

Department of English & Writing Studies
Film Studies Program

Film Studies 2252F (001)
World Cinema
Fall 2024

Instructor: Michael Raine
mraine3@uwo.ca

Screening: Virtual Screening, Available Through Owl Brightspace
Lecture: Thursday 10:30-12:30

Prerequisites: At least 60% in Film Studies 1020E or Film Studies 1022 or permission of the Department.

Antirequisites: The former Film Studies 2251E.

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 films to politically-charged critiques of Hollywood as well as entertainment films.

Course Aims

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. The goal is not to cover everything but to raise awareness of the aesthetic and political powers of the medium, in its various contexts.

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

All required readings are posted to Owl Brightspace. Students may access the OWL Brightspace Learner Support site for assistance: <https://brightspacehelp.uwo.ca/>

Methods of Evaluation

1. Attendance and participation (10%)

- All screenings in this class are *virtual*: the film will be linked on Owl Brightspace. You are expected to watch *all* the films, including films you have already seen, and attend *all* lectures, having completed the readings assigned for that week. After the first week, attendance will be taken at every class. You will be granted two grace absences before lack of attendance affects your grade. **Six or more unexcused absences will result in you failing the course.**
- Participation scores 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.

2. Presentation (5%)

- The discussion groups will also present on one film during the second part of 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.

3. Discussion posts (10%)

- You will be given the opportunity to make a series of discussion posts, including a self-introduction. You do not have to write every week: only the **top four** posts will count toward your grade. The posts should be 400-600 words long, written after you've done the reading and watched the film and before we meet for class. Each post should select **one** important concept or claim from one of the readings for that week and explore the concept in relation to **one** of the clips from the film posted to Owl Brightspace. The post is not primarily evaluative, and you should avoid making vague generalizations about the film. Through these posts, you will practice critical assessment of scholarly arguments, develop your abilities of close textual analysis, and improve your ability to explain abstract concepts and write evidence-based arguments with clarity and concision.

4. Sequence analysis (10%)

- To be submitted by Sunday, October 6, 11:55pm. There will be a late penalty of 3% per day beyond the 72 hour grace period, unless you can document a need for further consideration with academic counselling.
 - The 1,000 - 1,200 word short essay will focus on a close textual analysis of a clip 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.*

5. Research Essay (5 + 10 + 20 = 35%)

- There are three deadlines for this research project: **October 27** (topic and research questions); **November 10** (revised research questions + annotated bibliography); **November 24** (final essay). For each of these deadlines, there will be a late penalty of 3% per day beyond the 72-hour grace period, unless you can document a need for further consideration with academic counselling.
- **Topic and research question(s)**: choose a film that you can write about productively as part of "world cinema" and think of one or more "research questions" that you can reasonably answer in about 40 hours of work. *Don't just choose any film you want to write about and write anything you want to write*: your film should in some way speak to an important aspect of your understanding of world cinema. Your research question(s) should address that aspect of the film -- how it thematizes global connection/disconnection, how it exemplifies developments in the "political economy" of world cinema, etc. Write out your topic as a single sentence and your research questions as ... questions.
- **Annotated bibliography**: Once your topic is revised and approved, develop a title for your essay and a bibliography of relevant books and articles that will help you answer your research question(s). You should annotate this bibliography and submit it to me to demonstrate that you are using appropriate sources and that you have not passed over important material. Your annotations should be precise and accurate. You should identify the author and their credentials, the scope of the work and the main points of the argument, and the relevance of the work to the argument that you want to make. I know you will do your research on the internet: be sure you identify whether the work is a book, a PhD dissertation, and MA thesis, a critical article, journalism, and undergraduate essay, etc.; be sure to justify why you should be able to rely on the author's information and arguments.
- **Research Essay**: Write an 1,800 – 2,200 word essay on your chosen topic that answers, to the extent possible in an undergraduate essay, the research questions that you asked yourself. The essay should avoid simple evaluative judgments and vague generalizations about the film and world cinema. The goal of the assignment is for you to demonstrate your ability to research and analyze complex material, and to write cogently about a specific film. *Note: speak to me if you want to do a video essay instead!*

6. Final Examination (30%)

In this 3-hour examination covering all the material on the course, students will:

- Answer questions related to the films and the readings for each week.
- Write short (less than one page) answers to four from a list of eight questions. Students are expected to elaborate on the films viewed and studied in relation to the readings and to the concepts discussed in the lectures.

Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

I would encourage you to explore the AI tools that are available to you. The large language models used by some implementations of generative AI produce syntactically correct and logically coherent sentences. You will benefit from seeing how generative AI, drawing on the "wisdom of crowds," organizes sentences and arguments. These tools also serve as a kind of non-ironic "dictionary of received ideas" – they compile what has been written on the internet to give you a general sense of what people think about various topics. Use them to gain familiarity with the films, and the methods and issues, that we will discuss on this course. **However**, generative AI is not yet capable of satisfying the writing requirements of this course. You will be asked to write analytically about images and sequences, using the methods of film studies. That means you will need to describe, as concretely as possible, the actual images you see, as well as relate them to the moment-by-moment flow of attention that they cue. The current AI models can't do that. **Note**: you will be asked to reflect on your use of AI at the end of each writing assignment. It is an academic offense to pass off text generated by AI as your own.

Statement on Academic Consideration

The university policy on academic consideration (not academic accommodation) is laid out here: https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

On this course, you will not be penalized if you miss an assignment deadline by less than three days (72 hours). Also, your first two absences from the lecture will not affect your attendance grade. Finally, only your top four forum posts each term will be counted. In accordance with university policy, assignments with flexible deadlines and any term work that does not necessarily count toward the course grade are not eligible for additional consideration.

If you miss the Final examination, please contact the Academic Advising office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final examination) on or after the first Thursday in January following the beginning of classes. See: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/definitions.pdf

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 contact me if I don't get back to you in that time frame.

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*. 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 lectures is never acceptable.

Senate Regulations

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, here:

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

Statement on the Use of Plagiarism-Checking Software

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>).

Policy on Accommodation for Religious Holidays

Western's Policy on Accommodation for Religious Holidays can be found here:

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

Academic Accommodation and Accessible Education

Academic Accommodation is "a means of adjusting the academic activities associated with a course or program of student in order to permit students with disabilities to participate in those activities at the University and to fulfill the essential requirements of a course or program."

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with **Accessible Education** at the earliest opportunity. "Accessible Education plays a central role in Western's efforts to ensure that

its academic programs are accessible for all students"

http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html

Support Services

Academic Advising

Your Home Faculty's 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

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 University [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website:

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.

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.

USC

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