

Film Studies (FILM) 201 – L60
Introduction to Film Studies
Summer 2012
Mo & We 12:00-16:50

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Office Hours: Tuesday 14:00-15:00 and by appointment

Course Description

An introduction to the main issues involved in studying and analyzing film including medium, story, photography, mise-en-scene, movement, editing, sound, and acting. Intended to prepare students for further work in film studies.

Note: Credit for both Film 201 and Film 200 will not be allowed

Objectives of the Course

This course is designed as an introduction to an interrelated set of approaches to film study, all of them defined by their attention to the cinematic text. The course begins with an extended examination of the elements of film form, principally style (mise-en-scène, cinematographic properties, editing, sound) and narrative (structure and narration). This portion of the course will provide students with the necessary terminology to analyze moving images, and will also fortify their analytical skills. After students have an initial grounding in the principles of film form, we will examine how different types of film operate formally. In this section of the course, we will look at a few types of film that typically do not depend upon narrative, before exploring other issues pertaining to narrative film. In particular, we will investigate analytical approaches to Hollywood films of the studio era, with a concentration on how the critical categories of genre and author have proven relevant. The final week of the course will examine animation.

The course is conceived of as the introductory course in the Film Studies program, and is designed primarily to provide students with a grasp of the fundamentals of film analysis. Through a series of quizzes, tests, a scene analysis, and a final exam, students will demonstrate both their mastery of key concepts in film analysis and their ability to apply those concepts in the critical analysis of cinema.

In order to achieve these objectives, it is imperative that students come to class **prepared**, having completed the assigned readings or other preparatory tasks and willing to discuss pertinent issues with both the instructor and their peers in a thoughtful and respectful manner.

Students are responsible for catching up on any material missed due to absence.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Mobile phones must be turned off during class. **No electronic devices whatsoever may be used during screenings.** Students may use laptops or tablets during lectures and discussions for note-taking purposes only.

Textbooks and Readings

David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction*, 9th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010).

This book is available for purchase in the University bookstore.

Additional readings will be available on Blackboard [BB].

Assignments and Evaluation

Detailed information about all assignments will be available on Blackboard.

- 5% Quiz on mise-en-scène and cinematography, held in class July 16. 10 multiple-choice questions.
- 5% Quiz on editing and sound, held in class July 23. 10 multiple-choice questions.
- 25% Mid-term test, held in class July 30. Multiple choice and short answer questions covering material from lectures, readings and screenings from the first six weeks of the course.
- 5% Quiz on documentary and avant-garde and experimental film, held in class August 8. 10 multiple-choice questions.
- 25% Sequence analysis, due August 13. Shot-by-shot analysis and 1000-word essay on a short scene from *The Searchers*.
- 35% Final examination. Held during the examination period. Multiple choice and short answer questions covering material from lectures, readings and screenings from the entire course.

The sequence analysis must be composed in formal, error-free, academic English, and formatted according to either MLA or Chicago documentation and presentation standards. Your name and student number must appear on each page. Please staple all work – no paper clips or folders. Documentation resources, including style guides, can be accessed on the course Blackboard site under “Links.”

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

Please hand in your assignments directly to your instructor if possible. 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.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: Yes

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.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, **students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.**

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. 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: www.efwr.ucalgary.ca

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

| | Grading Scale |
|-----|---------------|
| A+ | 96-100 |
| A | 90-95.99 |
| A - | 85-89.99 |
| B+ | 80-84.99 |
| B | 75-79.99 |
| B- | 70-74.99 |
| C+ | 65-69.99 |
| C | 60-64.99 |
| C- | 55-59.99 |
| D+ | 53-54.99 |
| D | 50-52.99 |
| F | 0-49 |

(Revised, effective September 2008)

Where a grade on a particular assignment is expressed as a letter grade, it will normally be converted to a number using the midpoint of the scale. That is, A- would be converted to 87.5 for calculation purposes. F will be converted to zero.

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. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor Taylor Digital Family Library, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Academic Misconduct

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

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333 Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

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

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site:

<http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics>

or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/cfreb>

Provisional Schedule of Lectures and Readings

All films with the exception of those followed by an asterisk (*) are available for short-term loan in the Visual and Performing Arts collection, located on the 3rd floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.

