

University of Calgary  
Department of Communication and Culture

Film Studies (FILM) 331-01  
*Film Theory to 1950*  
Fall 2014  
Sep 10 2014 ~ Dec 5, 2014

Screenings (Labs): Wed 11:00AM - 1:45PM in SS203  
Lectures: Fri 12:00PM - 1:50PM in SS203

**Instructor:** Dr. Lee Carruthers  
**Office:** SS 232  
**Office Phone:** 210-8858  
**E-Mail:** Lee.Carruthers@ucalgary.ca  
**Web Page:** Course page via D2L available through MyUofC portal  
**Office Hours:** Fridays, 2-4PM. Please email to set an appointment.

### Course Description

*From the course calendar:* an introduction to theoretical perspectives on film before the mid-twentieth century. This course connects film with broader debates on aesthetics, medium specificity, genre, and realism, and includes theories developed in the first half of the 20th century related to silent film, Formalism, Montage, Critical Theory, and Auteur theories.

This course surveys the first broad phase of theoretical writings on cinema, sometimes referred to as 'classical film theory.' As such, we will examine an extensive range of critical commentary, engaging with fundamental questions about the film medium: what is the proper material, or 'essence' of cinema? What are its key methods and techniques? Is it an art equal to the other arts? What forms can cinema take, and what are the medium's possibilities? What can be considered the purpose or value of cinema? How do films affect individual viewers and culture at large? By taking this course, students will become familiar with the significant concepts and debates that constitute early film theory, while fulfilling the course objectives outlined below.

### Additional Information

As a course with a prerequisite, (FILM 201), this class assumes and requires your familiarity with **basic film terms**. For your reference, a 6-page *Glossary of Formal Terms* will be provided on the online course page. You are expected to use this

vocabulary correctly in class discussion and in your written assignments. The terms will also be **tested** as part of the first **Quiz** (details below).

### Objectives of the Course

This course asks you to pursue four overlapping aims:

1. To become familiar with the core issues of early film theory.
2. To become a sophisticated reader, engaging closely and critically with film-theoretical texts.
3. To discern relationships between the course readings and the weekly film screenings: what does each text reveal about the other?
4. To write clearly and authoritatively about films and film-theoretical issues, and thus to share in ongoing debates about the medium.

### Textbooks and Readings

Purchase from the University Bookstore:

- *Critical Visions in Film Theory: Classic and Contemporary Readings*. Edited by Timothy Corrigan, Patricia White with Meta Mazaj. (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 2011). Designated as 'CVFT' on the course schedule.

Additional **required readings** are accessible via D2L, designated as 'D' (D2L) or 'O' (Online) on the course schedule.

### Internet and electronic communication device information

This course observes a **strict laptop and cell phone policy**. Laptops are for note-taking only: laptop use for email, unauthorized browsing, etc. during class time will negatively impact your participation grade. Likewise, texting and cell phone use is not permitted: turn off these devices when you arrive at the classroom to avoid embarrassment, annoyance, and grade penalties.

### Assignments and Evaluation

Grades will be determined as follows:

<b>Participation</b>	Weekly (Online film responses + In-class contributions)	15%
<b>Quiz</b>	Week 4 / Oct. 3 <sup>rd</sup> (no alternate dates) (In-class, on readings + select terms)	10%
<b>Montage Assignment</b>	Week 8 / Oct 31 <sup>st</sup> (Film analysis in light of select readings)	20%

<b>Reading Exercise</b> (In-class, close reading + analysis of assigned text)	Week 12 / November 28 <sup>th</sup>	20%
<b>Final Exam</b> (All course materials)	Scheduled by registrar	35%

### Viewing Requirements

Students are required to attend *all* the screenings. If you miss one, it is your responsibility to view the film(s) at the Media Library (3<sup>rd</sup> floor, TFDL) as soon as you are able. Certain titles (though not all) may be available at local video stores, as well. These resources are *not* a substitute for the scheduled screenings, but may prove helpful for review purposes.

### Reading Requirements

The reading materials of this course are challenging and cannot be mastered quickly or superficially. You will need to set aside sufficient time to complete the readings every week and to reflect upon their content. If you find the texts difficult (and you will— theoretical writings are by nature ‘tricky’), *highlight the specific words and/or passages in question* and *raise these issues in class*. Other students will have similar questions, and will benefit from hearing yours. With consistent time and effort, completing the readings every week and engaging in discussion about them, the material will become more accessible. If your schedule doesn’t permit this kind of focused commitment, however, FILM 331 *is not for you*.

### Participation Requirements

Attendance and informed participation are essential components of this course and will determine your final grade. To succeed in the course, you must complete the assigned reading *before class* every week, so as to make informed contributions to discussion. There is also a simple task to be completed on a weekly basis, as follows:

After the Wednesday screening, but *before* the Friday deadline (cut-off time is Friday at 10PM), go to the Blackboard site to submit a **brief response to the film + weekly reading**. There will be a general question or prompt there for you to work with: in order to receive marks, your post must answer the question specifically and substantially. About a paragraph or so in length, your response should focus on a detail or raise a specific issue that you’d be willing to say more about in class. Please note that cursory, vague, or irrelevant commentary will not be credited.

**Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: YES**

Note: If your class is held in the evening, the Registrar's Office will attempt to schedule the final exam during the evening; however, there is NO guarantee that the exam will NOT be scheduled during the day.

**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 tutor or 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.

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 <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>

**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.

### **Students with Disabilities**

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. For details see <http://comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. 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 & Dept of Communication and Culture Grade Scale

Work in this course will be graded using letter grades. The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in Communication and Culture:

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Department grade scale equivalents	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations
4.00	Outstanding	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent—superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70		A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30		B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good--clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70		B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30		C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory—basic understanding of the subject matter.	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70		C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Minimal pass—marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00		D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.	F	00 - 49.99%	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 <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/node/208> . 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 <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/research/research-ethics>

## Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (PIC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 <a href="mailto:picarts@ucalgary.ca">picarts@ucalgary.ca</a>
CAMPUS SECURITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Calgary Police Service</li><li>• Emergency Text Messaging</li><li>• Emergency Evacuation &amp;</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/assembly">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assembly</a>

<p><b>Assembly</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Safewalk Program</b></li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">oints</a></p> <p>If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort (<b>220-5333</b>). For more information, see <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a></p>
<p><b>DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IT help line</b></li> </ul>	<p><a href="http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students">http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students</a></p> <p>403-220-5555 or <a href="mailto:itsupport@ucalgary.ca">itsupport@ucalgary.ca</a></p>
<p><b>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Writing Support Services</b></li> <li>• <b>Student Services Mobile App</b></li> </ul>	<p><a href="http://ucalgary.ca/ssc">http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support">http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</a></p> <p><a href="http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents">http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</a></p>
<p><b>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Faculty of Arts Reps</b></li> <li>• <b>Student Ombudsman</b></li> </ul>	<p><a href="http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html">http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds">http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds</a></p>
<p><b>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Counselling Services</b></li> <li>• <b>Health Services</b></li> <li>• <b>Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE</b></li> <li>• <b>Online resources and tips</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>403-210-9355</b> (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm</p> <p><a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</a></p> <p><a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</a></p> <p><b>403-266-HELP (4357)</b></p> <p><a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</a></p> <p>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.</p>

### Schedule of Lectures and Readings

A complete schedule of films + readings will be made available when the course begins.