

Introduction to Film Studies
Film 1020E – Section 003
The University of Western Ontario
Department of Film Studies 2011-2012

Dr. Charles Burnetts
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Office: UC 69
Office hours:
Friday: 10:00am - 11:30am

Tutorial leaders:
Kyle Tabbernor
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Screenings: Wednesday 6-9 pm (Room 3250 3M Centre)
Lectures: Thursday 3:30-4:30pm (MC 110)
Tutorials (UC12): Friday 9:30-10:30, 10:30-11:30, 11:30-12:30, 12:30-1:30,
1:30-2:30

Course Description

This course provides a broad introduction to the study of film. As a yearlong introduction to film studies, this course will explore the concepts of film form, film aesthetics, and film style, while remaining attentive to the various ways in which cinema always also involves an interaction with both specific audiences and larger social structures. Throughout the course, we will closely examine the construction of a variety of film forms and styles—including the classical Hollywood style, new wave cinemas, experimental films, and contemporary independent and global cinemas. We will pay particular attention to the construction of film images, systems of film editing, film sound, and the varied modes of organizing these core elements (narrative, non-narrative, etc.). The second term of the course will focus on key perspectives in the history of film theory, including theories of realism, montage, spectatorship, stardom and genre. Overall, the goal of the course is to help you develop a set of skills that will enable you both to experience and analyze all forms of cinema in newly exciting (and critical) ways.

Course Objectives

To develop critical awareness of film as an artistic medium, refine critical thinking skills, and learn how to analyze film language (the construction of film images, systems of film editing, film sound, and the varied modes of organizing these core elements {narrative, non-narrative, etc.}).

Course Texts (available at the UWO Bookstore in UCC)

Required:

1. Timothy Corrigan and Patricia White, *The Film Experience: An Introduction* [FE]
2. Jeffrey Geiger and R.L. Rutsky, eds., *Film Analysis: A Norton Reader* [FA]
3. Jane Haig, Gail Raikes, and Vicki Sutherland, *Cites and Sources*
4. A course-pack of additional readings [CP]
5. Susan Hayward, *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts*, Second Edition [CS]

Please note that many of the readings selected for the course involve specialized terms and/or ideas that may initially be unfamiliar to you. While the lecturer and tutorial leaders will work hard to help you understand the material presented, success in the course will require that you actively rise to the challenge of mastering it. This means doing the readings before the lectures, returning to them after the lectures, and being prepared to discuss them in detail in your tutorial. Susan Hayward's dictionary *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts* is a valuable reference that you might also want to consult independently if you are unsure about the meaning of certain terms or concepts. You are expected to bring hard-copies of the readings to the lectures and tutorials.

Screenings

It is very important that you see the course films projected on a large screen. You are thus required to attend weekly screenings on Wednesday evenings at 6 pm (attendance will be taken), including screenings of films you may have already seen. Students are responsible for making up any screenings they may miss. Study copies of most (but not all) films to be screened will be available in UC 1, but a video screening at a monitor does not substitute for full-screen projection. Please arrive on time for screenings and follow the screening etiquette (turn off cell phones, no talking, etc.). You should take notes, either during or shortly after the screening.

Course Requirements

All students are required to attend all screenings, lectures, and weekly tutorial meetings. Tutorial is not an optional element of this class. Students must come prepared to participate in tutorial discussions based on the week's assigned readings and screenings. Notes should be taken immediately following screenings—films shown in this class are texts to be studied and analyzed; such examination cannot occur without appropriate records of information. Students should come to class with questions and/or comments that have arisen from readings and viewings. Students should make notes during lectures and tutorials, with a view to developing or challenging some of the points expressed.

Assignments:

Fall Term: 35%

- Class Attendance and Tutorial Participation [5%]
- Exam 1 (week 7, 60 min) [5%]
- Essay 1 – Mise-en-scène Analysis (1000 words; due week 9) [10%]
- Essay 2 – Sequence Analysis (shot breakdown + 1500 word analysis; due week 12) [15%]

Winter Term: 65%

- Class Attendance and Tutorial Participation [5%]
- Exam 2 (week 17, 90 min.) [10%]
- Essay 3 – Research Paper (1500-2000 words; due week 24) [20%]
- Final Exam – (see UWO exam schedule, 180 min) [30%]

Attendance and Participation:

