

DC206-601 HISTORY OF CINEMA PRODUCTION

Spring Quarter 2016

Lecture: Thursdays, 1:30PM-4:45PM, 14 E. Jackson Rm. 214

Lab screening: Fridays, 10AM-12:15PM, 14 E. Jackson Rm. 214

Instructor: Eric Marsh

Office Hours: CDM Center, Rm. 522, Thursdays 9:00AM-1:00PM or by appointment

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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, genre, ideology, audience shifts, 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 MANDATORY lab 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.

Text - Required: A Short History of the Movies, 11th Abridged Edition by Gerald Mast & Bruce Kavin, Pearson, 2011. (Earlier editions acceptable, but some information, particularly for the recent history, may be missing). Additional readings will be provided by the instructor.

Basis for Evaluation

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| Weekly Reflections | 30% |
| Paper #1 | 15% |
| Paper #2 | 15% |
| Final Research Paper | 30% |
| Attendance & Participation | 10% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

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.

CLASS SCHEDULE & COURSE OUTLINE

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| WEEK 1 | 3/31 | Lecture: The Birth of Cinema Reading: M & K, Chs. 2 & 3 Lab Screening: <i>The Gold Rush</i> (Chaplin, 1925) |
| WEEK 2 | 4/7 | Silent Era Cinema Reading: M & K, Chs. 6, 7, 8 Lab Screening: <i>Stagecoach</i> (John Ford, 1939) |
| WEEK 3 | 4/14 | Sound and the Hollywood Studio System Reading: M & K, Chs. 9 & 11 Lab Screening: <i>Bigger Than Life</i> (Nicholas Ray, 1955) |
| WEEK 4 | 4/21 | Hollywood in Transition Reading: M & K, Ch. 12 Lab Screening: <i>Yojimbo</i> (Akira Kurosawa, 1961) |
| WEEK 5 | 4/28 | Post-War International Cinema Reading: Ch. 13 (pg. 220-236), Ch. 14 (pg. 251-260, 271-279) Lab Screening: <i>Cleo From 5 to 7</i> (Agnes Varda, 1961) |
| WEEK 6 | 5/5 | French New Wave, Auteurism Reading: Ch. 13 (pg. 236-250) Lab Screening: <i>Electra Glide in Blue</i> (J.W. Guercio, 1973) |
| WEEK 7 | 5/12 | The New Hollywood Reading: M & K, Chs. 15, 17 (pg. 346-355) Lab Screening: <i>The American Friend</i> (Wim Wenders, 1977) |
| WEEK 8 | 5/19 | International Cinema: New Waves Around the Globe (1968-) Reading: M & K, Ch. 14 (pg. 258-288), 16 Lab Screening: <i>Die Hard</i> (John McTiernan, 1988) |
| WEEK 9 | 5/26 | American Cinema & Entertainment Economy: 1980s & After Reading: M & K, Chs. 17 (pg. 355-372), Ch. 18 Lab Screening: <i>Post Tenebras Lux</i> (Carlos Reygadas, 2012) |
| WEEK 10 | 6/2 | 21st Century Cinema |

Reading: M & K, Ch. 19

Content & 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.

Assignment Breakdown & Due Dates

Specific parameters for the assignments will be given in class and posted to D2L.

Week 2 - Response #1: Introduction Assignment (3 pts). Due 4/7.

Week 2 - Response #2: *The Gold Rush* (3 pts) Due 4/14.

Week 3 - Response #3: *Stagecoach* (3 pts). Due 4/21.

Week 3 - Paper #1: Studio System. (15 pts). Due 4/28.

Week 4 - Response #4: *Bigger Than Life* (3 pts). Due 4/28.

Week 5 - Response #5: *Yojimbo* (3 pts). Due 5/5.

Week 6 - Response #6: *Cleo From 5 to 7* (3 pts). Due 5/12.

