

Oakland University, Cinema Studies Program
Fall 2018, CIN 3230 – History of Film: Into the 21st Century (CRN 44740)
TR 9 – 11:47 am, MSC 93

Professor: Dr. Courtney Brannon Donoghue
Email: donoghue@oakland.edu
Office: O’Dowd Hall 544E
Office Hours: Thursdays, 12 – 2 pm, or by appointment

Course Description (4 credits):

This course surveys major political, economic, technological, and cultural shifts in film from 1989 to today. We will explore film movements, identity politics, industry cultures, aesthetic practices, and trends through particular North American, Latin American, European, East Asian, Middle Eastern, and African case studies. Contemporary filmmaking will be contextualized and explored through a variety of industrial and historical moments focusing on industry organization and cultures, structural barriers, global blockbuster and genre cycles, diasporic filmmaking, and so on. What will emerge throughout the course is how the increasingly fragmented, globalized, and transmedia nature impact the way contemporary films are produced, circulated, and consumed.

Objectives:

- 1) To explore political, economic, socio-cultural, aesthetic, and technological climate of contemporary cinema.
- 2) To develop a working knowledge of key contemporary events, figures, industries, etc.
- 3) To utilize different forms of research methods including archival research, industry trades, digital platforms, and creative components.

Readings:

Required readings: Available on Moodle under each week’s heading.

Recommended textbook: Bordwell and Thompson, *Film History*, Third Edition

Course Communication:

- All class materials and required course readings will be available on Moodle.
- I reserve the right to alter the course schedule, readings, or assignments as necessary. All announcements/updates will be announced in class and updated on Moodle.

Assessment:

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|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Participation + Discussion Leader | 10 pts. |
| Weekly Reading Responses | 10 pts. |
| Creative Exercise | 10 pts. |
| Research Paper + Proposal | 25 pts. |
| Group Presentation | 10 pts. |
| Final Exam | 35 pts. |
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| | 100 points total |

Grades

Grading for this course will be based on the OU grading scale:

| | | | | | |
|----|------------|-----|----|----------------|-----|
| A | 94-100 pts | 4.0 | C+ | 77-79 pts | 2.3 |
| A- | 90-93 pts | 3.7 | C | 73-76 pts | 2.0 |
| B+ | 87-89 pts | 3.3 | C- | 70-72 pts | 1.7 |
| B | 83-86 pts | 3.0 | D+ | 67-69 pts | 1.3 |
| B- | 80-82 pts | 2.7 | D | 60-66 pts | 1.0 |
| | | | F | 59 pts or less | 0.0 |

Grades are based on your ability to follow directions, execute the assignment, interpret and comprehend the overall rationale for the course by reading materials with appropriate theoretical approaches. Your projects must be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. *All late assignments will lose points for each day late.*

A-range = for work which is outstanding, not just completing the assignment well, but going beyond—perhaps insightfully integrating ideas in the current section, perhaps drawing in readings from other parts of the course in interesting ways, or bringing something else special to the assignment.

B-range = for work which is good, not just meeting the minimum requirements necessary for completing the assignment, but also characterized by the inclusion of something more than the minimum.

C-range = for work which is adequate, meeting most but not all of the basic course/assignment requirements, or meeting the requirements at the bare minimum level without going beyond this.

D-range = for work which is worthy of some credit even though it does not satisfactorily meet the basic course/assignment requirements.

F-range = for work that does not meet the basic course/assignment requirements and/or is not submitted on time.

PARTICIPATION: Participation means regular attendance at lectures and screenings as well as contributing ideas during class discussions. Your participation grade is made up of the following: regular attendance, discussion, in-class writing and group activities, visiting office hours, etc. An attendance sheet will be passed around at the beginning of class.

You are required **to attend all classes and screenings** and arrive on time. Our classes will sometimes include a great many clips and information not available elsewhere. If you miss a class, please do not email me or ask me if you missed anything. If you need notes, ask one of your classmates. Additionally, I do not place my lectures notes online. Frequent absences will compromise your ability to understand key concepts, inhibit your contribution to classroom debates, and hinder your performance on exams and assignments.

