

CIN 1150: *Introduction to Film*
Oakland University
Fall 2018
DH 203
M 1:20 PM-3:07PM, W 1:20PM-3:47PM

Instructor

Nathan Koob

Office: DH 169 (subject to change)

Office Hours: Mondays 3:10-5:10 *or by appointment*

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Course Description:

Introduction to the art of film by examination of the filmmaking process, study of narrative and nonnarrative film, and exploration of film's relation to society. We will examine how films are made, watched, consumed and regarded throughout different societies and perspectives.

Learning Objectives:

- Arts Knowledge Exploration learning objectives:
 - knowledge of cultural or historic artistic traditions in visual, auditory, movement, theatrical, or cinematic art
 - knowledge of the role of art as critical commentary on society and as an aesthetic expression of experience
- US Diversity learning objectives:
 - demonstrate knowledge of how diverse value systems and societal structures are influenced by at least two of the following: race, gender, ethnicity
 - identify major challenges and issues these raise in society

Required Text:

- Maria Pramaggiore and Tom Wallis. *Film: A Critical Introduction*. 3rd Edition. London: Laurence King Publishing, 2011. (PW)
- Supplementary Readings on Moodle (M)

Recommended Text:

- Timothy Corrigan. *A Short Guide to Writing About Film*. 9th Edition. NY: Pearson, 2015.

Course Requirements and Grading:

- Class attendance and participation (15%)
- Three short response papers due intermittently throughout the semester (5% + 10% + 15% = 30% together).

- Midterm Exam (25%)
- Final Exam (30%)

Participation:

Participation in the course refers not only to attendance, but primarily to active listening with insightful comments and questions during class discussions. In order to facilitate lively participation make sure you are remaining actively engaged through both readings and screenings which means taking notes and developing questions/ideas. Remain respectful to others and their positions.

You may use laptops to take notes in lecture, but any use of phones, tablets, headphones or laptops for the purposes of anything beyond taking notes will count against your participation grade. I will only comment directly on such behaviors if they are disrupting others, but rest assured even if I do not comment I will notice and mark you down.

I do expect participation in class, however, I am also going to open a general discussion forum on Moodle for this course where you may create threads, discussion topics or ask questions. While it will not completely replace class discussion, the online forum can definitely positively effect your participation grade. It is a way for you to further show participation in the course, try out ideas/topics with your fellow classmates, work through course material and provide you with the opportunity to gain quick answers/responses to your questions.

Element	(D) Unsatisfactory	(C) Basic	(B) Proficient	(A) Distinguished
Attendance & Participation	Student is frequently late or absent. Absences are not handled following procedures specified by the instructor. Student is not prepared and does not participate in group and class discussions. Does not demonstrate commitment to learn and support the learning of others.	Student is usually on time, prepared for class, and participates in group and class discussions. Student attends classes and if an absence occurs, the procedure specified by the instructor is followed. Sometimes takes an active role in learning and supporting the learning of others.	In addition to attending classes, being on time, being prepared, and following procedures specified by the instructor, the student usually takes an active role in learning and supporting the learning of others.	In addition to attending classes, being on time, being prepared, and following procedures specified by the instructor, student consistently takes a leadership role in learning and supporting the learning of others.

Format for Written Assignments:

All assignments must be done on a computer. Do not try to type an essay for this course on your phone. Typeface should be 12 font Times New Roman, easy to read and double-spaced. Make sure to put your name on your paper even if submitting it through the Moodle system.

Late Policy: Work is due at the beginning of class. Every 3 days late will result in a 5 point reduction from the assignment (e.g. a paper turned in 2 days late will be reduced by 5 points, a paper turned in 4 days late will be reduced by 10). Written assignments must reach the minimum required length (e.g. 1 FULL page) or they will

be subject to point reduction. If you are absent on a day when a paper is due, you are still responsible for turning in the paper to Moodle before class time on the due date – otherwise your work will be considered late.

Response Papers

You must turn in three essays in response to the readings and screening/s of a given week. For certain screenings I will give you a prompt and ask you to write a short 1-2 page paper in response. Prompts will combine ideas found in the readings and ask you to engage those ideas with the screening for that week as well as your own ideas. It will behoove you to keep up with the reading in order to be able to apply concepts from the reading to the texts/films we watch.

