

WORLD CINEMA

(Film Studies 2251E)

Fall 2011 / Winter 2012

Instructor: Prof. Constanza Burucúa

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Office: UC Room 72

Office Hours: Monday 1.30 to 2.30 and Wednesday 11.30 to 12.30

TIMETABLE

Screening Tuesday 3:30-6:30 (UC 84)

Lecture/tutorial Thursday 9:30-11:30 (UC 84)

DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE

The course aims to introduce students to issues and concepts in World Cinema, referring to a body of films made in Latin America, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. The first module of the course is organized around these geographic divisions, beginning with Latin America, where the concept of Third Cinema, which lies at the core of the later articulation of that of World Cinema, was originally formulated. Following a geographical (and somewhat chronological) order, throughout the module we shall integrate and discuss the key theoretical categories and the main historiographic strands which guide our understanding of World Cinema. In the second module of the course, the consecutive units focus on different critical approaches to particular case studies of non-Western cinemas, successively concentrating on questions concerning the representation of racial, ethnic and cultural identities, on the matter of female authorship, and on issues of genre and stardom.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE / LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course students will have gained familiarity with some canonical texts produced in Latin America, Asia and Africa since the 1950s up to date. They will be able to analyze and critically appraise a wide range of films from an equally wide range of theoretical approaches. They will develop an informed understanding of the multidimensional nature (socio-historical, ideological and aesthetic) of the concept of World Cinema/s and of the film texts that are labeled under that category.

REQUIRED READING.

- John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson (eds.), The Oxford Guide to Film Studies (1998)

Selected weekly readings available on WebCT.

ASSESSMENT

1. Attendance and participation: worth 10% of the final grade.

- Attendance will be taken at every class (screenings and lecture/tutorials). More than three absences will affect the attendance mark.
- If you are absent from a screening or lecture, or an assignment is late due to illness or other legitimate reasons, please contact the instructor as soon as possible and forward supporting documentation to your Faculty.
For more information on Accommodation for Medical illness:
<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>
- Students who miss a screening due to illness or other legitimate reasons should make arrangements to watch the material on UC1.
- Students are also expected and encouraged to participate in class discussions and debates based on each week's assigned readings and screenings.

2. Six short essays throughout the whole course.

It is the aim of this course that, by the end of it, students will be able to appreciate and relate to different, and more or less distant, film cultures. In order to achieve this purpose, each short essay will give students the possibility to critically reflect upon ideas involved in the very concept of "World Cinema", questions of difference and approachability and key theoretical notions discussed throughout the course. Each essay should demonstrate mastery of the technical vocabulary and analytic skills and the capacity to relate the own arguments to the bibliography and the films watched in class. Each essay is 15% of the final grade.

1. Essay 1: 750 words.
Due date: (Week 3) Thursday, September 22nd, 2011, 9.30 a.m. (UC 84)
Worth 15% of the final grade.
2. Essay 2: 1000 words.
Due date: (Week 8) Thursday, October 27th, 2011, 9.30 a.m. (UC 84)
Worth 15% of the final grade.
3. Essay 3: 1000 words.
Due date: (Week 13) Thursday, December 1st, 2011, 9.30 a.m. (UC 84)
Worth 15% of the final grade.
4. Essay 4: 1000 words.
Due date: (Week 5) Thursday, February 9th, 2011, 9.30 a.m. (UC 84)
Worth 15% of the final grade.
5. Essay 5: 750 words.
Due date: (Week 10) Thursday, March 15th, 2012, 9.30 a.m. (UC 84)
Worth 15% of the final grade.
6. Essay 6: 750 words.
Due date: (Week 13) Thursday, April 5th, 2012, 9.30 a.m. (UC 84)

Worth 15% of the final grade.

Please note:

- a. Include word count at the end of each essay. Essays should have neither more nor less than the 5% of the required word count.
- b. Assignments handed in late without a previously approved extension will be penalized 3% per day. Extensions should be requested prior to the due date and they will be given at the instructor's discretion. Essays should be submitted in person to the instructor and/or the TA, on the due date, before the beginning of the lecture. Students have to keep a copy of every assignment they hand in.
- c. Please refer to the grading criteria at the end of this syllabus.

E-MAIL POLICY

Generally, all emails will be responded to within 24-48 hours during weekdays (not including holidays). Emails will *usually* be addressed during regular work hours (9-5). We may choose, at our discretion, to respond outside these hours, depending on availability. If you send us an email a 2:00am, it is highly unlikely that we will respond before 9:00am.

LAPTOPS AND CELL PHONES POLICY

Laptops are not to be used during screenings. You will need to take notes using paper and pens, so be sure to bring these materials to class. Exceptions may be granted in the case of students with special needs, but this will only come with official approval from the Dean's office. If, during lecture/tutorials, laptops are used for random web surfing, social networking, game playing or any other activity the instructor deems outside of acceptable usage, your laptop will be banned from this class. In addition, be sure to turn off cell phones and refrain from text messaging during class. This counts as disruptive behavior and will lower your final participation grade.

SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES AND PLAGIARISM

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf .

Please refer as well to the senate regulations at the end of this syllabus.

