

Department of English & Writing Studies
Film Studies Program

World Cinema
Film Studies 2252G (001)
Winter 2023

Instructor: Charles Burnetts
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Office Hours: By appointment

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Course Day/Time:

Screening: Asynchronous
Lecture/tutorial: Wednesday 10:30-12:30 (UC 1401)

Prerequisite(s): At least 60% in Film Studies 1020E or Film Studies 1022 or special permission of the Department. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This 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.

Course Description

This course surveys the significant movements and expressions of world cinema outside of North America. It traces the development of the medium in Europe and its spread around the world, paying particular attention to Asia. The course encompasses all forms of cinema, from avant-garde and experimental films to politically-charged critiques of Hollywood as well as entertainment films. The goal is not to cover everything but to raise awareness of the aesthetic and political powers of the medium, in its various contexts.

Objectives:

The course aims to help you develop your understanding of the multidimensional concept of World Cinema, and to appreciate the material histories of films produced in various global situations. It also aims to familiarize you with thinking about racial, ethnic, and cultural identity in the cinema.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Understanding, capacity for argument, judgement and analysis will be fostered by essays, presentations and assignments, 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.

Course Materials

Required Reading:

Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell. *Film History (3rd Ed.)*. Available from the university book store. *All other required readings are posted to the resources section of the class web site.*

Methods of Evaluation

Attendance: 5%

- Students are required to attend all sessions. Attendance will be taken at every class (screenings and lecture/tutorials). More than three unjustified absences will seriously affect the attendance mark and students may not be allowed to take the final exam.
- If you are absent from a screening or a lecture / tutorial, you need to provide supporting documentation to your Academic Counselor in order to get credit for attendance. For more information, please visit the Student Services website: <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>
- *Attendance requires your undivided attention:* please turn off all electronic devices in screenings and make notes using pen and paper. In each screening you will be given a written prompt, which you can use for notes and to aid your thinking about the film.

Participation: 15%

- Participation includes paying attention, asking relevant questions and engaging productively in discussions. The score will be lowered by such behaviors as arriving late, leaving early, being disrespectful to the views of others, or engaging in disruptive behaviors in the classroom such as reading non-class-related materials, using personal electronic devices, or having private conversations during class. Computers can be used in class only for taking notes.
- Small-group discussions 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.
- Those groups will also present on one or two films during the term. This will involve researching the route by which the film arrived on a world stage (film festival, commercial release, retrospective, DVD release, etc.) and the critical reception of the film. It will also involve presenting an analytic summary of that research, using whatever visual aids are necessary. The group will decide what work each member should do and will be asked to report on levels of participation. Each member of the group who is recognized as pulling their weight will get the same grade.
- Pop quizzes will be given at the start of most lectures and count toward the grade. Don't be late!

Short Essay: 15%

- To be submitted on Friday, February 3, by 11:55pm. Missing this deadline without a previously approved extension will be penalized 3% per day.
- The 1,500 (+/- 10%) word short essay will focus on a close textual analysis of one of three clips chosen from the films shown on the first three weeks of the course.

Further guidelines for this exercise will be presented in class and posted on OWL.

Mid Term Examination: 10%

Date: Wednesday, February 15, 10:30 to 12:00.

In this 90-minute examination, students will:

- Answer a series of questions related to the films and course readings until February 6.
- Provide paragraph-length answers to questions about ideas presented in the lectures and/or in the films and course readings.

** No electronic devices will be allowed during the exam **

Research Essay: 20%

- There are three deadlines: March 20 (topic); March 27 (outline + bibliography); April 5 (essay). Missing any of these deadlines without a previously approved extension will be penalized 3% per day.
- Choose one of the films studied on the course since week 4 that you would like to use as the focus of a research essay. You should look over your notes on the films and readings and do some extra research to find the film and the topic that will allow you to do your best work.
- Submit a statement of a specific topic that you would like to write on in relation to the film—a question raised in your reading or something that you noticed in your viewing. The topic should be a clearly articulated question, announced in the proposed title of your paper, that shows you have already done some preliminary research.
- Once your topic is approved, develop a bibliography of relevant books and articles on the film and its place in world cinema. You should submit this to me to demonstrate that you are using appropriate sources and that you have not passed over important material.
- Submit a 2000 (+/- 10%) word essay, in which you analyze the subject matter, the style, the director, the actors, the critical and community response, etc. to the film. Be sure to maintain focus on the topic that you announce in the title of your essay.
- Essays should be submitted to the assignments section of the class web site as a single uploaded file in .docx format (please put your name and the film title in the filename and include the .docx file extension). All essays must be uploaded to the class web site; they will be automatically passed through the plagiarism filters at turnitin.com and a report will be sent to you.

Further guidelines for this exercise will be presented in class and posted on OWL.

Final Examination: 35%

In this 3-hour examination, students will:

- Answer a series of questions related to the films screened since February 8.
- Provide paragraph-length answers to questions about ideas presented in the lectures and/or in the course's readings since February 8.
- Choose one topic from a list of three questions and write a short essay-like answer – between one and two pages long. Students are expected to elaborate on the films viewed and studied in relation to the bibliography and to the concepts discussed in the lectures.