Please arrive on time to ALL lectures, tutorials, and screenings. Students must attend all screenings, including those for films already seen—assignments are based on films screened in class and require up-to-date viewings. Study copies of most (but not all) films for this course are available in UC 1, but a small-screen video viewing does not compare with a large-screen projection, or with the experience of viewing a film with an audience. Attendance will be taken during each lecture, screening and tutorial—it is the student's responsibility to ensure his or her attendance has been noted. Students who miss class are responsible for contacting their tutorial leader to explain the circumstances. In addition to attendance, the quality and frequency of participation in tutorial discussion will determine 10% of the student's grade; consistent improvement in assignments is expected over the year. Participation marks will be awarded for active and informed engagement in tutorial discussions; special consideration is also awarded for participation in lecture.

Exams:

There will be one in-class exam in each term and one comprehensive final exam at the end of the course. Exams will typically feature an identification section (film clips, key concepts, key figures, etc.), short answer questions, and a longer essay question. Exams will cover material from screenings, readings, lectures, and tutorial discussion. In-class exams will take place at the beginning of Wednesday screening sessions, so be sure to arrive promptly. The final exam for the course will take place during the scheduled time slot for the second term (TBA).

Paper Assignments:

There will be three major paper assignments for the course. The first two papers will be due during the first term (see dates on the course schedule) and will consist of a mise-en-scène analysis and a longer sequence analysis/shot breakdown. These assignments are meant to help you develop the skills of close film analysis, which you will then incorporate into your longer research paper at the end of the winter term. Grading

guidelines are included in the syllabus; please review them carefully.

Paper assignments must be turned in at the beginning of your tutorial session on the week that the paper is due. Extensions may be given at the discretion of your tutorial leader, but you must request an extension at least one week in advance of the due date and provide a reasonable excuse. Be advised that no extension will be given to a student on the day the assignment is due, and extensions do not apply to exams. Essays that are emailed, faxed, or slipped under your tutorial leader's office door will not be accepted.

Student behaviour during lectures, tutorials and screenings

Students are required to behave respectfully in all sessions. Sitting in an orderly manner is required (e.g. no legs up, no sleeping etc.) and no eating is permitted for any sessions. **Laptops** – will be permitted in sessions EXCEPT for screenings. Absolutely no use of laptops or handheld devices in screenings. You are expected to attend to the screening only. Laptop use in any other session must be confined to note-taking – any use of internet browsers or other non note-taking applications during sessions may be noted and will adversely effect your participation grade.

Use of **handheld devices** is not permitted at any time during any session of 1020 E. Please have them turned off. Any use of a handheld device during sessions will be noted and will adversely effect your participation grade.

Late Paper Policy:

Late papers may be penalized at the rate of 5 marks for the first day, and 2 marks for every subsequent day late. If an assignment is late due to illness or other legitimate reasons, students must contact their tutorial leader as soon as possible with supporting documentation. If a student feels he or she has a reasonable request for an extension for an assignment, he or she must discuss this with the tutorial leader—the course lecturer will not grant extensions to students in other tutorials. Paper due dates in sections of Film 1020 other than 003 have no bearing whatsoever on the specific due dates for this section of 1020.

Final Grades:

You must receive a passing grade for both term work and the final exam to receive a passing grade in a Film Studies course. Students whose term and final exam grades average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. In addition, all assignments must be completed or you will receive an automatic failure for the course.

Assignment Guidelines:

- Very fine ideas are often buried under incomprehensible writing.

Students must ensure that their assignments are produced using effective writing skills. Investigate Western's Effective Writing Program in the Student Development Centre in the University Community College, which offers both drop-in and on-line services.

