

FILM 591 L01
Senior Seminar in Film Studies
Film and the City: Urbanity in Postmodern Canadian Cinema
Winter 2011

Lab Mon. 12:00-14:50 and Lecture Wed. 12:00-13:50

Instructor: Professor George Melnyk

Office
Location: SS218

Office Phone: 403-220-7562

E-Mail: gmelnik@ucalgary.ca

Office Hours: Wed. 11:00-11:50

Additional Information

This is a seminar course in which students will be making class presentations. The course consists of a Monday film screening (lab) and a Wednesday seminar (lecture).

Course Description

This is the senior seminar in film studies. This semester's topic is the representation of the city in Canadian feature films from 1989 to 2006. Students are expected to have a solid grounding in both film theory and film history. The course deals with issues of genre, authorship, and various cultural grammars such as gender, generation, and nationality in the construction of Canadian urbanity. Beginning with Quebec and moving across the country to the west coast the course focuses on auteur directors, whose urban vision reflects their experience of the city they have constructed. As a representation of society urban films create an imagined place based on differing cultural grammars. Each city is transformed depending on the cultural grammars that influence the director. The course will explore the concept of the "urban-imaginary" and how it contributes to a macro-characterization of postmodern Canadian feature films.

Objectives of the Course

To challenge the film studies knowledge of senior students by applying it to the specific subject of urbanity;

To explore how cinematic representations of urbanity are constructed using visual imagery, character, plot and dialogue.

To analyze specific cultural grammars result in a specific re-creation of urbanity;

To discuss how genre and authorship interact to produce variant versions of a single city.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptop computers may be used in class for taking notes only. Other devices such as smart phones must be turned off during class.

Textbooks and Readings:

Students will be required to read George Melnyk's "Film and the City: Urbanity in Postmodern Canadian Cinema" in manuscript-form. The book will be available on-line in Blackboard beginning January 03, 2011 in weekly installments for reading or downloading.

Assignments and Evaluation

1. Oral Presentation worth 15% of the final grade.

Each student is required to make one oral presentation of a topic during the course. The presentation will be based on their research paper that deals with a film or films in the course. The oral presentation will be marked 5% for quality of the student's explanation of their research topic and argument, 5% for their defense of their position during the seminar, and 5% for their critique of the relevant manuscript chapter.

2. Research Paper worth 40% of the final grade

Each student is required to prepare, defend, and submit a research paper on the topic that they have chosen and approved by the instructor. A first draft of the research paper will be due to all students one week prior to the session in which the student will defend it orally and the final draft will be due to the instructor one week after the oral defense. The research paper will be 2500-3500 words in length. Specific requirements for the paper will be available on the Detailed Course Outline posted on Blackboard on January 03, 2011.

3. Mid-Term Test worth 45% of the final grade

Each student is required to write the mid-term test on Monday, March 14, 2011 (13:20-14:50) during the scheduled Lab period. The test will consist of 3 questions on course content up to and including Wed. March 9, 2011 (Chp. 7).

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

Note: 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.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

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

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late (not including weekends), unless a documented medical emergency or similar serious reason is provided. No assignments will be accepted after the last day of classes (April 15, 2011). Assignments submitted after that date will receive a grade of 0.

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:

(Revised, effective September 2008)

	Grading Scale
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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

All assignments will receive a number grade, which will be converted to an explanatory letter grade. The sum total of the number grades (not the letter grades) will constitute the final letter grade for the course. E.g. Oral (12) + Paper (34) + Test (40) = 86 = A- (Final grade).

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 (MacEwan Student Centre 4th floor, efwr.ucalgary.ca) 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>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

The Detailed Course Outline with the schedule of screenings, seminar topics, and weekly readings will be posted on Blackboard on January 03, 2011.