GRADING CRITERIA

A+ (90-100)

Argument: Clear development of a specific, challenging and original thesis. The writer has taken significant risks successfully; in the resulting piece, distinctive ideas and content have discovered their necessary distinctive form. Detailed reference to appropriate texts, with evidence of individual response. Ability not only to expound subject but to see it around—subtleties and ambiguities, qualifications and concessions, relations to other subjects, etc.

Presentation, structure: Quotations well integrated into text. Proper paragraphs. Almost no typographical errors.

Language Skills: Sentence structure correct, with full range of sentence types (compound, complex, and compound-complex), with full range of punctuation (including semicolons, colons, dashes, parentheses). Graceful style, neither pompous nor breezy, and few errors.

Research/scholarship: Evidence of effective, extensive and independent research, with proper documentation of sources. Quotations used appropriately and purposively.

A (80 to 89)

Argument: The writer has taken risks and most of them succeed. Clear development of a specific and challenging thesis, with proper paragraphs. Detailed reference to appropriate texts, with evidence of individual response. Ability not only to expound subject but to see it around—subtleties and ambiguities, qualifications and concessions, relations to other subjects, etc.

Presentation, structure: Quotations well integrated into text. Proper paragraphs. Almost no typographical errors.

Language Skills: Sentence structure correct, with full range of sentence types (compound, complex, and compound-complex), with full range of punctuation (including semicolons, colons, dashes, parentheses). Graceful style, neither pompous nor breezy, and few errors.

Research/scholarship: Evidence of effective and independent research, with proper documentation of sources. Quotations used appropriately and purposively.

B (70 to 79)

Argument: Clear development of a specific thesis, with proper paragraphs. Adequately detailed reference to texts. Ability to expound reasonably sophisticated ideas with clarity.

Presentation/structure: Quotations well integrated into text. Proper paragraphs. A few typographical errors.

Language Skills: Sentence structure correct, with reasonable range of sentence types and full range of punctuation. Style not too wordy, with errors relatively few and minor.

Research Scholarship: Evidence of adequate research, with proper documentation of sources.

C (60 to 69)

Argument: Reasonably clear development of a thesis, with proper paragraphs. Basic ability to expound ideas, whose development might be rather thin. Effort to support points with references to the text. Tendency to replace analysis with descriptive retelling of plot.

Presentation/structure: Presentation showing lapses in tidiness and/or proofreading. Poor use of paragraphs.

Language Skills: Sentence structure correct, but perhaps overly simple, with tendency to avoid punctuation besides period and comma. Errors relatively few, but occasionally serious, with evident misunderstanding of some point of elementary grammar (comma splices, fragments, semicolon errors, subject-verb disagreements, poorly integrated quotations)

Research/Scholarship: reasonable effort at documentation, but rather thin.

D (50 to 59)

Argument: Difficulty with paragraphing or consecutive thought. Ideas inchoate but clouded by weak expression. Overgeneralization with inadequate support, or examples that run to lengthy paraphrase, with little or no analysis.

Presentation/structure: Very poor to non-existent use of paragraphs. Inadequate and inaccurate documentation. Multiple typographical errors.

Language Skills: Errors of grammar or diction frequent enough to interfere with understanding.

Research/Scholarship: Little serious effort to research the topic.

F (49 and down)

Argument: Ideas too simple for level of course. Argument completely incoherent. Erroneous content showing little or no understanding of subject.

Presentation/structure: Very sloppy proof-reading. Documentation virtually non-existent.

Language Skills: Writing frequently ungrammatical.

Research/Scholarship: Non-existent. Content largely “borrowed” from sources with non individual distillation, but no apparent attempt to deceive.

0 (Report to Department)

Plagiarism with intent to deceive

SENATE REGULATIONS

1. **Plagiarism:** Students must write their essays in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage, from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offense Policy in the UWO Calendar). All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between the University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com.

2. **Prerequisites:** Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

3. **Complaints:** If students have a complaint concerning a course in which they are enrolled, they must discuss the matter with the instructor of the course. If students are still not satisfied, they should then take the complaint to the Film Studies Office, University College, Room 80. These regulations are in place because a failure to follow these procedures creates the potential for injustices of various kinds affecting either the instructor or the students themselves, or both parties. Concerns should not be allowed to fester but should be raised with the instructor in a timely manner, so that they can be addressed in time to make a difference to the course.

Course and programme aim (in accordance with OCAV requirements)

1. Understanding, capacity for argument, judgement and analysis will be fostered by essays, presentations and assignments with formative comment, and by in-class small-group and whole-class discussion.
2. Communication skills will be imparted through in-class discussion and credit given for frequency and quality of contributions, and by essays and other assignments marked in accordance with a grading scale given to the students and including benchmarks for the expectations associated with each grade, from A+ to F.
3. Awareness of the limits of knowledge will be enhanced by exploring the legitimate differences of opinion and methodology within the field, and by requiring students to negotiate the formulation of their own opinions in-class with the terms and knowledge brought to that discussion by other students and the instructor.
4. The ability to argue and decide on complex issues will be fostered by essays and in-class discussion; that to manage time, by the need to prepare properly for class and to deliver assignments in a timely manner; and that for academic responsibility, by the need to source assignments accurately.