General Grading Guidelines:

Element	(D) Unsatisfactory	(C) Basic	(B) Proficient	(A) Distinguished
Quality of Writing and Argument	Writing contains many grammar and syntax errors. Repeated patterns of mechanical and usage errors seriously interfere with writer’s purpose. Argument is poorly worded and supported, evidence is lacking or inaccurate, and fails to demonstrate any significant course-specific learning.	Grammar and syntax are correct. Argument is understandable and evidence is accurate, but lacking in quantity or quality. Paper will demonstrate a learned knowledge of the work we have been doing in class, but fails to extend it to any degree.	Communication of ideas is clear and accurate. Argument is clearly presented, supporting evidence/ counterarguments are effective and well-used. Will show insight and an above average command of the material discussed in class, while engaging complexly with the primary text.	Writing is of polished quality. The language used reflects a careful choice of words and a strong vocabulary. Argument is clearly presented, original, and supporting evidence/ counter-arguments are fully unpacked and implemented excellently. Will respond to assignments aggressively, creatively, and with a high degree of organizational foresight.

Midterm and Final Exams:

The exams will cover material from both lectures and the readings. This is to say that just attending lecture and taking notes will not be enough as material in the readings not specifically covered in lecture is fair game for the exam. You are encouraged to ask questions in class, on the discussion forum or during office hours regarding any material you do not understand or would like to talk through. The format of the exam will be a mixture of fill in the blank, multiple choice, short answer questions and a short essay covering both key terms and theories/concepts discussed in the lecture and readings.

Attendance:

Attendance will be checked at each meeting and is required for all lectures and screenings. You are expected to arrive on time and be prepared to fully engage in the class discussions. This course is highly dependent upon both the lecture and discussion in every class. The material in the readings may not always be covered in class, but you are expected to know it. If there are any questions concerning the readings feel free to ask either in class or during office hours but know that there

are weeks where my lesson plans will take a slightly different direction on the topic than the readings. Therefore, if you are to miss a class finding someone with excellent note-taking skills will be highly recommended.

Class will begin promptly. Late arrivals or early departures will be considered one absence unless cleared by me in advance. Do not expect me to warn you about your attendance status. If you are consistently absent or late you will quickly and quietly fail the course. If you ever need to leave a class or screening early you must let me know in advance so that I will not mark you absent.

First Four Absences: You are allowed four absences, no questions asked. Use at your discretion.

Five Absences +: 5 absences and above will begin to negatively affect your GPA in the course through your participation grade by 0.3 points per additional absence. At this point you have missed almost 1/5 of the entire course. Enough absences can result in failure of the course.

University excused absences apply to participation as an athlete, manager or student trainer in NCAA intercollegiate competitions, or participation as a representative of Oakland University at academic events and artistic performances approved by the Provost or designee. For the excused absence policy, see <http://www.oakland.edu/?id=6850&sid=175>.

A Note on Screenings:

Screenings for the class have been chosen without regard to their MPAA rating or content and may contain violence, language, sexual, or other objectionable content. If you feel like viewing any content might be a problem for you notify me so we can try to work something out or move you to another course.

You must attend all screenings and make sure to remain actively engaged in the screenings, which includes taking notes and being respectful to those around you. Turn cell phones off—no computers, tablets or devices that emit light will be allowed during screenings. Refrain from loud talking, sleeping and disruptive behavior.

You are responsible for watching the assigned films each week. It is highly possible that a number of films we watch in class will NOT be readily available and it is possible that we may occasionally screen something during lecture as well **so be sure to come to class and screenings.**

Communication:

I usually check email once or twice a day; do not expect immediate or detailed responses. Expect a response within 24 hours. If I'm travelling over a given weekend I may be much slower in responding or, in an extreme circumstance, even unavailable for email correspondence. I will

notify you in advance if this is going to be an issue. *Email is not a substitute for face-to-face meetings. If you have detailed questions or concerns visit me during my office hours.*

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism consists of using other people’s words *and/or ideas* and presenting them as one’s own, whether the material is taken from a book, a friend, or the Internet. Please consult the General Information section of the Undergraduate Catalog to acquaint yourself with the university’s definition of and policies regarding plagiarism. Any student suspected of cheating and/or plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students and, thereafter, to the Academic Conduct Committee for adjudication. Anyone found guilty of academic misconduct in this course may receive a course grade of 0.0, in addition to any penalty assigned by the Academic Conduct Committee. Students found guilty of academic misconduct by the Academic Conduct Committee may face suspension or permanent dismissal. For any trouble with your writing I recommend you see me or the Oakland Writing Center (212 Kresge Library, 370-3120). *Ignorance of the standards and policies of academic integrity is not an acceptable excuse.*

Disabilities:

A student with a documented learning or physical disability must contact the Office of Disability and Support Services, 121 North Foundation Hall, (248) 370-3266, and inform me of special needs during first week of classes. For more information, visit <http://www.oakland.edu/dss>.

