

Department of English & Writing Studies
Film Studies Program

Canadian National Cinema
Film Studies 2258G (001)
Winter 2023

Instructor: Dr. C.E. Gittings
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Prerequisites: 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.

VIRTUAL SCREENINGS: **asynchronous viewing** via licensed Weldon Streaming sites **but before the Thursday Zoom discussions** (links to Weldon and other streaming sites are listed in the syllabus with each weekly film title).

LECTURES recorded and posted to OWL Zoom on **Wednesdays** to be viewed **asynchronously BEFORE** timetabled slot: **Thursdays** 12:30-14:30

Synchronous Tutorial Discussions: Live On OWL Zoom (weekly in second hour of timetabled Thursday lecture slots: **13:30-14:30**)

Course Description

Beginning in the silent period and extending into the twenty-first century, this course seeks to answer historical, cultural, ideological and aesthetic questions about Canadian cinema. We will explore how cinema has reflected the complex and unstable notion of Canada as a nation, focusing upon issues of representation as well as problems of production, distribution and exhibition as these are grounded in political economy. Additionally, we will consider the transnational flows between the Canadian film industry, Hollywood, and other global film industries through co-production and casting. Questions addressed include: What is the influence of the documentary tradition on Canadian cinema as a whole? Is there an innate division between Canadian “art” cinema and popular cinema? What are the relationships of Indigenous, regional, diasporic and queer cinemas to a Canadian national cinema? Does Canadian cinema embody two linguistic, cultural and industrial “solitudes” or are there in fact a range of Canadian *cinemas*? How have colonialism, immigration, and economics shaped Canadian cinema? What roles can genre play in producing and understanding Canadian cinema? How do gender, sexuality, race and class inflect the representation of Canadian nation on screen?

Course Objectives:

- Understandings of the historical trajectory of Canadian cinema.
- Mastering of Film Studies' critical terms 'national cinema,' 'genre,' 'postmodern,' 'political economy,' 'colonial discourse,' 'decolonization,' 'transnational,' and 'ideology' as these apply to Canadian cinema.
- The above will be acquired by students through a capacity for argument, research, judgement and analysis that will be fostered by essays, and other assignments, and by in-class small-group and whole-class discussion on Canadian national cinema.
- Communication skills will be imparted through in-class discussion and credit will be given for frequency and quality of contributions.
- Research skills will be developed through the reception study assignment and the research required for the term paper.
- Essays and other written assignments are marked in accordance with the grading criteria listed below and include benchmarks for the expectations associated with each grade.
- 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 discussions by other students and the instructor.
- The ability to argue and decide on complex issues will be fostered by essays and in-class discussion. Time management skills will be fostered by the need to prepare properly for class and to deliver assignments in a timely manner. Academic responsibility will be developed by the need to source assignments accurately.

Course Materials

Required:

- Christopher E. Gittings, *Canadian National Cinema: Ideology, Difference and Representation* (London/New York: Routledge, 2002)

Hard copy available from the UWO Bookstore

E-Book available at <https://lb.ca/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/additem.bbx?/Z109991/I9781134764853>

- Additional Readings available on the course **OWL** page under **Resources** and **PDF Course Readings**

Methods of Evaluation (Provisional and subject to change)

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

Tutorial Participation		10%
Reception Assignment (Annotated Bibliography, research notes, PowerPoint)		20%
Mid-term	Posted 21 October—Submission 22 February	15%
Essay	22 March	20%
TOTAL TERM		65%
FINAL EXAMINATION	Posted 24 hours before the scheduled exam slot. Response submitted by midnight of the day of the scheduled Exam via OWL Assignments	35%

The Department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at: <https://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>

Midterm and Exam on OWL

Take-Home Midterm: The midterm-exam will be posted to OWL at least 48 hours before it is due to be submitted for assessment on **20 February**. You will submit your responses to the mid-term questions via OWL Assignments by midnight on **23 February**.

Your responses must be submitted as an MS Word file. **PDF files will not be accepted.** Midterm responses not uploaded to OWL Assignments by midnight on 23 February will not be graded unless accommodation is sought and granted through your Dean's Office.

Take-Home Final Exam: The final exam will be posted to OWL 48 hours before it is due to be submitted for assessment via OWL Assignments. **The date of the final exam will be circulated once the exam timetable is published by the Office of the Registrar.**

The final exam is comprehensive, but it will be weighted towards the material from the second half of the course. In addition to multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions, the final exam will also feature a longer essay response based on the course content. The short essay questions may also include a close analysis of a screening clip.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS for Success

- All students will attend screenings and seminars prepared to **participate** in discussions based on the week's assigned readings and screenings.
- Notes should be taken during or immediately following all screenings.
- Come to class with questions or comments that have arisen from your readings, the lecture and screening.
- Make notes during the lectures, and class discussions, with a view to challenging or developing some of the points expressed.
- ***Review lecture slides frequently***

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory in all classes and tutorials. In cases of excessive absenteeism (e.g. more than 9 unexcused hours for a half course, 18 for a full course), which are not accounted for by either academic consideration or accommodation, students may be debarred from taking the final examination, and will receive an official warning to this effect by or before the course drop date (see Senate policy). In classes with or without final exams, students who do not attend class will receive 0% for course participation grades. Unless other policies dictate a different set of penalties in specific English and Writing Studies programs, this will apply to all department programs.

Intellectual Property/Copyright

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course, and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.