

Department of English & Writing Studies
Film Studies Program

Animation / Anime
Film 2164A (001)
Fall 2022

Instructor: Michael Raine
mraine3@uwo.ca | UC 2421

Office Hours: Wednesday 12-2pm or by
appointment

Teaching Assistants:

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Course Day/Time:

Screening: (Virtual) See "Resources" folder
on OWL website)

Lecture/tutorial: Thursday, 3:30 – 5:30pm,
SSC 3022

Contingency Plans for Pivoting to Online Delivery

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online. The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Course Description

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.

Objectives:

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.

Course Materials

Required Texts: All required texts are uploaded to the class web site.

Methods of Evaluation

1. Attendance and participation [15%]:

Attendance will be taken at every class (using the quiz as a proxy). You are allowed two unexcused absences, but more 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 discussions we've had 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. Also, some of the screenings feature TV series that will be shown in excerpt form. 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. In-class quizzes [15%]:

Short quizzes will be given at the beginning of most lectures, using the quiz function on Owl. Please make sure you bring a device that can access the class web site. 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, and in your preparation for the final examination.

3. Poster presentation [10%]:

Once during the semester you will work in small groups to make a poster presentation. You will research and create materials for an analysis of an anime franchise. You will exhibit the material in class, answer questions from your classmates, and submit the material for grading. All members of the group will receive the same grade so long as they participate in the work.

4. Forum posts [25%]:

In addition to the self-introduction that you will write in the first class, you will be expected to respond to at least five of the screenings and readings. This will be the main writing you do on the course – there is no written assignment. The posts should be short (500-750 words) and will usually comment on one idea from the readings and/or one aspect of the screening. Posts will be graded on originality, cogency, and style -- not length or comprehensiveness.

5. Final Examination [35%]:

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 a number of short responses to broader questions on Japanese animation.

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:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Accommodation_disabilities.pdf.

Academic Counselling

Your Home Faculty's Academic Counselling or Academic Advising Office will support or refer whenever you have an issue that is affecting your studies, including information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters. Do not hesitate to reach out to them if you are struggling and unsure where to go for help. Contact info for all Faculties is here:

https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

You are allowed two unexcused absences from class. Your two lowest scores on your quizzes and in-class discussion posts will be dropped. Only your five highest forum posts will be counted. If you miss more than two classes / quizzes, or write less than five forum posts, your grade will be affected. In principle, grades will never be reweighted, and work (even if less than 10% of the course grade) can only be made up if Academic Counselling recommends that you receive an accommodation.

Students should 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 academic consideration must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

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 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 writing 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. See <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

Mental Health Support

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Gender-based and sexual violence

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html.

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Accessible Education

You may wish to contact Accessible Education at http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html if you have any questions regarding accommodations.

Learning Development and Success

Counsellors at the Learning Development and Success Centre (<https://learning.uwo.ca>) are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

Digital Student Experience

Western University is committed to a thriving campus as we deliver our courses in the mixed model of both virtual and face-to-face formats. We encourage you to check out the Digital Student Experience website to manage your academics and well-being: <https://www.uwo.ca/se/digital/>.

USC

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.