Classmate contact info:

Name/Email: _____

Name/Email: _____

DISCUSSION LEADER: You will sign up to be a discussion leader for one week during the semester. During that week's lecture, you will be responsible for being particularly vocal in class regarding discussion of the assigned readings and screening. (To prepare read closely, prepare some questions or comments, and be ready to contribute your thoughts. Note: this is **not** a presentation.)

Discussion leader date: _____

WEEKLY READING RESPONSES: In order to encourage consistent engagement in the course, you will spend 15-20 minute at the beginning of class responding to a prompt or question based on the week's readings. This will serve as a warm-up for the day's discussion as well as help you stay accountable for the reading. Because this is in class activity, there will be no makeups.

FINAL EXAM:

You will have one *take home final exam* this semester worth 35% of your grade. The exam will ask you to define, analyze, and apply key events, figures, methodologies, and case studies. You will have ample time to complete, therefore there will be no makeups. The exam will be posted during the last week of classes and will be due Monday, December 10.

CREATIVE EXERCISE:

Detailed assignment sheets will be passed out closer to the due date.

RESEARCH PAPER + PROPOSAL:

Detailed assignment sheets will be passed out closer to the due date.

GROUP PROJECT:

In groups of three, you will consider the question "What is cinema today?" While you will have time to present your concept to the class, this is not a traditional group presentation. Instead, this project is a meditation and analysis of the current state of filmmaking and reception in the 21st century. You may take a creative and production perspective, theoretical stake, or manifesto approach. This project should be grounded in course concepts and incorporate mixed media examples. A detailed assignment sheet will be passed out closer to the due date.

EXTRA CREDIT

You are allowed to submit TWO extra credit assignments over the semester. Each assignment is worth 1 point on your final average. Extra credit options include: attend a special screening or recommended event and write a 300-400-word response posted to Moodle in the Extra Credit forum.

INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

Every student in this class will be respected as an individual with distinct and important experiences, opinions, talents, and backgrounds. To that extent every individual in this class is expected to treat others with this same amount of respect. Students will be treated justly regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, socioeconomic status, or national identity. Issues regarding diversity may be a part of class discussion, assigned material, and projects. Your professor will make every effort to ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment for all students.

Please let me know of the name and gender pronouns you use if they are different from official documents. I will make those changes to my own records and address you that way in all other cases. If any issues arise or you have any concerns or suggestions for improving any aspect of the classroom setting, please do not hesitate to speak with your professor.

Triggers and Warnings

We may discuss potentially sensitive topics during class. Please see me immediately if you feel that you will have difficulties attending class or completing the assignments. It is your responsibility to notify me if you become triggered by readings, films, and/or discussions.

Technology in the Classroom

You are encouraged to use laptops or tablets to aid in taking notes or participation. However, if your use becomes a distraction to yourself or others, you will be asked to put it away. If you are asked more than once, you will lose a significant portion of your participation points for the semester.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Oakland University provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Disability Student Services at (248) 370-3266, TTY: (248) 37-03268, <http://www.oakland.edu/dss>

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Oakland University takes the Academic Code of Conduct seriously. Cheating will not be tolerated. Two kinds of academic misconduct are **cheating** on exams and **plagiarism** (such as turning in someone else's work, downloading a paper in part or in whole, copying and pasting from Wikipedia, or paraphrasing or quoting sources without citation). You are responsible to adhere to and be familiar with Oakland's Academic Code of Conduct. Information on academic integrity and disciplinary action is available at <http://www.oakland.edu/?id=1610&sid=75>

WRITING AND RESEARCH RESOURCES

The Cinema Studies program requires you to follow Chicago Style of using footnotes for all writing assignments. For more information on Chicago, please see: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

Since this course relies on research and writing skills, you are encouraged to look for outside resources and support. I strongly recommend that you contact The Writing Center here on campus (located in the Kresge Library; phone 471-6222). The Center offers individualized assistance to students. Their website offers information about scheduling appointments and how to prepare for you visit at: <http://www.oakland.edu/ouwc>

