

HISTORY OF CINEMA PRODUCTION

FILM 131-601 | DEPAUL UNIVERSITY | SPRING QUARTER 2024

WEDNESDAYS | 1:30PM-4:45PM | 14 E. Jackson Room 802

Instructor: Eric Marsh | marsh@cdm.depaul.edu

Virtual Office Hours: Fridays, 8AM-2PM, by email appointment only

COURSE DESCRIPTION – This course explores the origins, evolutions, and revolutions of cinema production from the perspective of a filmmaker. We will examine a diverse range of critical historical events and theories that have impacted the industry and the craft of filmmaking: the emergence of the studio system, the coming of sound, the auteur theory, genres, ideology, audience, as well as the emergence of other media and the rise of digital technology. Students will acquire a broad understanding of the aesthetic, economic, social, and technological forces that have shaped and continue to influence the development of cinema. In addition to weekly screenings of relevant films, students will be assigned readings on various historical, critical, and theoretical topics.

LEARNING OUTCOMES – Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- Identify major historical shifts in the production of motion pictures.
- Analyze the historical and creative context of films and their relationship to – and role in – society.
- Recognize the importance of global perspectives throughout the history of cinema production.
- Evaluate the continuing evolution of the cinematic process throughout qualitative movements in culture, technology, economics, and audience appreciation.
- Synthesize their understanding of the course materials through written analyses of feature films, readings, and class lectures.

Course Management System - All course materials will be available to you on [D2L](#).

Required Text – All readings will be provided by the instructor on [D2L](#) including the primary textbook for this course: [A World History of Film](#) by Robert Sklar. Various supplemental readings will also be provided by the instructor on D2L.

Grading Scale

A = 100 – 94, A- = 93 – 90, B+ = 89 – 88, B = 87 – 83, B- = 82 – 80, C+ = 79 – 78, C = 77 – 73, C- = 72 – 70, D+ = 69 – 68, D = 67 – 63, D- = 62 – 60, F = 59 – 0.

BASIC FOR EVALUATION

Weekly Reflection	40
Presentation	15
Final Paper	25
<u>Attendance/Participation</u>	<u>20</u>
Total	100

COURSE SCHEDULE & OUTLINE

WEEK 1	4/3	THE EMERGENCE OF CINEMA, 1800s-1912 Introduction, Syllabus / Early Cinema
WEEK 2	4/10	THE SILENT-ERA, 1912-1929 The Heyday of the Silents <i>The Gold Rush</i> , 1925, d. Charlie Chaplin, USA
WEEK 3	4/17	CLASSIC CINEMA, 1927-1945 Sound and the Hollywood Studio System <i>Design for Living</i> , 1933, d. Ernst Lubitsch, USA
WEEK 4	4/24	POSTWAR TRANSFORMATION I, 1945-1960 Film and WWII: Neorealism & Noir <i>Detour</i> , 1945, d. Edgar G. Ulmer, USA <i>Los Olvidados</i> , 1950, d. Luis Buñuel, México
WEEK 5	5/1	POSTWAR TRANSFORMATION II, 1945-1960 Hollywood in the 1950s / Art Cinema of Europe and Asia <i>Johnny Guitar</i> , 1954, d. Nicholas Ray, USA <i>Yojimbo</i> , 1961, d. Akira Kurosawa, Japan
WEEK 6	5/8	REVIVAL OF CINEMA, 1960-1980 French New Wave / The New Documentary <i>Cleo from 5 to 7</i> , 1961, d. Agnes Varda, France In-class: <i>High School</i> , 1968, d. Frederick Wiseman, USA
WEEK 7	5/15	REVIVAL OF CINEMA, 1960-1980 American Film: Turmoil & Transformation <i>Car Wash</i> , 1976, d. Michael Schultz, USA

WEEK 8	5/22	EXPANSION OF CINEMA, 1980-2000 New Waves Around the Globe Presentations: International Explorations
WEEK 9	5/29	EXPANSION OF CINEMA, 1980-2000 American Cinema & The Entertainment Economy <i>Point Break</i> , 1991, d. Kathryn Bigelow, USA <i>The Living End</i> , 1992, d. Gregg Araki, USA
WEEK 10	6/5	21st CENTURY CINEMA, 2000-2023 The Digital Revolution: The Present and Future of Cinema <i>Ash is Purest White</i> , 2018, d. Jia Zhangke, China

FINAL PAPER DUE BEFORE OR ON JUNE 15 – THE LAST DAY OF THE QUARTER

ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN

Weekly Reflections (5pts each) – Due EVERY WEEK unless otherwise specified

The weekly reflections provide you the opportunity to integrate the readings, lectures, and assigned films through your own reactions, observations, and analysis. This is a space for YOU to **think** about and **explore** the movies we watch in greater detail, and to prove to me that you are keeping up and engaging with the course material. In addition to your own reactions and observations you should *contextualize* the assigned films in your analysis.

1. **Historical context:** moods, attitudes, conditions that existed during a certain time
2. **Creative context:** conventions, styles, and practices that existed at a certain time

You have a certain amount of freedom to how you approach these reflections – I recognize that as production students you may have different pursuits or interests within the field of filmmaking so I encourage you to come at it from your own perspective – but the point of these reflections, like the class, is to learn from the class material and these films ***as a filmmaker***.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. 500+ word minimum
2. At least 1 or more quote/citation from readings or lecture material
3. Analysis of assigned film (or *films*)

If you do not meet the minimum word requirement, cite a source, or discuss that week's film or *films* you will automatically receive a zero.

Things to do: Be specific, descriptive, and thoughtful in your writing. Connect the readings, lectures, discussions to the films. Back up your opinions and observations with concrete examples from the films. Ask questions. Seek answers!

