



CIN 1150-C03 - Intro to Film
OU Fall 2018 (CRN 43558)
English Dept./Cinema Studies
Location: 208 AFC
T 6:00 – 9:50 pm
4 Credits

Charlie M. Meyers, Ph.D.
Ofc: Faculty Corridor
Dept. Phone: 248-370-2250
***Email: meyers2@oakland.edu**
Ofc Hrs: T & Th 2:00 – 2:40
T 5:00–6:00 or by appmt.

Required Text: *Film Studies: An Introduction*, Ed Sikov
ISBN: 978-0231142939

Additional Readings will be posted to the course site on Moodle.

***Email Policy:** Email is the best way to contact me. I will do my best to respond within 24 hours, during business hours, on week days. Please do not expect an immediate response after hours or on weekends, and please follow the rules of [Netiquette](#) when communicating with me or your classmates. **When emailing, please indicate the class and section you are in.**

Course Description: This course is an introduction to the art of film by examination of the filmmaking process, study of narrative and non-narrative film, and exploration of film's relation to society. That is, how individual films affirm, challenge and/or call into question particular values, attitudes, and institutions in which they are produced.

By breaking films down into their component parts – narrative structure, mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing and sound – we will explore the ways in which filmmakers employ techniques – lighting, dramatic staging, musical scores and motifs, and compositional elements – in order to communicate ideas and evoke emotions. We will also explore the relationship between film and various artistic movements, as well as a broad-based spectrum of styles, genres, historical periods and national cultures. Students will also be introduced to the specific techniques and critical methods of sophisticated film criticism.

CIN 1150 satisfies the university general education requirement in the arts knowledge exploration area and satisfies the university general education requirement in U. S. Diversity.

Learning Outcomes:

Knowledge Exploration Area – Arts: The student will demonstrate:

- 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

U.S. Diversity – The student will:

- demonstrate knowledge of how diverse value systems and societal structures are influenced by at least two of the following: race, gender, ethnicity

Cross-Cutting Capacities:

- This course addresses the cross-cutting capacity of critical thinking.

Course Content Disclaimer: The films to be screened have been selected on the basis that they exemplify the cinematic elements and/or themes addressed in the text. The diversity of the subject matter contained in these films may include such adult content as violence, profanity, nudity, and/or alternate lifestyles. If you are unwilling, or unable, to deal with these issues, feel free to opt out of the course.

Grading

As of Fall 2018, Oakland University uses a letter grade scale (previously a 4-point scale).

- A: Comprehensive mastery of all objectives and required content, critical and higher-level thinking, original and creative work, sound use and development of writing abilities
- B: Competent, thorough coverage of basic content and concepts, adequate use and development of writing abilities
- C: Slightly below average work, has met minimum basic requirements but with difficulty
- D: Has not met many requirements of assignments/course, has significant difficulties in many areas
- F: No credit—Has not completed most requirements and has not officially withdrawn from course before drop date

OU GRADING SCALE

SCALE AS OF FALL 2018	OLD SCALE
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

Grade Distribution & Requirements:

Quizzes (6x25)	150 points
Shot Analysis	25 points
Short Response Paper (2x25)	50 points
In-class exercises/Participation	25 points
Final Exam	<u>100 points</u>
Total Possible Points	350 points

- **All assigned work must be completed in order to receive a passing grade for the course.**
- All assignments are to be submitted via Moodle. Once they have been critiqued and/or graded, they will be returned to you with comments. Please review the feedback before submitting subsequent work.
- **Do not email assignments unless previous arrangements have been made with the instructor.**
- With excused absences, students will have one week to make up missed work.
- Keep all materials returned to you throughout the semester.
- Total points earned, divided by 350 possible points, will yield your final grade as a percentage.

Quizzes:

- Quizzes will be posted online every two weeks.
- They will cover the assigned films and the text, as well as the assigned readings posted on Moodle.
- They may be turned in online or, if you prefer, hard copies may be submitting in class.

Written Response Papers:

• Students are to **submit 2 short analytical essays**, which may be based on one of the prompts that I will post on the class website, or you may generate your own thesis. In either case, your essay should *critically evaluate* an aspect of the film assigned for that week.

→ • Written assignments are to be typed and formatted according to **MLA or Chicago guidelines**, using black ink, a standard 12-point font (such as “times new roman”), one-inch margins, double spacing, and a header with your last name and page number (as seen here)

→ • **All essays MUST be accompanied by a properly formatted Works Cited page**, which lists all of the sources consulted in the preparation of your essays.