CONTACTING Dr. Brannon Donoghue

Please take advantage of my office hours. I also will be available for a few minutes before and after lectures to answer questions. When sending an email, please address me as Dr. Brannon Donoghue or Professor Brannon Donoghue. My pronouns are she/her/hers. Please only email to contact me for quick questions or if you need to schedule an appointment. Depending on your question, I may request that you see me during office hours. If you are having difficulties, you should see me ASAP and not after assignment has been completed. Your success in this course is important to me. I am willing to make appropriate accommodations for any student who experiences problems

understanding the material or meeting course requirements as long as he/she demonstrates a genuine desire to learn and takes the initiative to seek my help. I look forward to getting to know each of you during this semester!

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 Hollywood moves into the 1990s

Th 9/6

Screen: *Batman* (1989, dir. Tim Burton, US, 126 min)

Read: Schatz, "The Studio System and Conglomerate Hollywood"

Week 2 Major Studios and American Independents

T 9/11

Screen: *Slacker* (1990, dir. Richard Linklater, US, 96 min)

Read: Pierson, "Slacking Off"

Th 9/13

Topics: New Hollywood into Conglomerate Hollywood, blockbuster mentality, franchising, independent filmmaking, Sundance Film Festival

Read: Newman, Introduction and Chapter 1

recommended: B&T, Ch. 28

Week 3 Experimental Film and Black Visual Cultures

T 9/18

Screen: *Daughters of the Dust* (1991, dir. Julie Dash, US, 114 min)

Read: Bambara, "Reading the Signs, Empowering the Eye: *Daughters of the Dust* and the Black Independent Cinema Movement"

Th 9/20

Screen: *Beyoncé: Lemonade* (2016, 46 min)

Topics: LA Rebellion, art cinema, identity politics, Black cinema, arthouse distribution

Read: Buckley, "Julie Dash Made a Movie. Then Hollywood Shut Her Out" [*New York Times*](#)
Hooks, "Moving Beyond Pain"

Week 4 New Queer Cinema

T 9/25

Screen: *Velvet Goldmine* (1998, dir. Todd Haynes, 118 min, US/UK)

Th 9/27

Screen: *Moonlight* (2016, dir. Barry Jenkins, US, 111 min)

Topics: LGBTQ filmmaking, New Queer Cinema movement, visibility & representation

Read: Rich, "New Queer Cinema"

Taylor, "Black Silence and the Politics of Representation"

- Week 5** **Dogma 95**
T 10/2
Screen: *Festen (The Celebration, 1998, dir. Thomas Vinterberg, Denmark/Sweden, 105 min)*
- Th 10/4
Topics: Dogme 95, transnational movements, film manifestos, challenging cinematic conventions, European art cinema traditions
Read: “The Vow of Chastity” and “Vow of Chastity Rules” [LINK](#)
Laursen, “The Agitated Camera” [LINK](#)
Christensen, “Dogma and Marketing” [LINK](#)
recommended: B&T, Ch. 29 (p. 703)
- Week 6** **Hong Kong as Media Capital**
T 10/9
Screen: *Chung Hing sam lam (Chungking Express, 1994, dir. Wong Kar-Wai, Hong Kong, 102 min)*
- Th 10/11
Screen: *Fa yeung nin wa (In the Mood for Love, 2000, dir. Wong Kar-Wai, Hong Kong/France, 98 min)*
Topics: Hong Kong film industry, global auteurism, media capitals
Read: Curtin, “Media Capital: Towards the study of spatial flows”
recommended: B&T, Ch. 27 (pp. 637-657)
- Week 7** **Bollywood as Media Capital**
T 10/16
Screen: *Yeh Jawani Hai Deewani (2013, dir. Ayan Mukherjee, India, 160 min)*
- Th 10/18
DUE: Creative Exercise
Topics: Bollywood, Indian film industries, Hindi cinema, musicals, global audiences
Read: Ganti, “The production and distribution of popular Hindi cinema”
recommended: B&T, Ch. 26 (pp. 621-625)
- Week 8** **Nollywood as Media Capital**
T 10/23
Screen: *Blackberry Babes (2011, dir. Ubong Bassey Nya, Nigeria, excerpts)*
Topics: Nollywood, alternative film markets, video aesthetics, distribution
Read: Miller, “Nollywood in Nigeria” and “Nollywood the Nigerian Product”
recommended: B&T, Ch. 26 (pp. 601-605)
- Th 10/25
Screen: *Persepolis (2007, dir. Vincent Paronnaud & Marjane Satrapi, France/US, 96 min)*

