

University of Houston-Downtown

Course Prefix, Number, and Title: ENG 2309 Survey of Film: Beginnings to Present

Credits/Lecture/Lab Hours: 3/3/0

Foundational Component Area: Language, Philosophy and Culture

Prerequisites: Completion of, or concurrent enrollment in, ENG 1302.

Co-requisites: None

Course Description: A study of narrative, documentary, and experimental film as a cultural artifact from its late-nineteenth century beginnings through its digital form in the 21st century.

TCCNS Number:

Demonstration of Core Objectives within the Course:

Assigned Core Objective	Learning Outcome Students will be able to:	Instructional strategy or content used to achieve the outcome*	Method by which students' mastery of this outcome will be evaluated
Critical Thinking Communication Social Responsibility	Describe how ideas, values, beliefs and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience.	Lecture and lead discussions on a range of films that reflect human experiences from around the globe. Include topics such as the pre-history of moving images; late-19 th century cinematic beginnings; early-20 th century cinematic movements; the transition from silent to sound film in Hollywood; 1940s narrative, avant-garde, and documentary films; post-1960s international explorations of genre; Third Cinema and African American cinema; and the rise of digital media and global internet cultures.	15-20 pages of writing through assignments such as the mid-term exam, the final exam, and analytical essays.
Critical Thinking Communication Social Responsibility	Analyze fundamental ideas that foster intellectual and aesthetic creation across human cultures.	Lecture and lead discussions on readings that trace a variety of film histories, aesthetic movements, directorial styles, and film genres. Assign, lecture, and lead discussion on critical film studies readings that explain the language of film and methods for analyzing film	15-20 pages of writing through assignments such as the mid-term exam, the final exam, and analytical essays.

		structures.	
Critical Thinking Communication	Evaluate assumptions, concepts, and language to develop defensible conclusions based on analysis and interpretation of information relevant to course content.	Lecture and lead discussions on preconceived ideas about “movies” in culture and compare these with scholarly understandings of film as a historic cultural medium. Lecture and lead discussions on cinema as a meditation on or a critique of dominant understandings of time, space, and the human, including differences in location, era, and nation as well as racial, gender, and class-based identities.	15-20 pages of writing through assignments such as the mid-term exam, the final exam, and analytical essays.
Critical Thinking Communication	Synthesize and deliver well-constructed analyses and arguments about course content using multiple modalities (including written, oral, and visual formats).	Lecture and lead discussions on academic sources such as those that examine film narrative, reception history, and generic innovation. In-class visual studies work such as comparative shot and scene analyses to generate ideas for group work. The instructor will provide direct instruction on how to design and deliver effective presentations that include the purposeful integration of visuals.	Team-based activities such as rubric-assessed oral group projects, group generated visual presentations, and collaborative analyses.
Social Responsibility Personal Responsibility	Investigate ethical dimensions of behavior and language use in different cultural contexts.	Lecture and lead discussions on the ethical impact of cinema on individual and mass spectators in different historical, national, and subcultural contexts.	Mid-term exam and final exam
Social Responsibility Personal Responsibility	Connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making through the analysis of ethical dilemmas explored through literary, philosophical, or intercultural texts.	Lecture and lead discussions on the ethics of representation, the ethics of documentary, narrative, and avant-garde cinematic practices, and the ethics of spectatorship. In lectures and writing prompts, discuss the ethical standards of American higher education, especially with respect to PS 03.A.19, the UHD Academic Honesty Policy.	Mid-term exam, final exam, and a quiz on UHD Academic Honesty Policy

Additional Course Outcomes: See outcomes above.

Course Outline:

CALENDAR OF READINGS

Students will be notified of changes ahead of time, in class. If you are absent from class, MAKE SURE you get in touch with a classmate to find out if any changes have occurred. In case it is not clear, the readings listed below the dates are to be read *for that day*. TFE = *The Film Experience*

Week One:

M 8/27: Introductions | Syllabus | What This Course Does | Studying film

Homework: Purchase required texts. Read TFE, Introduction, 5-17 and 357-358.

W 8/29: Spectator | Culture | Identification | Realism. In-class screening of Early Film clips.

