Course Description

This course is designed as an overview of some of the key histories, methodologies and concepts in film studies. As well as offering a chronological grounding in the history of film from the late-19th century onwards the course engages a number of significant films and genres by way of investigating aesthetic, stylistic, political, and theoretical approaches to the study of cinema. Though the principal focus will be film from the US we will be looking beyond the boundaries of American culture to embrace a variety of other national cinemas including German Expressionism, French New Wave, Italian Neo-Realism and Third Cinema. Every week there will be both readings and film viewings required for each class. As well as completing the required readings for each class meeting it is also your responsibility to find out as much information as you can about the individual films to bring to the class discussion – year, country of origin, cast, crew, critical reception etc. Because the nature of film involves analysis and interpretation, and because there is a large amount of reading involved for each session, much of what we do in this class will be discussion-based. You must make the effort to actively involve yourself in an appropriate and constructive way. There will be a variety of informal exercises, group work, and discussion periods that will demand this active involvement. Merely being present in the classroom does not count as participation. You must be prepared to speak and therefore you must be prepared!

Course Objectives

Students will:

- Gain factual knowledge of the history of film (terminology, classifications, periods, and styles)
- Develop the appropriate critical language of film analysis
- Learn to analyze and critically evaluate various and competing ideas, arguments, and points of view
- Understand film as a dynamic expression of culture

Course Requirements
• Attendance at all sessions is required. For each absence 2 points will be subtracted from your final overall score.
• Submit all required work by designated dates. Late work will not be graded.
• Undertake all required readings/viewings by assigned dates.
• Maintain appropriate and common sense etiquette in class at all times.

Required Texts
All other readings will be available electronically through Canvas.
You will find a list of useful websites, journals, and books at the end of the syllabus.

University Policies

Grading Scheme
A 100% - 95%
A- 94% - 90%
B+ 89% - 87%
B 86% - 84%
B- 83% - 80%
C+ 79% - 77%
C 76% - 74%
C- 73% - 70%
D+ 69% - 67%
D 66% - 60%
F 60% - 0%

Honor Pledge
Students will be held accountable to the Honor Pledge to which they have agreed: “I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity.”

Academic Dishonesty
The instructor of this course will take appropriate actions in response to Academic Dishonesty, as defined in the University’s Student Code. Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: cheating; falsification; plagiarism.


Students with Disabilities
Students with documented impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for service. Please contact the Disability Resource Center as early as possible. DRC is located in Room 101 of the University Inn. Call on: 435-797-2444 (voice); 435-797-0740 (TTY); toll free at 1-800-259-2966.

**Course Assignments**

**Term Paper (30%)**
This is a formal academic essay in which you apply the discussions, concepts and ideas generated from reading and discussion, to a particular set of representations, director, film, or genre. Conceivably it might embrace elements of all these things. However you decide to move forward with your project, you need to be able to speak critically and objectively about your chosen subject matter using the appropriate language and terminology. You should ensure that your paper includes elements of detailed structural analysis (in terms of editing, cinematography, mise-en-scene etc.) as well addressing issues of theme, motif, and narrative structure. There is a supplementary reading list with this syllabus that should offer some good starting points but topics should be decided in consultation with me and I will set aside specific tutorial time in Weeks 5 and 9 to discuss ideas and the progress of the paper. There will be 3 submission points for drafts of the paper for assessment and feedback prior to its final submission in the last week of the semester. The paper must be a minimum of 3500 words and follow MLA guidelines for presentation and citation. Your research must be largely hard-copy based, ie. books and journals as opposed to web-specific sources. If there is a web-based source that you need to use then please check with me first.

**8 Critical Response Papers (40%)**
These are critical assessments of those films you are required to watch as homework. In each paper you should apply the language and terminology appropriate to the analysis of film. You can think of this exercise as a sophisticated critical review that embraces cinematography, sound, narrative, and direction as well as themes and motifs etc. Each paper must be no less than 1000 words and you must do a total of 8 response papers. Each critical response must be submitted within 1 week of the viewing.

**In-class Presentation (20%)**
In small groups students will take responsibility for the leading of designated class sessions that involves presenting information to the group, establishing agenda for discussion, and leading discussion. Each group will consist of 4 students. The instructor will meet with each group at least 2 weeks prior to the group's designated session as part of their lesson-planning process. Groups will be required to provide readings for the class, class activities (if appropriate), a lesson-plan, and a detailed study guide for that week's film and reading. The assigning of work within the group will be determined in consultation with the instructor. Individually, each member of the group will be expected to lead a discrete element of the in-class presentation for a minimum of 20 minutes that will provide a clear
analysis of the film under consideration and broader contexts for analysis. Group presentations should last approximately 1 and a 1/2 hours.