- Week 9 Middle Eastern Cinema, Borders, and Diaspora**
 T 10/30
 Screen: *Jodaeiye Nader az Simin (A Separation, 2011, dir. Asghar Farhadi, Iran, 123 min)*
- Th 11/1
 DUE: Research Paper Proposals
 Topics: Iranian Revolution, borders, displacement, diaspora, family melodrama
 Read: Malek, “Memoir as Iranian exile cultural production: A case study of Marjane Satrapi’s *Persepolis* Series”
 Hamid, “Freedom and its Discontents: An Interview with Asghar Farhadi”
recommended: B&T, Ch. 26 (pp. 605-613) & Ch. 29 (pp. 704-706)
- Week 10 Melodrama, Mysteries, and Memories**
 T 11/6
 Screen: *Brick (2005, dir. Rian Johnson, US, 110 min)*
- Th 11/8
 Screen: *Sharp Objects (2018, Season 1, Episode 1 “Vanish”)*
 Topics: noir traditions, femme fatale, female bodies as inciting incidents, unreliable narrator and fractured memories
 Read: Bolin, “The Dead Girl Show” (excerpt)
- Week 11 Latin American Cinema: Regional Conversations**
 T 11/13
 Screen: *Tropa de Elite (Elite Squad, 2007, dir. José Padilha, Brazil, 115 min)*
- Th 11/15
 Topics: Retomada Brasileiro/Brazilian Retomada, blockbusters beyond Hollywood
 Read: Alvaray, “National, Regional, and Global: New Waves of Latin American Cinema”
 Brannon Donoghue, “The Rise of the Brazilian Blockbuster: How Ideas of Exceptionality and Scale Shape a Booming Cinema”
recommended: B&T, Ch. 26 (pp. 613-621)
- Week 12 US/Mexico Border, Industry, and Audiences**
 T 11/20
 DUE: Research Paper
 Screen: *No se Aceptan Devoluciones (Instructions Not Included, 2013, dir. Eugenio Derbez, Mexico, 122 min)*
 Topics: US/Mexico border in cinema, Latinx cinema, Spanish-language co-productions, Pantelion Films, Eugenio Derbez and transnational stardom
 Read: Betancourt, “Whose Latin American Cinema?”
 Hegarty, “Pantelion Films and the New Wave of Global Latino Cinema” [Flow](#)
- Th 11/22 NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Break

Week 13 Local and Global Alienation

T 11/27

Screen: *The Lobster* (2015, dir. Yorgos Lanthimos, Ireland/UK/Greece/France/Netherlands, 119 min)

Th 11/29

Screen: *Lost in Translation* (2003, dir. Sofia Coppola, US/Japan, 102 min)

Topics: international co-productions, globalization and mobility, Coppola and cinema of boredom, Lanthimos and European art film, alienation and anxiety in cinema

Read: Smaill, "Sofia Coppola: Reading the Director"
recommended: B&T, Ch. 29 (pp. 698-703 & 706-709)

Week 14 Film in the 21st Century

T 12/4

DUE: Group Project Presentations

Th 12/6

Screen: *The Handmaid's Tale* (2017, "Offred," Season 1, Episode 1, 57 min)

The OA (2016, "Homecoming," Season 1, Episode 1, 62 min)

Topics: female-driven content, rise of streaming platforms as content creators, longform storytelling, streaming platforms become the new studios

****Take home FINAL EXAM -- DUE: Monday, December 10 by 12 pm****