

**University of Calgary**  
**Department of Communication, Media and Film**  
**COMS 643 -S01**  
***Methods + Issues in Film Studies***  
**Fall 2018**  
**Sept 6, 2018 — Dec 7, 2018**  
**(excluding November 11-17)**

**Screenings (Labs): Wednesdays, 2:00PM - 4:45PM SS203**  
**Seminar: Fridays 2:00PM - 4:45PM SS203**

**Instructor:** Dr. Lee Carruthers  
**Office:** SS 232  
**Office Phone:** 210-8858  
**E-Mail:** lee.carruthers@ucalgary.ca  
**Web Page:** D2L  
**Office Hours:** Mondays, 2:45-4:45PM

### **Course Description**

This course seeks to familiarize students with a range of methods and issues entailed in film studies research. It is designed for those with a limited background who wish to augment their understanding of film-based topics and/or to successfully integrate such materials into their own research. Each week we will address one or more approaches deployed within the literature, using these essays as models of film scholarship that can be emulated and adapted to new research agendas. Specifically, the course will focus on developing skills of film analysis and description while investigating key theoretical, historical, and methodological formulations. Areas of focus include issues of medium specificity, decay, and preservation; realism and documentary; the film apparatus, identification, and the gaze; representations of race and gender; cultural analyses via the Frankfurt School; film-philosophy; new technologies and digitality. Filmmakers to be considered include Chantal Akerman, Jean-Luc Godard, Sergei Eisenstein, Werner Herzog, Alfred Hitchcock, Philip Hoffman, Marzieh Makhmalbaf, Chris Marker, Errol Morris, Bill Morrison, Jafar Panahi, Raoul Peck, Agnes Varda, Dziga Vertov, and others.

### **Additional Information**

In addition to the weekly seminar on Fridays, there is a separate screening time every Wednesday, also in SS203. The films are a required element of the course. If you are unable to attend the weekly screening, the films can be viewed online, or at the TFDL the following week. Please be advised that the films are central course texts, not merely supplements: missing a screening, or otherwise failing to view the films every week, will jeopardize your success in the course. Students are strongly encouraged to keep detailed screening notes as ongoing preparation for the course assignments.

### **Objectives of the Course**

As noted in the course description, there are five overlapping objectives:

- To reflect upon the unique qualities of the medium and their conceptual possibilities
- To become familiar with film terminology and analysis, so as to write accurately and fluently on film topics
- To read a range of significant film studies texts, engaging key approaches, issues, and debates in the field

- To become a more skillful film viewer, refining and deepening your assessment of film texts
- To enrich your current and future research activities by the application of new competences in film studies

### Textbooks and Readings

There is no single textbook for this course: a diverse selection of texts will be made available via **D2L**. Please note that all readings are **required**, unless otherwise designated, and should be completed every week before class.

### Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptops are for note-taking only. The use of cellphones and other electronic devices are not permitted during class time or film screenings. Your compliance with these policies is assumed: failure to do so will negatively impact your course grade.

### Assignments and Evaluation

#### Participation (weekly)

**10%**

Regular attendance and informed contributions to seminar discussion are essential course requirements.

#### In-class Presentation (selected dates)

**20%**

A 15-minute presentation that relates the assigned reading to the weekly film and initiates a robust discussion. The schedule of presentations will be settled in Week 2 (September 14<sup>th</sup>).

#### Film analysis + short report (due October 12<sup>th</sup>)

**20%**

Aesthetic analysis of an excerpt from one of the course screenings, paired with a short report (2 pages) discussing these details. The film excerpt will be assigned in advance, and a discussion prompt will be provided to frame your commentary.

#### Final Paper (due January 10<sup>th</sup> 2019)

**50%**

A paper that demonstrates the competences developed in the course and that benefits the students research interests. The paper may be research-driven, or analytically based: 20 pages, 5000 words (approx.)

### Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO

All assignments and exams must be completed or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

**Submission of Assignments:** Please hand in your essays directly to your instructor. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox. Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at final exams in SS 320 after classes have ended. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip>

**Note:** It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

For courses in which assignments are submitted electronically, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that

the correct copy of the assignment is submitted. (Including the version date or version number in your file name may help you avoid submitting the wrong version of your written assignments.)

### Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

### Student Accommodations

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/) Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

Please note:

1. Students seeking accommodations for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) should contact their instructors directly. Whenever possible, students should advise their instructors in advance if they will be missing quizzes, presentations, in-class assignments, or group meetings.
2. When accommodations are granted, they may take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test.
3. For information on Deferrals of Final Exams and Term Work, see sections G.6 and G.7 of the *University Calendar* at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html> and <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

### Support Services

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Student Accessibility Services (220-8237, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of the course.

### Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

### Grading System

Work in this course will be graded using [choose one] letter grades, GPA values (using any value on the 0 to 4.0 scale, including, e.g., 3.2 or 2.8). The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Faculty of Graduate Studies:

Grade	Grade Point Value	Graduate Description
A+	4	Outstanding

A	4	Excellent - superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.
A-	3.7	Very good performance
B+	3.3	Good performance
B	3	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.7	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.3	All grades below "B-" are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements. Individual programs may require a higher passing grade.
C	2	
C-	1.7	
D+	1.3	
D	1	
F	0	

### Plagiarism

**Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense.**

Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. **In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin.** Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there. **These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.** For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436>. If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor TFDL, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

### Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

### Research Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/resources/ethics>

### Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
<b>FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES</b> CMF Graduate Programs	<a href="http://grad.ucalgary.ca/home">http://grad.ucalgary.ca/home</a> or 403-220-4938 SS222 or 403-220-5623
<b>CAMPUS SECURITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calgary Police Service</li> <li>• Emergency Text Messaging</li> <li>• Emergency Evacuation &amp; Assembly</li> <li>• Safewalk Program</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a> 403-220-5333 403-266-1234      Emergency: call 911 <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints</a> If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort (220-5333). For more information, see <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a>
<b>DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT help line</li> </ul>	<a href="http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/">http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/</a> 403-220-5555 or <a href="mailto:itsupport@ucalgary.ca">itsupport@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Support Services</li> <li>• Student Services Mobile App</li> </ul>	<a href="http://ucalgary.ca/ssc">http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support">http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</a> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents">http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</a>
<b>GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Ombudsman</li> </ul>	<a href="http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/">http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/</a> <a href="http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/ombudsperson">http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/ombudsperson</a> (403) 220-6420 or <a href="mailto:ombuds@ucalgary.ca">ombuds@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty of Arts Reps</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html">http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html</a>
<b>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling Services</li> <li>• Health Services</li> <li>• Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE</li> <li>• Online resources and tips</li> </ul>	403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</a> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</a> 403-266-HELP (4357) <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</a> If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.

### Schedule of Lectures and Readings

A complete schedule of films + readings will be provided on D2L before the course begins.