- If you have difficulties with the English language, or if you have a learning, reading, or writing disability, please see your tutorial leader and lecturer regarding UWO's regulations and considerations regarding these matters.
- Essays must be written in MLA format. Follow the format outlined in *Cites and Sources: an MLA Documentation Guide*. Papers not completed in the MLA format may not be accepted for grading.
- In general, assignments are due during the Lecture Period. Those assignments not handed directly to the tutorial leader in Lecture, must be submitted to the Film Studies DROP-BOX, located outside UC 80. All assignments must indicate, clearly, on the first page: student name; student number; tutorial leader's name; course title and number (Film 1020-003). All essays submitted to the DROP-BOX are date-stamped. If an essay is submitted between 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m., it will date-stamped with the previous day's date. Essays are not accepted by e-mail.
- Students must also submit an electronic copy of all assignments to turnitin.com, which is accessed through Web CT.
- Students who miss tests must provide tutorial leaders with a medical certificate or other written documentation which explains their absence as soon as possible. Or, students may go through their Academic Advisor to handle such arrangements.
- All assignments for this course must be completed. Failure to do so will result in an automatic F for the course.
- Students must write essays in their own words. Ideas or passages of text taken or learned from another source must be properly documented: this debt must be indicated by using quotation marks where appropriate and by referencing source material in footnotes, endnotes, and bibliographies. Plagiarism is a serious offence and is prosecuted to the fullest extent that UWO regulations allow. To avoid plagiarism, all assignments are downloaded to turnitin.com. Essays that are not downloaded to this site will not be graded. All students should consult and ensure they understand the definitions and applications of UWO's Plagiarism Policy as outlined in the current UWO Calendar.
- If you feel an assignment has not been graded fairly, you must first make an appointment with your tutorial leader to discuss the grade. If you still believe your grade is unfair, you may make an appointment to discuss the matter with the course lecturer—discussion of an appeal with the course lecturer can only transpire after you have met with your tutorial leader. For further information on the appeals process, visit the Film Studies Department web site at <http://www.uwo.ca/film/> and click on —Student Information.||

Office Hours and Communicating With Instructors:

The lecturer and tutorial leaders will hold weekly office hours. The lecturer's office hours are posted above; tutorial leaders will communicate their office hours to their students during their first class meetings. Students are encouraged to take advantage of these times of availability. We are happy to discuss assignments and course progress, suggest further readings and research, and clarify and expand upon issues from lecture and tutorial discussion. Do not wait until the week before assignments are due to consult instructors as their time may already be booked. Written messages can be left for us at the Department of Film Studies main office, UC 80, with Jennifer Tramble. E-mail messages to the course lecturer will be responded to within 2 days; consult your tutorial leader for her individual policy on e-mail communication.

Course Schedule:

N.B. The screening list is subject to change. Students will be notified in advance if a change is necessary. Abbreviations for readings:

FALL TERM

Week 1—Sept. 8-10—Introduction

Reading: FE 15-57
No screening

Section 1 – THE SHOT– COMPOSING IMAGES

Week 2—Sept. 14-16—Mise-en-scène

Reading: FE 62-93, FA 776-793, CS entries on *mise-en-scène*, *lighting*, *colour*, *Black cinema*
Screening: *Do The Right Thing* (Spike Lee, US 1989, 120m)

Week 3—Sept. 21-23—Cinematography I

Reading: FE 96-121, FA 301-317, CS entries on *French poetic realism*, *deep focus*, *shot*
Screening: *The Rules of the Game*, (*La règle du jeu*), (Jean Renoir, France, 1939, 110m)

Week 4—Sept. 28-30—Cinematography II

Reading: FE 122-133, CS entries on *thriller*
Screening: *M* (Lang, Germany, 1931, 110m.) & clips from

Section II: MONTAGE - COMBINING IMAGE AND SOUND

Week 5—Oct. 5-7—Editing I

Reading: FE 136-166, Warren Buckland, *Directed by Steven Spielberg: Poetics of the Contemporary Hollywood Blockbuster*, pp. 86-110 (uploaded to Webct).
CS entries on *continuity editing*, *editing*, *eyeline match*, *shot/reverse-angle shot*, *180-degree rule*
Screening: *Jaws* (Spielberg, USA, 1975, 124 m.)

Week 6—Oct. 12-14—Editing II

Reading: FE 166-183, FA 566-581, CS entries on *cut*, *French New Wave*, *jump cut*
Screening: *Breathless (À bout de souffle)* (Godard, France, 1960, 87 m.)

Week 7—Oct. 19-21—Film Sound I

Reading: FE 183-198, FA 440-455 CS entries on *musical* and *sound*
Screening: *Singin' in the Rain* (Donen and Kelly, USA, 1952, 103m.)