• A word about sources:

• Additional sources **must** come from a peer reviewed or editorially reviewed publication. Thus, Wikipedia.com **is not** an acceptable source for this course.

• Caveat: If you scroll down to the bottom of a Wikipedia entry, you will often find a list of sources used to prepare the entry. In many cases, these are credible sources.

• imdb.com, while also not an academic source, can be useful for such information as characters’ or actors’ names and other production details

• Once your essay has been reviewed, it will be returned or uploaded, with comments. Be sure to **read the comments** in order to help make future papers stronger.

• If you need assistance, I strongly encourage you to contact me, or make an appointment with one of the University’s Writing Centers.

→ • Or visit The Purdue Online Writing Lab, which is also a valuable source for information regarding essays, MLA, APA or Chicago format and citation: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>

Criteria for Evaluating Essays:

Contrary to popular opinion, grades are **earned, not given**; and, in my opinion, an “A” is earned by those who do *outstanding work*. If one merely does the minimum, or adequate work, they can expect the corresponding grade, which would be a “C.” A “B” will reflect work that is above average. Consequently, **an “A” paper will:**

- respond appropriately to the posted prompt
- be well written and free of spelling and grammatical errors
- not rely solely on personal opinion, but provide support for opinions expressed
- incorporate ideas from the text book, posted readings or outside research
- include and cite outside sources
- be properly formatted in the MLA style

Classroom and University Policies

Attendance Policy:

- By their very nature, film courses require a significant commitment in terms of time and effort. They are not, as some students have learned the hard way, courses in which one merely watches movies solely for their entertainment value.
- This course adheres to the [OU Excused Absence Policy](#). For absences not covered by this policy, students will be allowed 2 unexcused absences during the term. Each absence after that will lower your final grade one half point; for example, a 4.0 would drop to 3.5, etc.

Class Participation: My preferred style of teaching could best be described as a seminar – a course in which a group of students engaged in study and research, guided by a faculty member, meets regularly to exchange information and hold discussions. Therefore:

- Our classroom should be a space where everyone feels safe and welcome to share ideas.
- A significant portion of class meetings will be devoted to lecture/discussion.
- Your attentiveness to, as well as your participation in, these discussions is expected.
- You are welcome to bring laptops, tablets, and cell phones to class, but please make sure to turn phones on silent or vibrate. Also, please use these devices only for note taking.
- Respecting others also means avoiding behaviors that are disruptive to the class, including (but not limited to) talking, texting or scrolling on cell phones, listening to iPods or similar devices, playing videogames or Facebooking on a laptop/tablet, or doing work for another class.
- If I observe disrespectful or disruptive behaviors, I will give you two warnings throughout the semester. After that, I may ask you to leave class and take an absence for the day.

Academic Conduct: All members of the academic community at Oakland University are expected to practice and uphold standards of academic integrity and honesty. Academic integrity means representing oneself and one's work honestly. (See OU's Academic Conduct Regulations and the Student Code of Conduct for more information.)

- **Cheating** includes using materials such as books and/or notes when not authorized by the instructor, copying from someone else's paper, helping someone else copy work, substituting another's work as one's own, theft of exam copies, falsifying data or submitting data not based on the student's own work on assignments, or other forms of misconduct on exams.
- **Plagiarism** is using someone else's work or ideas without giving that person credit; by doing this, students are, in effect, claiming credit for someone else's thinking. Both direct quotations and paraphrases must be documented. Buying a paper or using information from the World Wide Web or Internet without attribution and handing it in as one's own work is also plagiarism. Clear cases of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment, and possibly for the course as a whole. If you are uncertain about how to integrate a particular source into your work, please check with me or with someone in the OU Writing Center.

Accommodation and Special Consideration

Oakland University is committed to providing everyone the support and services needed to participate in their courses. Students with disabilities who may require special accommodations should make an appointment with campus [Disability Support Services](#) (DSS). If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to your professor a letter from Disability Support Services in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. DSS determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact DSS at 248-370-3266 or by e-mail at dss@oakland.edu.

For information on additional academic support services and equipment, visit the [Study Aids](#) webpage of Disability Support Services website. (Link to Disability Support Services website: <https://www.oakland.edu/dss/>)

Religious Observances

Student should discuss with professor at the beginning of the semester to make appropriate arrangements. Although Oakland University, as a public institution, does not observe religious holidays, it will continue to make every reasonable effort to help students avoid negative academic consequences when their religious obligations conflict with academic requirements. See The [OU Diversity Calendar](https://www.oakland.edu/diversity/calendar/) for more information. (<https://www.oakland.edu/diversity/calendar/>)

Preferred Name/Pronoun

If you do not identify with the name that is listed with the registrar, please notify me so that I may appropriately amend my records. In addition, if you prefer to go by a different pronoun, please inform me.

