

FILM 2164A: ANIMATION / ANIME
Fall 2021

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Office Hours: Wednesday 4:30 – 6:30pm or by appointment

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TIMETABLE

Screening: VIRTUAL SCREENING: SEE "RESOURCES" FOLDER ON OWL WEB SITE

Lecture/tutorial: Thursday, 3:30 – 5:30pm, UC 1405

DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE

This course explores the power of animation as a form of audiovisual representation, with a particular emphasis on Japan. We will trace the intertwined history of film, television, video, and computer animation in Japan from its beginning to the present day media mix that incorporates comic books, light novels, video games, and toys. Japanese *anime* franchises will be examined from the side of production, as industrial products and artistic expressions, and from the side of reception, as semiotic texts and as objects through which consumers construct their social lives. We will also explore the further dissemination of those franchises in various kinds of fan fiction and academic discourse, and as an aspect of Japanese "soft power" in North American popular culture.

All readings on the course are in English; no Japanese is required.

COURSE AIMS

The course aims to familiarize students with the development and main themes and genres of Japanese media franchises, popularly known as *anime*. It also aims to introduce students to the methods of audiovisual analysis and to topics in the study of popular culture such as media convergence, fan anthropologies, and the political economy of cultural industries.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn to closely analyze the stylized mode of representation of *anime* texts and to develop arguments about their appeal to audiences in Japan and abroad. Students will also gain a broader appreciation of the history of East Asian popular culture and its presence in the contemporary world, including in their own histories of cultural consumption.

REQUIRED TEXTS

All required texts are uploaded to the class web site.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance and participation [15%]:

Attendance will be taken at every class. Unexcused absences will affect the attendance mark.

Screenings are virtual but you may not skip watching an *anime* because you have already seen it. You

may be familiar with the narrative, and even the audiovisual design, but the point of the course is to commit to paying close attention to a text that you then consider in the light of the readings and the course of discussion so far. You can't do that from memory. You also can't pay close attention to a film and read your email or do your homework at the same time. In fact, *you cannot pay close attention to a film and take notes at the same time*. It's best to write up some comments just *after* you watch the film. I will upload screening notes and prompts that will give you some information and ideas to respond to. Also, some of the screenings feature TV series that will be shown in specific excerpts. You are welcome to watch the whole series, but we will only discuss what I upload as part of the compilation.

This is a large class so in addition to your comments and questions during the lecture you will be graded on your participation in small-group discussions, which will be a feature of every class. You will discuss assigned topics related to the film or one of the readings with a group of fellow students and then report back to the class or upload a response to the class web site.

2. Forum posts [10%]:

In addition to the self-introduction that you will write in the first class, you will be expected to respond to at least nine of the screenings. The posts should be short (250-500 words) and will usually comment on one idea from the readings or one aspect of the screening. Posts should not be over-elaborate: zero credit will be given for missing or egregiously poor work; half-credit for perfunctory work; and full credit for all serious responses.

3. Pop quizzes [15%]:

There will be pop quizzes given at the beginning of most lectures. We will be using iClicker, so please download the app to your smart phone, tablet, or laptop and make sure that you bring it to class. If you don't have any suitable electronic device, you can buy a physical clicker at the bookstore. The quizzes will test you on your ability to comprehend and retain material in the screening and readings for that week, and material we covered in the previous week's lecture. The goal is to nudge you to take notes and to prepare the readings before class by rewarding you for the effort. Doing the work will also help you in your classroom discussions, in your preparation for the examinations, and when you are writing your assignment.

4. Essay [30%]:

There will be one essay assignment, 1,200 - 1,500 words in length, due October 24. The assignment will consist of EITHER a textual analysis of a sequence from one of the films shown in the first weeks of the course, OR a short piece of writing on one of the *anime* shown on the course in the light of the reading and discussion for that week, OR (with my permission) a well-illustrated argument for the significance of one film or "cour" (season) of an *anime* not shown on the course. Detailed instructions will be posted to the assignment section of the web site. The emphasis will be on marshaling evidence to make cogent arguments, drawing mostly on your viewing of the *anime*.

Please note:

Assignments handed in late without a previously approved extension will be penalized 3% per day. Essays should be submitted to the assignments section of the class web site as a *single uploaded file* in Word Format (put your name and the film title in the filename and include the .docx extension). Further instructions will be given on the assignment page. You are responsible for making sure that the correct file has been successfully uploaded – no credit will be given for mistakes.

5. Final Examination [30%]:

There will be a final examination that covers the material *in the whole course*. Students will be expected to recognize and discuss the films and the main arguments from the readings, as well as to remember and discuss the history of animation and the Japanese animation industry covered in class and write several short responses to broader questions on Japanese animation.

Accommodation

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see

[Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or 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.

Plagiarism Checking: 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 for such checking 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 <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Academic Support and Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Health and Wellness <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.