Grading:

The University’s new grading scale is below. For this course, you will receive grades on individual assignments on a 0-100 scale. The corresponding letter grades are as follows: A 94-100, A- 90-93, B+ 87-89, B 84-86, B- 80-83, C+ 77-79, C 74-76, C- 70-73, D+ 67-69, D 60-66, F 0-59

Grade	Honor Points
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7

C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
F	0.0

Schedule:

(Subject to change)

Week 1: Introductions

W 9/5: Syllabus/Why we study film

Reading: Corrigan “Glossary of Film Terms” (M)
PW Ch 2 (pg. 14-30)

Week 2: Writing About Film

M 9/10: Choosing a Topic

Reading: Corrigan “Beginning to Think, Preparing to Watch, and Starting to Write” (M)

W 9/12: Writing

Reading: PW Ch 3

Screening: *The Third Man* (Carol Reed, 1949) 93 min

Week 3: *Mise-en-scène*

M 9/17: Making the World

Reading: PW Ch 5

W 9/19: Stuff on Screen

Reading: Diawara “Black American Cinema” (M)

Screening: *Beyond the Lights* (Gina Prince-Bythewood, 2014)

Week 4: Narrative

M 9/24: Understanding Story

Reading: PW Ch 4

W 9/26: Stuff on Screen

Reading: Cavell “The World Viewed” (M)

Screening: *Miller’s Crossing* (Joel Coen and Ethan Coen, 1990) 115 min

Week 5: Film and Ideology

PAPER #1 DUE

M 10/1: Realizing Difference

Reading: PW Ch 10

W 10/3 : Cinema and Race

Reading: Dyer “Lighting for Whiteness” (M)

Screening: *Suture* (Scott McGehee and David Siegel, 1993) 96 min

Week 6: Editing

M 10/8: Arranging Events

Reading: Tasker “Dumb Movies for Dumb People” (M)

W 10/10: Manufacturing Visual Time

Reading: PW Ch 7

Screening: *Free Fire* (Ben Wheatley, 2016) 91 min

Week 7: Documentary

MIDTERM EXAM

M 10/15: A Creative Treatment of Reality

Reading: PW Ch 9 (pg. 279-291)

W 10/17: Documentary History/Theory

Reading: Renov “New Subjectivities” (M)

Screening: *American Movie* (Chris Smith, 1999) 107 min

Gap-Toothed Women (Les Blank, 1987) 31 min

Week 8: Cinematography

M 10/22: Visualizing story

Reading: PW Ch 6

W 10/24: The Look of Things

Reading: Johnston “Myths of Women in the Cinema” (M)

Screening: *Come Back to the 5 & Dime Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean* (Robert Altman, 1982) 109 min

Week 9: Sound

M 10/29: Auditory Learning

Reading: PW Ch 8

W 10/31: Soundscapes

Screening: *The Golf Specialist* (Monte Brice, 1930) 21 min

The Dentist (Leslie Pearce, 1932) 22 min

The Bank Dick (Edward Cline, 1940) 72 min

Week 10: Social Context/Transnational Cinema

PAPER #2 DUE

M 11/5: Exploring Context at Home and Abroad

Reading: Crofts “Reconceptualizing National Cinema/s” (M)

W 11/7: Korean Cinema

Reading: PW Ch 11

Screening: *The Thieves* (Dong-hoon Choi, 2012) 135 min

Week 11: Genre

M 11/12: Genre and Film Noir

Reading: PW Ch 13

W 11/14:

Reading: Biesen “Manufacturing Heroines” (M)

Screening: *Out of the Past* (Jacques Tourneur, 1947) 97 min

Week 12: Avant-Garde

M 11/19: New Ways of Seeing

Reading: PW Ch 9 (pg. 291-305)

Johnston “Women’s Cinema as Counter Cinema” (M)

Screening: Selections by Stan Brakhage, Shirley Clarke, Agnes Varda and Kenneth Anger

W 11/21 **No Class. Enjoy the Break! Write Good Papers! Study for the Final!**

Week 13: Film Authorship

PAPER #3 DUE

M 11/27: Who Makes the Movies?

Reading: PW Ch 14

W 11/29

The Living Author

Reading: Barthes "The Death of the Author" (M)

Screening: *Before Sunset* (Richard Linklater, 2004) 80 min

Week 14: Stardom

M 12/4: Stardom in Hollywood and Beyond

Reading: PW Ch 12

W 12/6

Screening: *Butter* (Jim Field Smith, 2011) 90 min

FINAL EXAM: See Moodle for Exact Date/Time/Place