Things *not* to do: Excessive plot recapping, excessive opinion, generalizations, platitudes

Papers/Presentations

Presentation: International Explorations (15pts) – During Week 8 students will give group presentations on international filmmakers and movements from the 1960s-1990s. Due 5/22

Final Paper: 21st Century Cinema (25pts) – Students will write a paper about cinema in the 21st century. Due 6/15

Content and Schedule Changes – The syllabus is subject to change depending on class progress, time constraints, or material availability. This goes for the screenings as well. The overall workload, however, will not change. Make sure you pace yourself accordingly. You will be notified of any changes in the syllabus in a timely fashion.

Content/Trigger Warnings – Films, lectures, and discussion in this course may engage with potentially sensitive or traumatizing material. I will try to note ahead of time especially graphic/intense content and do my best to foster a classroom in which we can relate courageously, compassionately, and contemplatively with difficult and important material each week. If you believe a film may be potentially triggering to you, I will happily search for a replacement film for you to view and write about. Additionally, if you would like specific or personalized triggers identified throughout the course, please let me know.

Weekly Updates – After each class meeting I will post an update on D2L detailing the immediate class “business”: assignments, readings, screenings, etc, anything that you need to *do* before the next class. You may also keep track of this on the D2L content page. If you want to keep up with the course you *must* read these updates or use the checklist method on D2L and make sure you’re on track. No excuses.

Screenings – All of the assigned films are required “texts” for the course, and as such, are MANDATORY. They will fuel your reflections, our discussions, guide us through the history

of cinema, and make you smarter and better filmmakers. All of the films assigned for the course will be made available to stream on D2L through Panopto.

A note on LAB SCREENINGS: This course comes attached with a *weekly lab* dedicated to film screenings BUT: attendance for the lab is OPTIONAL. All of the movies for this course will be made available to stream via D2L/Panopto and can be watched at your discretion. HOWEVER, if you wish to use the on-campus space reserved for our screenings (same as our classroom) for any of the lab screenings let me know and I will gladly help facilitate that.

Reading Assignments – Readings are *mandatory* and will guide us through your responses and our discussions. Various supplemental readings will also be provided on the films/topics each week, and are highly recommended – they will help you understand the films more – but not strictly required. Lectures may introduce additional material not in the readings, and the readings may explore concepts not mentioned in the lectures. All of the texts for the course will be made available on D2L as PDFs.

Grading – Weekly Responses will be graded without comments. If you would like to receive specific or detailed feedback for any of your responses please let me know in-class or via email. Papers/Presentations will be graded with detailed feedback. In order to be accepted for grading, assignments must be turned in on time. Late work will receive zero points for grading. Failure to turn in even one assignment has a significant impact on your grade. Extensions will be considered depending on individual circumstances as long as you contact me *ahead* of the assignment's due date.

Attendance – Attendance is *mandatory*. This course only meets once a week so missing even one class can be detrimental to your learning experience. However, if you do need to miss class for any reason, excused or not, please let me know ahead of time. All I ask is that you communicate with me and keep an open line of communication. Every situation will be handled according to individual circumstances and the instructor's discretion. If you do have to miss, there are various ways to engage with the course from a distance: every class will be recorded by COL and can be watched back on D2L.

Class Discussion – Student participation in class discussions will be measured in two ways. First, students are highly encouraged to ask **questions** and offer **comments** relevant to the day's topic. Participation allows the instructor to "hear" the student's voice when grading papers. Secondly, students will be called upon by the instructor to offer comments related to the **films and reading assignments**. Students must keep up with the readings and films to participate in class discussion.

Civil Discourse – DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be [Socially Responsible Leaders](#). It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student's ability to be successful in the course. The professor will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.

Computer/Phone Use – This course involves a mixture of lecture, discussion, and clips and as such, requires your full attention. There will be no phones or computers allowed during class. Exceptions will be made on an individual basis.

Attitude – A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: using your computer or phone to look at non-course related material, talking to, or over, others when the instructor or another student is speaking, mocking classmate's opinions, cell phones ringing, or anything else that could be considered a distraction. If this becomes an issue the professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate any such issues or problems.

Academic Policies – All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the University Academic Calendar. Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found [here](#)

Academic Integrity – Plagiarism is dishonest behavior and therefore violates collegiality as well as University policy. Any cases of plagiarism will automatically receive a zero and be reported to departmental and University officials for disciplinary action.

DO NOT

- Copy or use any source without proper acknowledgement
- Paraphrase another's work or ideas without acknowledgement
- Self-plagiarize (i.e. copy work from another class and submit to this one)
- Submit someone else's work or writing
- Use generative AI, AI-related tools or attempt to pass off AI-generated work as your own.

You should familiarize yourself with behavior that constitutes plagiarism by reviewing the University's policy regarding academic dishonesty [HERE](#). Remember: if you use Wikipedia or ANYTHING online, you have to CITE IT. I don't care whether you use MLA or Chicago style citations, but please be consistent. When in doubt, CITE THE SOURCE. I cannot stress this enough. Consequences for plagiarism are severe.

Writing Center – I strongly recommend you make use of the Writing Center throughout your time at DePaul. The Writing Center provides free peer writing tutoring for DePaul students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Writing Center tutors work with writers at all stages of the writing process, from invention to revision, and they are trained to identify recurring issues in your writing as well as address any specific questions or areas that you want to talk about. Visit www.depaul.edu/writing for more information.

Online Course Evaluations – Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Students complete the evaluation online in CampusConnect.

Special Needs – Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at: csd@depaul.edu.

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