** No electronic devices will be allowed during the exam **

E-Mail Policy:

Think ahead. Generally, all emails will be responded to within 24-48 hours during weekdays (not including holidays). Don't hesitate to remind me if I don't get back to you.

Laptops and Cell Phones Policy:

Laptops are useful for making notes and reading material from the web site but they are also a source of distraction, to you and to others. Laptops should not be used during screenings. A viewing prompt will be provided for you to write on. Any indication that you are not doing class work will result in laptops being banned for in-class use. Please remember that, and remind your classmates. In addition, be sure to turn off cell phones. Text messaging during screenings and lectures is never acceptable.

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, IGAB, Room 0N64. 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.

Timetable

Week 1 (January 11): Soviet Montage and French Impressionism

Screening:

Battleship Potemkin (USSR, Sergei Eisenstein, 1925, 75 mins)

Merilmontant (France, Dimitri Kirsanoff, 1926, 38 mins)

Reading:

Thompson/Bordwell, ch. 4, 6 (pp. 71-86, 105-127)

Sergei Eisenstein. "Beyond the Shot"

Week 2 (January 18): German Cinema and the Transition to Sound

Screening:

M (Germany, Fritz Lang, 1931, 111 mins)

Reading:

Thompson/Bordwell, ch. 5, 9 (pp. 87-104, 177-194)

Gabriele Tergit. "Fritz Lang's *M*: Filmed Sadism"

Anton Kaes. "Berlin, 1931"

Week 3 (January 25): Deep Space and Long Takes in 1930s France

Screening:

Rules of the Game (France, Jean Renoir, 1939, 110 mins)

Reading:

Thompson/Bordwell, ch. 13 (pp. 260-276)

Christopher Faulkner, Martin O'Shaughnessy, and V. F. Perkins. "*La Règle du jeu*: Lies, Truth, and Irresolution (A Critical Round Table)"

Week 4 (February 1): Italian Neo-Realism

Screening:

Paisan (Italy, Roberto Rossellini, 1946, 134 mins)

Reading:

Thompson/Bordwell, ch. 13, 16 (pp. 253-258, 324-341)

Cesare Zavattini. "Some Ideas on the Cinema"

André Bazin. "An Aesthetic of Reality: Cinematic Realism and the Italian School of the Liberation"

***** SHORT ESSAY DUE: February 3 *****

Week 5 (February 8): The Rise of Global Art Cinema

Screening:

Rashōmon (Japan, Kurosawa Akira, 1950, 88 mins)

Reading:

Thompson/Bordwell, ch. 18, 19 (pp. 358-383, 388-390)

Parker Tyler. "Rashomon as Modern Art"

Week 6 (February 15): MIDTERM

Screening: *** MIDTERM EXAM REVIEW

***** MIDTERM EXAMINATION: FEBRUARY 15 *****

Week 7 (February 18-26): NO CLASSES: READING WEEK

Week 8 (March 1): Modernism and the French New Wave

Screening:

Breathless (France, Jean-Luc Godard, 1960, 90 mins)

Reading:

Thompson/Bordwell, ch. 17, 20 (pp. 342-357, 403-418)

Dudley Andrew. "Breathless Then and Now"

Week 9 (March 8): Francophone African Cinema

Screening:

Yeelen (Mali-Burkina Faso-France-West Germany-Japan, Souleymane Cisse, 1987, 105min)

Reading:

Thompson/Bordwell, ch. 23, 26 (pp. 495-534, 599-613)

David Murphy. "Africans Filming Africa: Questioning Theories of an Authentic African Cinema"

Week 10 (March 15): Hong Kong Action Cinema

Screening:

The Killer (Hong Kong, John Woo, 1989, 111 min)

Reading:

Thompson/Bordwell, ch. 27 (643-660)

Kenneth Hall. "Style and Structure in *The Killer*"

Week 11 (March 22): Parallel Cinema in India

Screening:

Dil Se (India, Mani Ratnam, 1998, 158 mins)

Reading:

Thompson/Bordwell, ch. 26 (pp. 613-626)

Nasreen Muni Kabir. "Bollywood Basics"

Anayana Jahanara Kabir. "Allegories of Alienation and Politics of Bargaining Minority Subjectivities in Mani Ratnam's *Dil Se*"

***** TERM PAPER TOPIC DUE: MARCH 20 *****

Week 12 (March 29): 4th Cinema: Australia

Screening:

Ten Canoes (Australia, Rolf de Heer and Peter Djigirr, 2006, 90 min)

Reading:

Thompson/Bordwell, ch. 27 (pp. 627-643)

Ian Henderson. "Stranger Danger: *Approaching Home* and *Ten Canoes*"

***** TERM PAPER OUTLINE DUE: MARCH 27 *****

Week 13 (April 5): Reflections on World Cinema

Screening:

The World (China, Jia Zhangke, 2004, 143min)

Reading:

Thompson/Bordwell, ch. 29 (pp. 694-713)

Dudley Andrew. "Time Zones and Jet Lag: The Flows and Phases of World Cinema"

***** TERM PAPER DUE: APRIL 6**

***** ** FINAL EXAMINATION ****

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

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

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/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

For information on the examination services provided by the Student Development Centre, please visit www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd

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 no individual distillation, but no apparent attempt to deceive.

0 (Report to Department)

Plagiarism with intent to deceive.