Session 1 Introduction (7/4)

Screening *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, 1940, 119 min)*
The Searchers (John Ford, 1956, 119 min)*

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| UNIT ONE: FILM FORM AND STYLE |
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Session 2 Mise-en-scène (7/9)

Screening *Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans* (F.W. Murnau, 1927, 95 min)*
Modern Times (Charlie Chaplin, 1936, 87 min)*
Reading *Film Art*, 118-159, 163-166

Session 3 Cinematography (7/11)
Screening *Touch of Evil* (Orson Welles, 1958, 112 min)*
Visions of Light: The Art of Cinematography (Glassman et al, 1992, 91 min)*
Reading *Film Art*, 167-222

Session 4 Editing (7/16)
Screening *The General* (Clyde Bruckman and Buster Keaton, 1926, 78 min)*
Casablanca (Michael Curtiz, 1942, 102 min)*
Reading *Film Art*, 223-268
Evaluation Quiz on mise-en-scène and cinematography (5%)

Session 5 Sound (7/18)
Screening *Blackmail* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1929, 84 min)*
Singin' in the Rain (Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly, 1952; 103 min)*
Reading *Film Art*, 269-297, 308-311

Session 6 Film Form (7/23)
Screening *The Wizard of Oz* (Victor Fleming, 1939, 101 min)
Reading *Film Art*, 56-76
Evaluation Quiz on editing and sound (5%)

Session 7 Narrative and Narration (7/25)
Screening *North by Northwest* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1959, 136 min)*
Reading *Film Art*, 78-116

UNIT TWO: TYPES OF FILM

Session 8 Avant-Garde and Experimental Film (7/30)
Evaluation Mid-term test (25%)
Screening *Ballet Mécanique* (Fernand Léger, 1924, 19 min)*
Un Chien Andalou (Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí, 1929, 16 min)*
Meshes of the Afternoon (Maya Deren and Alexander Hammid, 1943, 14 min)*
A MOVIE (Bruce Connor, 1958, 12 min)
Dog Star Man: Part I (Stan Brakage, 1962, 30 min)*
Scorpio Rising (Kenneth Anger, 1964, 28 min)*
Wavelength (Michael Snow, 1967, 44 min)
Reading *Film Art*, 366-381
Maya Deren, "Cinematography: The Creative Use of Reality," in *The Avant-Garde Film: A Reader of Theory and Criticism* (1978), 60-73 [BB]
Michael O'Pray, "The Avant-Garde Film: Definitions," *Avant-Garde Film: Forms, Themes, Passions* (2003), 1-7 [BB]

Session 9 Documentary (8/1)
Screening *Hoop Dreams* (Steve James, 1994, 170 min)
Reading *Film Art*, 349-356
Bill Nichols, "How Can We Define Documentary Film?," *Documentary Film* 2nd ed. (2010), 1-41 [BB]

8/6 ALBERTA HERITAGE DAY NO CLASS

Session 10 Genre (8/8)

- Screening *Top Hat* (Mark Sandrich, 1935, 101 min)*
The Tall T (Budd Boetticher, 1957, 77 min)*
- Reading *Film Art*, 328-331, 336-347
- Evaluation Quiz on avant-garde and experimental film and documentary (5%)

Session 11 Authorship (8/13)

- Screening *The 39 Steps* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1935, 86 min)*
Strangers on a Train (Alfred Hitchcock, 1951, 101 min)*
- Reading Andrew Sarris, "Towards a Theory of Film History," *The American Cinema: Directors and Directions 1929-1968* [1968] (New York: Da Capo Press, 1996), 19-37 [BB]
- David Sterritt, "Introduction," *The Films of Alfred Hitchcock* (Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1993), 1-27 [BB]
- Evaluation Sequence analysis

Session 12 Animation (8/15)

- Screening *The Band Concert* (Wilfred Jackson, 1935, 9 min)
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (David Hand et al., 1937, 83 min)
Duck Amuck (Chuck Jones, 1953, 7 min)
Fuji (Robert Breer, 1974, 8 min)
A Grand Day Out (Nick Park, 1989, 24 min)
Toy Story (John Lasseter, 1995, 81 min)
- Reading *Film Art*, 382-389
- Kristin Thompson, "Implications of the Cel Animation Technique," *The Cinematic Apparatus*, eds. Stephen Heath and Teresa de Lauretis (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), 106-120 [BB]
- Kristin Thompson, "By Annie standards," *Observations on Film Art*, <http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog/?p=178>.

Final exam held during the examination period