Exam # 1 before the screening

Week 8—Oct. 26-28—Film Sound II

Reading: FE 198-223, Altman, —The Material Heterogeneity of Recorded Sound|| [CP]
Screening: *The Conversation* (Francis Ford Coppola, US 1974, 113m)

SECTION III: NARRATION – THE LANGUAGE OF FILM

Week 9—Nov. 2-4—Narrative Principles

Reading: FE 228-259, FA 340-361, CS entry on narrative/narration
Screening: *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, US 1941, 119m)

****Essay #1 due in tutorial

Week 10—Nov. 9-11—Classical Hollywood Narrative/John Ford as Auteur

Reading: FA 319-338, Bordwell —Classical Hollywood Cinema|| [CP], Kuhn —The Classic Narrative System|| [CP], CS entry on *Classical Hollywood Cinema, Oedipal trajectory*
Screening: *Stagecoach* (John Ford, US 1939, 96m)

Week 11—Nov. 16-18—Alternative Narrative: Art Cinema

Reading: Bordwell, —The Art Cinema as a Mode of Film Practice|| [CP], Peter Brunette, *The Films of Michelangelo Antonioni*, pp. 109-126 (uploaded to WebCt), CS entry on *art cinema*
Screening: *Blow Up*, (Michaelangelo Antonioni, 1966, UK/Italy/USA, 111m)

SECTION IV: TYPES OF FILM

Week 12—Nov. 23-25—Avant-Garde

Reading: FE 301-329, Dulac, “From Visual and Anti-Visual Films” [CP], “The Essence of Cinema: The Visual Idea” [CP], “The Avant-Garde Cinema” [CP], CS entry on *avant-garde*
Screening: *Ballet Mécanique* (Fernand Léger & Dudley Murphy, F 1924, 14m), *Un chien andalou* (Luis Buñuel & Salvador Dali, F 1928, 17m, *Meshes of the Afternoon* (Maya Deren, US 1943, 14m), *Mothlight* (Stan Brakhage, US 1963,

4m), *La Jetée* (Chris Marker, F 1966, 28m), *A Movie* (Bruce Conner, US 1958, 12m), *Windowlicker* (Chris Cunningham, 16min, UK 1999),

***Essay # 2 due in tutorials

Week 13—Nov. 30-Dec. 2—Documentary

Reading: FE 271-299, FA 118-137, Nichols, —Why Are Ethical Issues Central to Documentary Filmmaking?|| [CP], CS entry on documentary

Screening: Excerpt from *Nanook of the North* (Robert Flaherty, US 1922, 30m approx.),

Night Mail (Watt and Wright, 1936, 25m)

Bowling for Columbine (Moore, 2002, USA, 120m)

Fall term ends

WINTER TERM

Week 14—Jan. 11-13—Genre I: The Western

Reading: FE 332-367, Kitses, “Authorship and Genre” [CP], Warshow “The Movie Chronicle: The Westerner” [CP], CS entry on *Westerns*

Screening: *Red River* (Howard Hawks, US 1948, 133m)

Week 15—Jan. 18-20—Genre II: Film Noir

Reading: FA 380-399, Schrader, “Notes on Film Noir” [CP], Place/Peterson, “Some Visual Motifs in Film Noir” [CP], Placey, “Women in Film Noir” [CP], CS entry on *Film noir* and *genre*

Screening: *Double Indemnity* (Billy Wilder, US 1944, 102m)

SECTION V: CLASSICAL FILM THEORIES

Week 16—Jan. 25-27— Realism

Reading: FE 90-92, 406-412, 458-463, 478-482, FA 422-439, Bazin, “The Evolution of the Language of Cinema” [CP], “Ontology of the Photographic Image” [CP], —An Aesthetic of Reality: Neorealism|| [CP], CS entries on Italian *Neo-Realism* and *realism*

Screening: *Bicycle Thieves* (Vittorio de Sica, I 1948, 93m)

Week 17—Feb. 1-3— Formalism

Reading: FE 178-182, 477-448, FA 158-177, Eisenstein, “A Dialectical Approach to Film Form” [CP], “The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram,” [CP], CS entries on *Soviet Cinema* and *futurism*
Screening: *Battleship Potemkin* (Sergei Eisenstein, USSR 1925, 75m)

***Feb 1: Exam # 2 before the screening

Week 18—Feb. 8-10—Authorship

Reading: FE 463-469, Tudor, *Theories of Film* (excerpt) [CP], Sarris, “What is the Auteur Theory” [CP], Sterritt, *The Films of Alfred Hitchcock* (Introduction) [CP], CS entries on *auteur*
Optional reading: FA 474-493
Screening: *Rear Window* (Alfred Hitchcock, US 1954, 112m)

SECTION VII: CINEMA, SOCIETY, AND IDEOLOGY

Week 19—Feb. 15-17—Political Critique and Counter-Cinema

Reading: FE 438-442, 485-491, Comolli/Narboni, “Cinema/Ideology/Criticism” [CP], Wollen, “Godard and Counter-Cinema: *Vent d'Est*” [CP], CS entry on *modernism* and *counter-cinema*
Screening: *Weekend* (Jean-Luc Godard, F 1967, 105m)

Week 20—Feb. 20-24— READING WEEK: No class!

