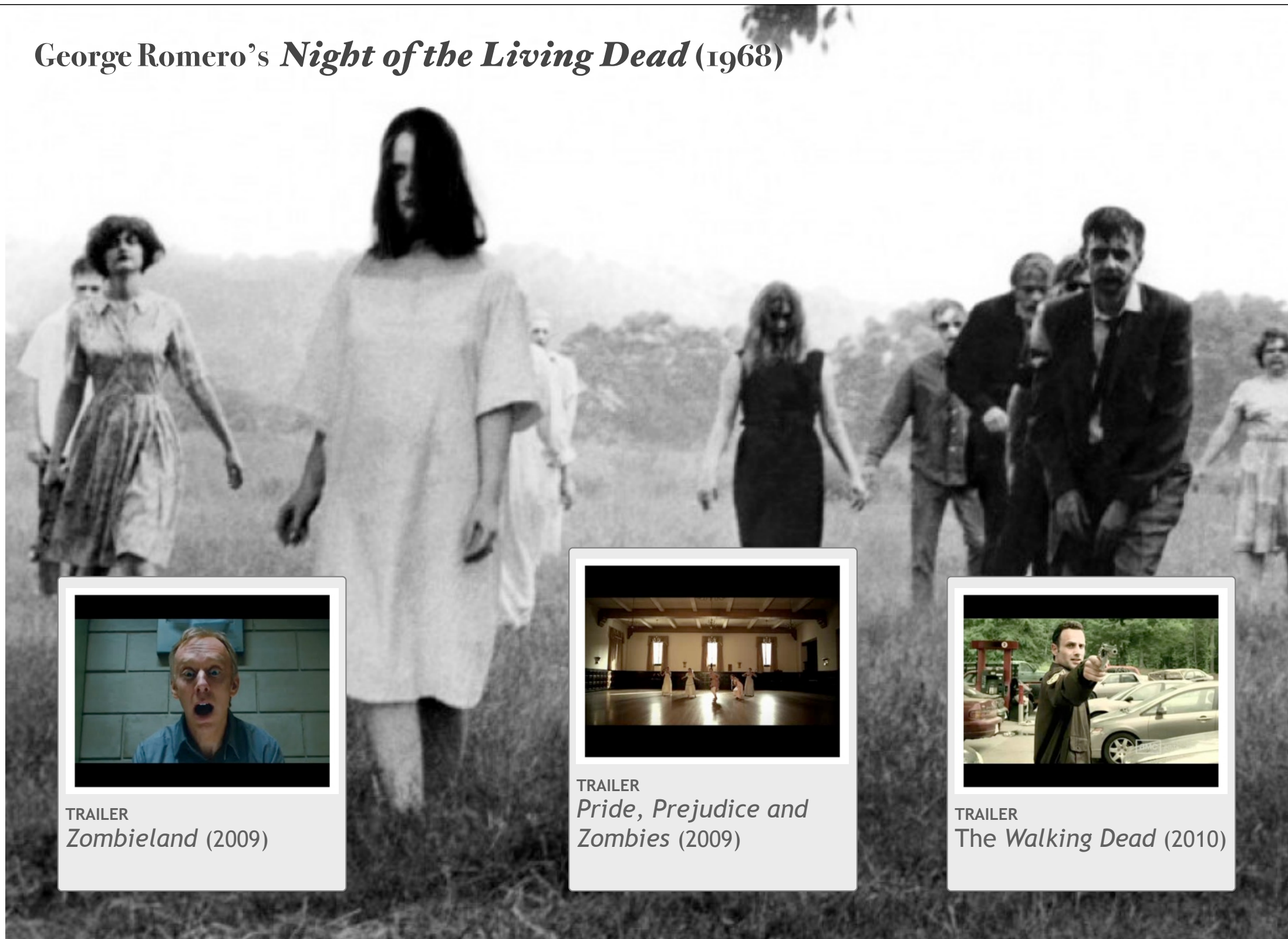
### ***Attendance and Participation***

You are expected to attend class unless documented sickness or University business prohibits your attendance. If you miss a class, you are responsible for the material covered and any assignments made.

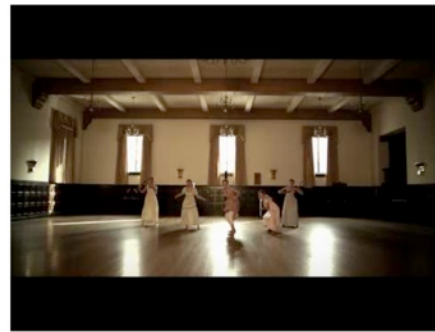
After 9 absences in a MWF class (both excused and unexcused), the student will receive an F at the end of the semester. Students who participate in official university activities must provide the required university form in advance to qualify for an excused absence.



## George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* (1968)



TRAILER  
*Zombieland* (2009)



TRAILER  
*Pride, Prejudice and  
Zombies* (2009)



TRAILER  
*The Walking Dead* (2010)



### ***Late Work***

Ignorance of an assignment will not excuse late work, as assignments and information are accessible on your iPhone/iTouch. Contact your peer leader or me if you have questions or concerns.