Week 7 - Response #7: *Electra Glide in Blue* (3 pts). Due 5/19.

Week 8 - Paper #2: International Explorations (15 pts). Due 5/19.

Week 8 - Response #8: *The American Friend* (3 pts). Due 5/26.

Week 9 - Response #9: *Die Hard* (3 pts). Due 6/2.

Week 10 - Response #10: *Post Tenebras Lux* (3 pts). Due 6/9.

Week 11 - Final Research Paper (30 pts). Due 6/10.

Grading - Grades and/or written feedback will be given for each assignment. In order to be accepted for grading, assignments must be turned in on time (all deadlines are on the syllabus and on D2L). *Late work will receive zero points for grading.* An assignment worth 10 points (10%) is equal to one full letter grade. Failure to turn in even one assignment has a significant impact on your grade.

Course Policies - In addition to the DePaul University course policies (see student handbook), the following policies apply to this course:

Weekly Reflections - The weekly film responses provide an opportunity to integrate the lectures and readings with the lab screenings (as well as your own reactions and observations). Each week I will start a discussion thread on D2L, and your responses are due the following week before the start of next lecture period. Reflections have a **400 word minimum!** Be descriptive and specific in your writing -- cite examples and ideas from the films, textbooks, and readings to put these films into historical and creative context. If you do not meet the word requirement, you will receive a zero. If you do not engage with the film seriously, you will receive a zero.

Lab Screenings - The assigned films are required “texts” for the course, thus attendance at the screenings is *mandatory*. If you are unable to attend a screening, it is *your* responsibility to seek out the film and watch it before the next class. Students should come to class prepared to discuss the assigned film and corresponding readings each week.

Attendance - Each class consists of lecture, screenings, and discussion. Class time is most productive when everyone arrives promptly and comes prepared to discuss that week's reading and film screening. Clips and short films shown in class may not be available outside of class, and you are responsible for all of the class material. Absences will result in a major reduction of the participation grade. Each student is allowed **ONE** absence before your grade is severely affected.

Reading Assignments - Reading assignments are *mandatory* and textbook readings should be completed by the date they are listed in the syllabus. The textbook readings supplement and inform the lectures and discussions and will be crucial in a broad understanding of cinema history as well as writing your weekly responses and papers. Lectures may introduce additional material not available in the readings, and the readings may explore concepts not mentioned in class. *Supplemental readings will also be assigned & discussed in-class.* They will be available on D2L.

D2L & COLTUBE - The course materials for this course, such as syllabus, announcements, course documents, and assignments will be available to you through D2L site at <https://d2l.depaul.edu/>. Please make sure you have access to D2L. Films screened in class will be made available to stream afterwards on <http://coltube.cdm.depaul.edu/> as a resource for your writing.

Computer/Smart Phone Use - This course involves a mixture of lecture, discussion, as well as screenings and as such, it requires your full attention (we watch movies with our eyes, ears, and minds!). There will be no phones or computers allowed during class. Exceptions will be made on an individual basis.

Illness - If you are sick, please contact me by email prior to missing a class due to illness and continue to keep me posted until you return. As long as I am aware of your situation and you take an active role in catching up, absences may be excused and extensions may be granted. Every situation will be handled according to individual circumstance at the instructor's discretion. Absolutely no consideration will be given for those who request special treatment without advanced notice, even with a doctor's note.

Academic Integrity - Plagiarism is dishonest behavior and therefore violates collegiality as well as University policy. You should familiarize yourself with behavior that constitutes plagiarism by reviewing the University's policy regarding academic dishonesty at: <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/Resources/Students/index.html>. Any cases of plagiarism will automatically receive a zero and be reported to departmental and University officials for disciplinary action.

Special Needs - Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, instructors must make reasonable accommodations for students with physical, mental, or learning disabilities. Let me know at the beginning of the term if you require some modification of seating, testing, or other class adjustments so that appropriate arrangements may be made.

