

## **HISTORY OF CINEMA PRODUCTION**

FILM 131-502 [IN-PERSON] | FILM 131-511 [ASYNC]

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY | WINTER QUARTER 2024

WEDNESDAYS | 1:30PM-4:45PM | CDM Center RM 708

Instructor: Eric Marsh | [marsh@cdm.depaul.edu](mailto: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 and video lectures will be provided by the instructor on [D2L](#). The primary textbook for this course is A World History of Film by Robert Sklar. This is what in-person students will be reading and what the online video lectures for async students are based on. Various additional readings will 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 (total of 99 points)**

Attendance/Participation	10 points
Short Responses (8 @ 3pts each)	24 points
Paper #1	20 points
Paper #2/Presentation	20 points
Final Paper	25 points

**COURSE SCHEDULE & OUTLINE**

- WEEK 1**     **1/10 THE EMERGENCE OF CINEMA, 1800s-1912**  
Cinema, Society and Science  
In-class screening: Early Cinema shorts
- WEEK 2**     **1/17 THE SILENT-ERA, 1912-1930**  
The Heyday of the Silents  
*The Gold Rush*, 1925, d. Charlie Chaplin, USA, 95 min.
- WEEK 3**     **1/24 CLASSIC CINEMA, 1927-1945**  
Sound and The Hollywood Studio System  
*Design for Living*, 1933, d. Ernst Lubitsch, USA, 91 min.
- WEEK 4**     **1/31 POSTWAR TRANSFORMATION I, 1945-1960**  
Film and World War II: Neorealism and Film Noir  
*Road House*, 1948, d. Jean Negulescu, USA, 95 min.  
*Los Olvidados*, 1950, d. Luis Buñuel, México, 76 min.
- WEEK 5**     **2/7 POSTWAR TRANSFORMATION II, 1945-1960**  
Hollywood in Decline / Art Cinema of Europe and Asia  
*Yojimbo*, 1961, d. Akira Kurosawa, Japan, 110 min.
- WEEK 6**     **2/14 REVIVAL OF CINEMA, 1960-1980**  
The Shock of the New: French New Wave / The New Documentary  
*Cleo from 5 to 7*, 1961, d. Agnes Varda, France, 90 min.
- WEEK 7**     **2/21 REVIVAL OF CINEMA, 1960-1980**  
American Film: Turmoil & Transformation / Alternative Cinema  
*Car Wash*, 1976, d. Michael Schultz, USA, 97 min.
- WEEK 8**     **2/28 EXPANSION OF CINEMA, 1980-2000**  
International Explorations: New Waves Around the Globe

*The 36th Chamber of Shaolin*, 1978, d. Lau, Hong Kong, 1978, 115 min

**WEEK 9      3/6      EXPANSION OF CINEMA, 1980-2000**

American Cinema and the Entertainment Economy

*Point Break*, 1991, d. Kathryn Bigelow, USA, 122 min.

*The Living End*, 1992, d. Gregg Araki, USA, 84 min.

**WEEK 10      3/13      21st CENTURY CINEMA, 2000-2023**

The Digital Revolution: The Present and Future of Cinema

*A Touch of Sin*, 2013, d. Jia Zhangke, China, 130 min.

**FINAL PAPER DUE BEFORE OR ON MARCH 12 – THE LAST DAY OF THE QUARTER**

**Weekly Responses** – due EVERY WEEK unless otherwise specified

Weekly Responses (3pts each) provide you an opportunity to integrate the readings and lectures with the *assigned films* through your own reactions, observations, and analysis. This is a space for **YOU** to reflect on and explore the movies we watch in greater detail, and to prove to me that you are keeping up with and engaging with the course material.

**Requirements:**

1. 300+ word minimum. If you do not meet this requirement you will receive a zero. There is no maximum, write as much as you'd like...
2. Each response should contain reflections on the assigned film or films for that week. If you do not write about or mention the assigned film(s) in your response, you will receive a zero.
3. Each response must cite, quote, or reference *at least 1 SOURCE* from the course material (i.e. textbook or supplemental reading, video lectures for async students, lecture material, or your own research into the film/subject). If you do not use or quote any sources, you will receive a zero.

**A Few Notes on Weekly Responses**

1. Get Personal: I recognize that as production students you may all have different pursuits and interests within the field of filmmaking, so I encourage you to explore *anything* that you find interesting in the context of *your own* field or particular cinematic practices or aspirations.
2. Things to do: Be specific, descriptive, and thoughtful in your writing. Connect the readings to the films. Explore what you can learn from the film or films **as a filmmaker**. Back up your opinions, observations, and statements with concrete examples from the films/readings.

3. Things Not To Do: Excessive plot recapping, excessive opinion, generalizations, platitudes.

### **Papers/Presentations**

Paper #1: The Studio System (20pts) - Students will write a paper exploring Classic Hollywood Cinema. Due 2/7

Paper #2/Presentations: International Explorations (20pts) - In-person students will give presentations and async students will write papers about international filmmakers and movements from the 1960s-1990s. Due 2/28

Final Paper: 21st Century Cinema (25pts) - Students will write a paper about cinema in the 21st century. Due 3/12

### **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.

### **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.

### **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 (for in-person students):** This course comes attached with a weekly lab for film screenings. Since 2020/COVID I have made attendance at these lab screenings OPTIONAL and will continue to do so and make all of the movies available to watch at home via D2L. HOWEVER, if you wish to use the on-campus theater space (14 E. Jackson RM 214) for any of the lab screenings let me know and I will gladly help facilitate that.

### **Reading Assignments**

**Textbook readings** are *mandatory* (for in-person students) and will guide us through your responses and our discussions. Async students must either follow along via textbook readings OR video lectures (which are based on the textbook). 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.

### **Video Lectures [for async students]**

The online video lectures for this course combine the textbook and lecture as a video essay featuring lots of movie clips, etc, and are the main way you will engage with the course material. Outside of Week 1, where I will ask you to watch the in-class lecture video, you will *only* be watching the video lectures and films. While you are not required to read the textbook (since the video lectures are a substitute based on it) you will have access to it on D2L and may use it if you wish.

### **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 [in-person students]**

Attendance is mandatory (and 10% of your grade). 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.

### **Attendance [for Async students]**

Because you are not required to attend class in person your attendance and participation grade will be folded into the grades for the Weekly Responses. So for every weekly response you turn in, you will receive attendance/participation points. If you do not turn in your weekly response, you will be marked absent for that week re: attendance/participation.

### **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.

### **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 any source without proper acknowledgement
- paraphrase another's work or ideas without acknowledgement
- self-plagiarize
- submit someone else's work
- 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.

## **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](mailto:csd@depaul.edu).

Lewis Center 1420, 25 East Jackson Blvd.

Phone number: (312)362-8002

Fax: (312)362-6544

TTY: (773)325.7296

**COVID-19 Health & Safety Precautions**

Faculty and staff should take proper precautions to safeguard their health. It is important for everyone at DePaul to monitor yourself for COVID-19 symptoms, test when you feel sick and stay home to avoid exposing others if you are sick: [Health & Safety Practices](#)