All assignments must be submitted by the due date given in the syllabus. Students may turn in one assignment late, but any subsequent late assignments will automatically receive a zero.

### ***Academic Integrity***

It is expected that all students will adhere to the University's Academic Integrity Policy. Violations will be addressed as described in the Policy. While the University enforces the Policy, the most powerful motive for integrity and truthfulness comes from one's desire to imitate God's nature in their life. Every member of the faculty, staff, and student body is responsible for protecting the integrity of learning, scholarship, and research. The full policy is available for review at the Provost's office web site ([www.acu.edu/campusoffices/provost](http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/provost)) and these offices: Provost, college deans, dean of campus life, director of student judicial affairs, director of residential life, and academic departments.

Consequences include lowering the grade on the assignment up to and including a zero on the assignment. A second violation will result in an F in the course and immediate referral to the Dean of Students. Any violation of this policy may result in the student being dropped from the course with a grade of "F". All incidents of academic integrity will be reported to the Dean of Student Life.

### ***Withdrawal and Repeat Policy***

Students may withdraw from Cornerstone; however, any student who does not complete the with a passing grade is required to retake it the next semester. This includes students who withdraw or fail the class.

### ***Special Needs Policy***

Abilene Christian University is dedicated to removing barriers and opening access for students with disabilities in compliance with ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The Alpha Scholars Program facilitates disability accommodations in cooperation with instructors. In order to receive accommodations, you must be registered with Alpha Scholars Program, and you must complete a specific request for each class in which you need accommodations. If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please call the Alpha office directly at (325) 674-2667.

ACU is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 93112 — The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens. As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide "reasonable accommodation" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty at the beginning of the semester and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels.

### ***Grade Weights***

Your grade in Cornerstone is based on completion of all course assignments.

Attendance and Participation (10%)

Quizzes: Results on reading quizzes will indicate a working knowledge of terms and main concepts from the Spotlight presentations and assigned readings.



Discussion: Be prepared and willing to participate in class discussions over the Spotlight presentations, reading and course materials.

Your attendance and participation grade will be based on 2 things: the grades you receive on your daily quizzes and your attendance grade. You'll receive the following grade for your attendance in class. 0-1 absences (100 points); 2 absences (90); 3 absences (85); 4 absences (80); 5 absences (75); 6 absences (70); 7 absences (65), 8-9 absences (60), 10+ (WF). Three tardies count as 1 absence.

Course blog: Create and respond to blog as assigned.(10-15%)

Ways of Thinking Assignment (35%)

Four scaffolding assignments, together worth 20 percent

Final assignment worth 15 percent

Oral Presentation (10-15%)

Theatre Performance Response (10-15%)

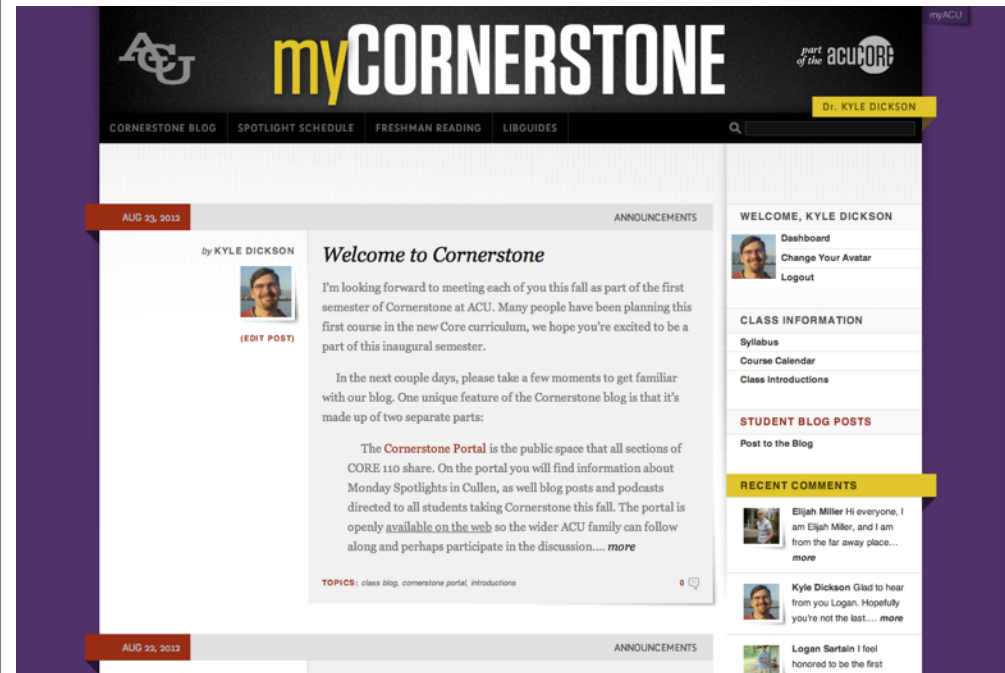
Final Podcast (10-15%)

Teacher's choice assignments (0-15%)

### **Grade Scale**

A (90-100%), B (80-89%), C (70-79%), D (60-69%), F (below 60%)

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**



***For assignment prompts and a complete schedule,  
check the myCornerstone BLOG.***