

# DC 387 Hollywood History

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**When:** Tuesdays & Thursdays · 6pm-9pm  
**Where:** The Lot in Hollywood · 1041 N. Formosa Ave West Hollywood, CA 90046

**Instructor:** Erin Rodman · [erodman@cdm.depaul.edu](mailto:erodman@cdm.depaul.edu) · (310) 927-2525

**Office hours:** I'm around and available to meet. Email me to set a time.

## → Course Description

Students will gain a deep understanding of the history and foundation of the film industry through behind-the-scenes access to working studios, historical readings and discussions of the material, and the unique opportunity to have access to the Warner Brothers Archives, the largest single studio collection in the world, housing all of the WB materials from 1918 (the release of the studio's first feature film) through 1968 (when the studio was sold to Seven Arts).

## → Course Goals

The purpose of this class is to expand the student's knowledge of the history and evolution of cinema through the following key objectives:

- Students will identify key milestones in film history and culture and locate their importance to cinema at large.
- Students will gain understanding of the origins of filmed entertainment by interacting with historic Hollywood studios and production facilities.
- Students will critically assess films from the early days of cinema.

## → Grading

Studio tour Reaction	20%
Viewing Reaction	20%
Group Presentation	20%
Class attendance and participation	40%

*A= 100-93, A-=92-90, 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. A indicates excellence, B indicates good work, C indicates satisfactory work, D work is unsatisfactory in some respect, F is substantially unsatisfactory work.*

## → Class Schedule

*Note: This schedule is subject to change. Please consult class calendar and professor emails for the most up to date schedule for student postings, readings, assignments and all due dates. Weekly reading, screenings & class events to be assigned by the instructor class by class.*

### Week 1

Introduction to LA Quarter courses and each other  
Review syllabus and class requirements

### Week 2 - 6

Classroom discussions  
Interviews with industry professionals and student-driven Q&As  
Studio tour Reaction  
Viewing Reaction

### Week 7-10

Group presentation  
Industry network party (date TBD)

## → Assignment Details

*All written assignments should be at least 500 words (approximately two pages), double spaced, one inch margins, 12 point Times New Roman font*

### Studio Tour Reaction (20% of final grade)

Students will write a reaction paper inspired by one of the studio lot tours. Included should be impressions of the tour, one specific person, film or event you learned about during the studio tour and why the observation resonated with you.

### Viewing Reaction (20% of final grade)

Students must write a reaction paper to one of the following films: *Sunset Blvd*, *Singin' In the Rain*, *The Day of the Locust*, *The Bad and the Beautiful*, *A Star is Born* (1927, 1954 or 1976), *The Player*, *Barton Fink*. **What sort of commentary do these fictional representations of Hollywood provide? Do they support a myth of what Hollywood can be, or attempt to destroy it?**

### **Group Presentation (20% of final grade)**

Students will break into groups of three and develop a 10 minute visual presentation briefly summarizing and analyzing one of the films listed below. **What was the cinematic landscape/context at the time the film was made? Does the story reflect elements of our cultural beliefs at the time or make statements about a specific moment in history? Why do you think the film is considered historically/creatively “important?”**

*Casablanca, On the Waterfront, Some Like It Hot, All About Eve, The African Queen, The Maltese Falcon, Mr. Smith Goes To Washington, High Noon, It Happened One Night, Double Indemnity, North by Northwest, Rear Window, A Streetcar Named Desire, The Philadelphia Story, From Here to Eternity, The Third Man, Fantasia, Rebel Without A Cause, An American in Paris, City Lights, Modern Times, Duck Soup, A Place in the Sun, Bringing Up Baby, Yankee Doodle Dandy, Swing Time (1938).*

### **→ Required Texts and Suggested Resources**

Websites:     Deadline · The Wrap · Hollywood Reporter

Films:         [AFI Top 100 Movies](#)