Week 21—Feb. 29-Mar. 2—Feminist Film Theory

Reading: FE 124-126, 492-494, Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” [CP], McCabe, *Feminist Film Studies* (excerpt) [CP], CS entries on *apparatus*, *scopophilia*, *voyeurism*, *gaze/look* and *imaginary/symbolic*
Screening: *Peeping Tom* (Michael Powell, UK, 1960, 101 m.)

Week 22—Mar. 7-Mar. 9—Film Historiography: Early Cinema and the Cinema of Attractions

Reading: FE 138-139, 372-387, 393-395, FA 42-63, 64-82, Gunning, “The Cinema of Attractions” [CP]
Screening: Edison Kinetoscopic Record of a Sneeze (Edison, US 1994, 5 sec), Sandow – The Strong Man (Edison, US 1894, 1min), Annabelle Serpentine Dance (Edison, US 1895, 1min), Arrival of the Train at Ciotat (August and Louis Lumière, F 1895, 1min), Leaving Jerusalem by Railway (August and Louis Lumière, F

1895, 1min), The Sprinkler Sprinkled (August and Louis Lumière, F 1895, 1min), Niagara (August and Louis Lumière, 1897, 1min), The Execution of Mary, Queen of Scots (Edison, US 1895, 1min), How It Feels to Be Run Over (Hepworth, 1900, 1min), Explosion of a Motorcar (Hepworth, UK 1900, 1min), Attack on a China Mission (Williamson, UK 1900, 1min), Electrocuting an Elephant (Edison, US 1903, 1min), What Happened in the Tunnel (Edison, US 1903, 1min), Life of an American Fireman (Porter, F 1903, 6min), San Francisco: Aftermath of Earthquake (Anon., US 1906, 1min), A Trip to the Moon (Méliès, F 1902, 12min), Great Train Robbery (Porter, US 1903, 12min), The Living Playing Cards (Méliès, F 1905, 3min), Rescued By Rover (Fitzhamon/Hepworth, UK, 1905, 7min), Dream of A Rarebit Fiend (Edison, US 1906, 7min), Lonedale Operator (Griffith, US 1911, 17min), Revenge of the Cameraman (Wladyslaw Starewicz, Russia, 1912, 12min)
 + excerpts from: The Birth of a Nation (D.W. Griffith, US 1915, ca. 30min)

Week 23—Mar. 14-Mar. 16—Cultural Studies: Fans and Audiences

Reading: FE 442-447, 495-499, Jenkins “Reception Theory and Audience Research: The Mystery of the Vampire’s Kiss” [CP], Willis, “Hardware and Hardbodies, What Do Women Want?: A Reading of *Thelma and Louise*” [CP], CS entries on *road movie*, *preferred reading*, *queer cinema*
Screening: *Thelma and Louise* (Ridley Scott, USA 1991, 129m)

SECTION VIII: BEYOND HOLLYWOOD

Week 24—Mar. 21-Mar. 23—Third (World) Cinema and Postcolonialism

Reading: FE 416-421, Solanas/Gettino, “Towards a Third Cinema” [CP], Stam/Spence, “Colonialism, Racism, and Representation: An Introduction” [CP], CS entry on *Third cinema* and *postcolonial theory*
Screening: *The Battle of Algiers* (Gillo Pontecorvo, Algeria/Italy 1966, 121m)

*** Essay #3/Research Paper due in Tutorials

Week 25—Mar. 28-Mar. 30—Hongkong Cinema and Postmodernism

Reading: FE 502-505, Marchetti, “Buying American, Consuming Hong Kong: Cultural Commerce, Fantasies of Identity, and the Cinema” [CP], Jameson, “Postmodernism and Consumer Society” [CP], CS entry on *postmodernism*
Screening: *Chungking Express* (Wong Kar-Wai, Hong Kong 1994, 102m)

Week 25—Apr. 4-Apr. 6— Digital and Indigenous Film

Reading: FE: 118-119, 447-453

Screening: *Atanarjuat/The Fast Runner* (Zacharias Kunuk, Canada, 2001, 172m)