Final Exam (10%)
This will be a comprehensive written exam. Questions will focus on a series of points of definition, debate and contention surrounding film that we have covered over the course of the semester. It will include sections on analysis of specific scenes and use of appropriate and specific critical language and terminology.

Class Schedule

Jan 13. Introduction: What is Film Studies?

Jan 20. The World of Silent Film I

Jan 27. The World of Silent Film II
Reading: Dixon and Foster, “Chapter 3. World Cinema: The Silent Era”
Film: The Passion of Joan of Arc (Carl Theodor Dreyer 1928)

Feb 3. Classical Hollywood Narrative
Reading: Dixon and Foster, “Chapter 4: The Hollywood Studio System in the 1930s and 1940s”; Dana Polan, “Casablanca”
Film: Casablanca (Michael Curtiz 1941)

Feb 10. The Post War Scene 1 [Tutorials week]
Reading: Dixon and Foster, “Chapter 6. Postwar Challenges to the Movies”
Film: Rebel Without a Cause (Nicholas Ray 1955)
[Submit detailed plan for term paper]

Feb 17. The Post War Scene 2
Film: The Seventh Seal (Ingmar Bergman 1957)

Feb 24. The Swinging Sixties
Reading: Dixon and Foster, “Chapter 8. The 1960s Explosion”
Film: À bout de souffle (Breathless) (Jean-Luc Godard 1960)
Mar 2. Genre
Reading Barsom and Monahan, “Types of Film”
Film: *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (George Roy Hill 1969)

Mar 9. NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

Mar 16. Film Noir [Group 1 Presentation]
Reading: Friedman et al, “Film Noir”
Film: *The Big Sleep* (Howard Hawks 1946)
[Submit draft of term paper]

Mar 16. The Apocalypse [Tutorials Week]
Reading: TBD
Film: *2012* (Roland Emmerich 2009)

Mar 23. Science Fiction [Group 2 Presentation]
Reading: Friedman et al, “Science Fiction”
Film: *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Stanley Kubrick 1968)

Apr 6. Horror [Group 3 Presentation]
Reading: Friedman et al, “The Horror Film”
Film: *The Babadook* (Jennifer Kent 2014)

Apr 13. Italian Neo-Realism [Group 5 Presentation]
Reading: Geoffrey Nowell Smith, “Bicycle Thieves”
Film: *Bicycle Thieves* (Vittorio de Sica 1948)

Apr 20. Action and Adventure [Group 4 Presentation]
Reading: Gina Marchetti, “Action-Adventure as Ideology”
Film: *Casino Royale* (Martin Campbell 2006)

Apr 27. Art House [Group 6 Presentation]
Reading: TBD
Film: *Under the Skin* (Jonathan Glazer 2014)
[Submit final draft of term paper]

May 4. EXAM WEEK

Supplementary Resources

Books
Rick Altman, *Film/Genre*
Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: A History of the Non-fiction Film*
Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen, *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*
Paul Cooke, *German Expressionist Films*
Marnie Hughes-Warrington (ed.), *The History on Film Reader*
Robert Lapsley and Michael Westlake, *Film Theory: An Introduction*
Jon Lewis, *American Film: A History*
Michael T. Martin (ed.), *Cinemas of the Black Diaspora: Diversity, Dependence, and Oppositionality*
James Naremore, *More than Night: Film Noir in Its Contexts*
Phil Powrie and Keith Reader, *French Cinema: A Student’s Guide*
Cedric Robinson, *Forgeries of Memory and Meaning: The Regimes of Race in American Theater and Film before World War II*
Leonard Quart and Albert Auster, *American Film and Society Since 1945*
Robert Stam and Toby Miller, *Film Theory: An Anthology*
Amy Villarejo, *Film Studies: The Basics*
Christopher Wagsatff, *Italian Neorealist Cinema: An Aesthetic Approach*

**Journals** (most of these journals also have accompanying websites)
*Cineaste*
*Cinema Journal*
*Film Comment*
*Film Quarterly*
*Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*
*Images: A Journal of Film and Popular Culture*
*Film and History*
*Journal of American Studies*
*Journal of British Cinema and Television*
*Journal of Popular Culture*
*Journal of Visual Culture*
*Screen*

**Websites**
American Film Institute (www.afi.com)
British Film Institute (www.bfi.org.uk)
British Pathe archive (www.britishpathe.com)
California Newsreel (www.newsreel.org)
*Cineaste* articles and reviews (www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/CineasteMenu.html)
Film Archive Forum (www.bufvc.ac.uk/faf)
Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com)
UCLA Film and Television Archive (www.cinema.ucla.edu)