Homework: Watch *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. TFE Chapter 2, 63-93 and 361-362.

Week Two:

M 9/3: NO CLASSES

W 9/5: Mise-en-scène | German Expressionism

Homework: Watch *The Battleship Potemkin*. TFE Chapter 3, 95-133 and 362-363.

Week Three:

M 9/10: Cinematography | German Expressionism | Soviet Montage

Homework: TFE Chapter 4, 133-176.

W 9/12: Editing | Soviet Montage

Homework: Watch *Modern Times*. Read TFE Chapter 5, 177-205 and 358-361.

Week Four:

T 9/17: Silence and Sound | Chaplin | 1930s Hollywood studio system.

Homework: Review materials.

R 9/19: In-Class Review | First Essay Assignment

Homework: Compose an outline for Cinematic Analysis Essay.

Week Five:

M 9/24: Electronic Classroom | Draft Cinematic Analysis Essay.

Homework: Write final draft of Cinematic Analysis Essay.

**W 9/26: Cinematic Analysis Essay DUE | Story | Diegesis | Time | Space

Homework: Watch *Mildred Pierce*. Read Chapter 6, 225-245 and 364-366.

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Week Six:

M 10/1: Narrative Film | Hollywood in the 1940s | *Mildred Pierce*

Homework: Finish Chapter 6, 245-253

W 10/3: Narrative Film | Hollywood in the 1940s | *Mildred Pierce*

Homework: Read TFE, portions of Chapter 7.

Week Seven:

M 10/8: Documentary | Representation and the Real | In-class screening of *Night and Fog*

Homework: Read TFE, portions of Chapter 8 and p. 367.

W 10/10: Avant-Garde & Experimental Film | In-class screenings of *Meshes of the Afternoon*, *Fireworks*, and Other Experimental Films

Homework: TBA

Week Eight:

M 10/15: Review for Mid-Term Exam

Homework: Study for Mid-Term

**W 10/17: MID-TERM EXAM

Homework: Read TFE, Chapter 9, 315-351. Watch *The Birds*.

Week Nine:

M 10/22: Film Genre | Horror | *The Birds*

W 10/24: Film Genre | Horror | *The Birds*. Assign Research Project.

Homework: Bring draft to electronic classroom for next week.

Week Ten:

M 10/29: Electronic Classroom | Research and writing on *The Birds* and Genre.

W 10/31: Electronic Classroom | Research and writing on *The Birds* and Genre.

Week Eleven:

**M 11/5: Research Paper Due | Contemporary Cinema | Third Cinema | African American Cinema. Lecture and screen clips.

Homework: Read Chapter 10, 368-371, 384-389, 394-395.

W 11/7: In class screening of *Killer of Sheep*

Week Twelve:

M 11/12: Discussion: Race, Difference, Form | *Killer of Sheep*

Homework: Watch *Do the Right Thing*

W 11/14: Discussion: Race, Difference, Form | *Do the Right Thing* | Prep for Group Work

Homework: Prepare for In-Class Presentation

Week Thirteen:

**M 11/19: Group Work on *Killer of Sheep* and *Do the Right Thing*

**W 11/21: Group Presentations

Homework: Review TFE chapters on documentary and experimental cinema, plus 390-392.

Week Fourteen:

M 11/26: In-class screening of *Tarnation*.

W 11/28: Finish screening | Home video | YouTube | *Tarnation*

Homework: TBA

Week Fifteen:

M 12/3: What is the future of cinema? | YouTube | Digital Forms | Small Screens

W 12/5: Wrap Up. Last day of class. Review for Final Exam.

Grading/Course Content which Demonstrates Student Achievement of Core Objectives:

Grading Scale: 90-100 = A; 89-80 = B; 79-70 = C; 69-60 = D; 59 and below = F

Summary of Course Exams, Quizzes, Assignments and Final	
Class Participation, Homework, Discussion	10%
Avg. Quiz Grade	10%
Cinematic Analysis Paper	15%
Film Studies Research Project	20%
Oral Presentations/Group Work	10%
Mid-term Exam	15%
Final Exam	20%