Sexual Misconduct

Faculty and staff are responsible for creating a safe learning environment for our students, and that includes a mandatory reporting responsibility if students share information regarding sexual misconduct/harassment, relationship violence, or information about a crime that may have occurred on campus with the University. In such cases, the professor will report information to the campus' Title IX Coordinator (Chad Martinez, chadmartinez@oakland.edu or 248-370-3496). Students who wish to speak to someone confidentially can contact the OU Counseling Center at 248-370-3465. Additionally, students can speak to a confidential source off-campus 24 hours a day by contacting Haven at 248-334-1274.

Add/Drops

The university policy will be explicitly followed. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of [deadline dates for dropping courses](https://www.oakland.edu/registrar/registration/dropornot/) and officially drop the course. (Link to deadlines for dropping courses: <https://www.oakland.edu/registrar/registration/dropornot/>)

Faculty Feedback: OU Early Alert System

As a student in this class, you may receive "[Faculty Feedback](#)" in your OU e-mail if your professor identifies areas of concern that may impede your success in the class. Faculty Feedback typically occurs during weeks 2-5 of the Fall and Winter terms, but may also be given later in the semester and more than once a semester. A "Faculty Feedback" e-mail will specify the area(s) of concern and recommend action(s) you should take. Please check your OU email account regularly as that is where it will appear. This system is to provide early feedback and intervention to support your success. (Link to Faculty Feedback for students: <https://www.oakland.edu/advising/faculty-feedback/>)

Emergency Preparedness

In the event of an emergency arising on campus, the Oakland University Police Department (OUPD) will notify the campus community via the emergency notification system. The professor of your class is not responsible for your personal safety, so therefore it is the responsibility of each student to understand the evacuation and "lockdown" guidelines to follow when an emergency is declared. These simple steps are a good place to start:

- OU uses an emergency notification system through text, email, and landline. These notifications include campus closures, evacuations, lockdowns and other emergencies. Register for these notifications at oupolice.com.
- Based on the class cellphone policy, ensure that one cellphone is on in order to receive and share emergency notifications with the professor in class.
- If an emergency arises on campus, call the OUPD at (248) 370-3331. Save this number in your phone, and put it in an easy-to-find spot in your contacts.

- Review protocol for evacuation, lockdown, and other emergencies via the classroom's red books (hanging on the wall) and oupolice.com/emergencies.
- Review with the professor and class what to do in an emergency (evacuation, lockdown, snow emergency).

Violence/Active Shooter: If an active shooter is in the vicinity, call the OUPD at (248) 370-3331 or 911 when it is safe to do so and provide information, including the location and number of shooter(s), description of shooter(s), weapons used and number of potential victims. Consider your options: [Run, Hide, or Fight](#).

General Viewing Requirements:

Be forewarned – by their very nature, film courses require a significant commitment in terms of time and effort. They are not, as some students have learned the hard way, courses in which one merely watches movies for their entertainment value.

In addition to watching the required films, it is strongly suggested that you take notes while viewing, as well as while reading the assigned materials. This will assure that you will recall your observations, reactions and insights, as well as any questions that might arise. Also, beyond the elements of plot, you will need to begin paying attention to such cinematic elements as camera placement or movement, camera angles and distances, lighting, editing and sound design – all of which will be essential when responding to discussion prompts, preparing papers, and answering exam questions.

General Reading Requirements:

- Readings assigned on the syllabus are to be completed **before class** on the date indicated.
- Students are responsible for all materials discussed or screened in class, and all assigned readings. If you have any specific questions about any of the material, please pose them when we meet, as others may benefit as well.

Course Schedule: The class schedule below indicates class dates, major paper/project due dates, specific topical material to be covered, and reading/homework assignments. The instructor reserves the right to make minor adjustments to this schedule. Major assignment due dates are in **bold**.

