

22 Jump Street: Tatum and Hill generate chemistry again in hilarious college campus adventure

Written by Kam Williams

When we last saw LAPD Officers Morton Schmidt (Jonah Hill) and Greg Jenko (Channing Tatum), the partners were handed new identities and sent back to high school in order to crack a teen drug ring. However, that proved easier said than done, especially since the unathletic nerd and the academically-challenged hunk were both a little long in the tooth to pass for seniors.

Now, hard-boiled Captain Dickson (Ice Cube) has ordered the pair of polar-opposites undercover again, this time to masquerade as college students at Metro City State. Their assignment is to find the dealer on campus selling a lethal blend of Adderall and Ecstasy with the street name WHYPHY (as in "Wi-Fi").

Jenko and Schmidt's first order of business is to blend-in once they've matriculated and moved into the dorm. That proves to be a Herculean challenge, despite Jenko's enthusiasm about becoming "the first person in my family to pretend to go to college." For example, when a sociology professor innocently calls on him in class to answer a question about the War on Drugs, he defensively snaps, "Why would you ask me? I'm not a cop."

Schmidt doesn't fare much better, when he's derisively referred to as a "30 year-old 8th grader" by the wisecracking BFF (Jillian Bell) of the cute coed (Amber Stevens) he picks up at a poetry slam on open mic night. Further complicating matters is the fact that only after a consummating the relationship does he learn that the identity of her very overprotective father.

Thus unfolds "22 Jump Street," a worthy sequel which manages to eclipse an already outstanding original. This installment improves on 21 Jump by spinning a more engaging storyline and by further fleshing out the personalities of the likable leads.

The production also features Ice Cube in an expanded role while adding a number of notable support characters in Amber Stevens (daughter of Shadove Stevens, the voice of the skeleton on The Late, Late Show with Craig Ferguson. She plays) as the love interest, Jillian Bell as her relentlessly-rude roommate, and Kenny and Keith Lucas as the protagonists' terminally-eccentric dorm mates.

Of course, most of the film's focus remains on the hapless heroes as they make the most of the belated opportunity to experience college when not attempting to apprehend a most elusive perp. Hang around for the closing credits, and you'll be treated to ideas being floated for Jump Streets 23, 24 and beyond.

Tatum and Hill generate chemistry aplenty in a laff-a-minute, "bro"-mantic adventure every bit as funny as the first.

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