Month/Date/Week

Readings & Screenings

T 9/11 1

Introduction to the course
 Keynote: Picture This
 Basic Film Terms
 Brief overview of film history
Screen: Edison, Lumière and Griffith shorts
Trip to the Moon (Georges Méliès, 1903)
The Great Train Robbery (Edwin S. Porter, 1902)
 • In-class analysis of a 30 second ad
 • In-class analysis of film clip (students/group activity)

T 9/18 2

Screen: *Hugo* (Martin Scorsese, 2011)
 Won **Academy Award for Best Cinematography** as well as for
 Best Art Direction, Best Visual Effects, Best Sound Mixing,
 and Best Sound Editing
 Nominated for Academy Awards for Best Picture, Best Director,

Best Adapted Screenplay, Best Film Editing, Best Costume Design, and Best Original Score

Readings:

Sikov: Chapter 3 – Mise-en-scène: Cinematography

Bowe – Marty's Magical *Hugo*

Osmond – *Sight & Sound: Hugo*

Christie – *Sight & Sound: The Illusionist*

Meyers – Thoughts on *Hugo*

T 9/25 3 **Screen:** *Double Indemnity* (Billy Wilder, 1944) (107 min)
Keynote Presentation: Mise-en-scène and Film Noir

Readings:

Sikov: Chapter 10 – Genre

Schrader: Notes on Film Noir

Hirsch: Dark Side of the Screen

Schatz: Genres

Ebert: *Double Indemnity*/Film Review

T 10/2 4 **Screen:** *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982) (117 min)
Keynote Presentation: *Blade Runner*

Readings:

Sikov: Chapter 1 – Mise-en-scène: Within the Frame

Kerman: Retrofitting *Blade Runner* (Introduction)

Rough Guide: *Blade Runner*

Doll and Faller: *Blade Runner* and Genre: Film Noir and Science Fiction

T 10/9 5 **Screen:** *Run Lola Run* (Tom Tykwer, 1999) (80 min)

Readings:

Sikov: Chapter 2 – Mise-en-scène: Camera Movement

Mitchell: Marathon Woman

Chappell – *Run Lola Run*

T 10/16 6 **Screen:** *The Cutting Edge: The Magic of Movie Editing*
(Wendy Apple, 2004) (98 min)
Excerpts from *Potemkin* (Eisenstein, 1925)

Readings:

Sikov: Chapter 4 – Editing

Walter Murch: The 'Rule of Six'

<http://videoandfilmmaker.com/wp/index.php/tutorials/film-editing-walter-murchs-rule-6/>

Assign: Midterm – Shot analysis

Review: Sample Shot Analysis (from *Run Lola Run*)

Sikov: Chapter 12 – Writing on Film

T 10/23 7 **Screen:** *Singin' in the Rain* (Kelly & Donan, 1952) (103 min)
 Film clips from:
The Jazz Singer (Alan Crosland, 1927) (88 min)
The Conversation (Francis Ford Coppola, 1974) (113 min)

Readings:

Sikov: Chapter 5 – Sound

Happy Halloween



T 10/30 8 **Screen:** *Smoke Signals* (Chris Eyre, 1998) (89 min)

Readings:

Sikov: Chapter 6 – Narrative: From Scene to Scene

Alexie: “I hated Tonoto”

By WichacpiHoskila

Keynote Presentation – PDF

Midterm Essay/Shot Analysis Due

T 11/6 9 **Screen:** *Reel Injun* (Neil Diamond, 2009)

Readings:

Bosmajian: The Language of Indian Derision (Moodle)

Keynote Presentation – PDF

See Moodle for articles regarding documentaries

T 11/13 10 **Screen:** *Inside Man* (Spike Lee, 2006)

Readings:

Chapter 7 – Screenplay to Film

Ebert: Review of *Inside Man*Harrison-Kahan: Inside *Inside Man*: Spike Lee and Post-9/11 Entertainment

T 11/20 11 **Screen:** *The Purple Rose of Cairo* (Woody Allen, 1985)

Readings:

Chapter 8 – Filmmakers

Preussner: Purple Rose and the Genres of Comedy

Keynote Presentation – PDF

Nov 22 – 25

Happy Thanksgiving



T 11/27 12 **Screen:** *Her* (Spike Jonze, 2013)

Readings:

Chapter 9 – Performance

Review for *Slate* – Dana StevensGabe Toro – *IndieWire*: Romance in the technology age (link)Chris Michael – *The Guardian*: Film Blog (link)

Mark Harris – *Vulture*: Him and *Her* (link)

T 12/4 13

Screen: *Ex Machina* (Alex Garland, 2014)

Readings:

Chapter 11 – SFX

Alex Garland on *Ex Machina*

Ex Machina – Killian

Bill Gates on the Rise of the Machines

AI Could Spell the end of the Human Race – Stephen Hawking

Wozniak on AI

T 12/11

Final Exam scheduled from 7:00 to 10:00 PM

(Maybe be completed online with full consent of class.)