CIN 202
SURVEY OF US CINEMA

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COURSE TEXT


COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

In this course, you will

- Develop an awareness and understanding of important formal and thematic developments in the history of cinema as an art form in the United States.
- Develop an awareness and understanding of how the development of cinema reflects and has influenced the diverse social and cultural history of the US.
- Build a foundation of skills and experiences for advanced study of cinema.
- Develop your understanding of and familiarity with the technical components of cinema and the basic terminology of cinema analysis.
- Practice and improve your analysis of the cinema-watching experience, including the recognition of significant patterns of meaning and the formation of coherent arguments.
- Practice and improve your ability to write about cinema, including the use of specific examples and proper formatting and style.

LEARNING ASSESSMENT

In this course, you will demonstrate and measure your learning by

- Completing weekly quizzes based on your completion and comprehension of the assigned texts
- Work in teams to address a different case study question each week related to the development of American cinema
• Maintaining a weekly personal blog that discusses your reactions to the movies and class discussions and that poses questions for other class members to respond to
• Responding to at least two different student blog entries each week.
• Taking two midterm exams asking you to write brief explanations of key concepts in the analysis of cinema
• Practicing the knowledge you have learned by writing a 2-3 page analysis of a particular scene from a movie we will watch in class
• Working in teams to research and propose the final movie we will watch in class as well as a final exam question
• Writing a comprehensive final exam essay that applies concepts from the course to selected movies we will study

GRADE CALCULATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>15 pts per entry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blog responses</td>
<td>5 pts per response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team discussions</td>
<td>50 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two midterms</td>
<td>100 pts each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scene analysis</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group presentation</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
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Your final grade will be based on the percentage of points you earn out of the total possible number of points

ATTENDANCE

Because the movies in class will only be screened once, attendance is vital. There is also a fair amount of out-of-class work required for this course, since you must write about specific shots or sequences for your midterms, final, and scene analysis. Some of the movies are available at the Steely Library Media Center (SL 217), but you may need to find some of them on your own. If you cannot schedule out-of-class viewing time or do the searching needed to find a copy of a movie for this class, you should consider dropping it. You might consider forming small groups to watch movies out-of-class.

Viewing movies can be a powerful experience; this is part of why we watch and study them. The movies in class deal with a wide range of human experiences from many different perspectives in sometimes blunt and graphic ways. Since viewing and writing about each movie is required for the course, anyone who feels he or she cannot watch any of the movies listed on the syllabus should not take this course.

WRITING CENTER

Consultants in the Writing Center (UC 170) can offer valuable one-on-one assistance as you prepare the writing assignments for the course. This is a FREE (and highly recommended) resource available to everyone.

The Writing Center offers drop-in help, or you can make an appointment online at <http://lap.nku.edu/writing/writingcenterappointment.html>.
STUDENT HONOR CODE

The work you will do in this course is subject to the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code is a commitment to the highest degree of ethical integrity in academic conduct, a commitment that, individually and collectively, the students of Northern Kentucky University will not lie, cheat, or plagiarize to gain an academic advantage over fellow students or avoid academic requirements.

STUDENT SERVICES

Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments, auxiliary aids or services) for this course must register with the Disability Services Office (UC 101), 859-572-6373. Verification of your disability is required in the DSO for you to receive reasonable academic accommodation. You can find more information at the DSO website <http://disability.nku.edu/>.

COURSE EVALUATION

During the two weeks prior to the end of the semester, you will be asked to reflect upon what you have learned in this course, the extent to which you have invested the necessary effort to maximize your learning, and the role your instructors have played in the learning process through the NKU online course evaluation process. It is important that you complete the online evaluations with thoughtfully written comments.

Student evaluations of courses and instructors are strictly confidential. They are not available to the instructors until after final grades are submitted, and extensive precautions are taken to preserve your anonymity.

Students who complete evaluations for a particular course or officially opt out of doing so will have access to their course grades as soon as the instructors submit them. Students who do not complete the course evaluation or officially opt out of doing so will experience a two-week delay in accessing his or her course grade.

To complete online evaluations, go to <http://eval.nku.edu>. Click on "student login" and use the same USERNAME and PASSWORD as used on campus.

CREDIT HOUR POLICY STATEMENT

In accordance with federal policy, NKU defines a credit hour as the amount of work represented in the pursuit of student learning outcomes (and verified by evidence of student achievement) that reasonably approximates one hour (50 minutes) of classroom instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work. For every course credit hour, a typical student should expect to spend at least three hours per week of concentrated attention on course-related work including, but not limited to, class meeting time, reading, reviewing, organizing notes, studying and completing assignments. At least an equivalent amount of time is expected for other academic activities such as online courses, laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

In-Class (1 day x 165 min x 15 weeks) 41.25 hours
Blog posts and comments (2 hour per post) 40 hours
Exams 8 hours
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group presentation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal writing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading and review</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>143.25 hours</strong></td>
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## COURSE CALENDAR

Please have all readings completed by the dates listed below. Schedule is subject to change according to course needs.

### WEEK ONE
8/19:
- Introduction
- Movie: *Modern Times*

### WEEK TWO
8/26:
- Movies: *The Great Train Robbery* and other early cinema

### WEEK THREE
9/2:
- Chapter Two: “Becoming ‘The Movies’: The Nickelodeon Age, 1908-1915”
- Movie: *Suspense; The Girl and Her Trust; The Immigrant*

### WEEK FOUR
9/9:
- Movie: *The General*

### WEEK FIVE
9/16:
- Movie: *Citizen Kane*

### WEEK SIX
9/23:
- Movie: *Double Indemnity*
- Midterm Preparation

### WEEK SEVEN
9/30:
- Movie: *Vertigo*
- **First Midterm Due**

### WEEK EIGHT
10/7:
- Movie: *Bonnie and Clyde*

### WEEK NINE
10/14:
- Movie: *The Godfather*

### WEEK TEN
10/21:
- Chapter Seven: “Shopping Malls, Video Stores, and Cable TV: Movies in the Franchise Era, 1981-1977”
- Movie: *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*
WEEK ELEVEN
10/28:  Movie: *Pulp Fiction*
        Midterm Preparation

WEEK TWELVE
        Movie: *Rushmore*
        Second Midterm Due

WEEK THIRTEEN
11/11:  Movie: *Selma*
        Proposal for scene analysis due

WEEK FOURTEEN
11/18:  Final Movie Proposal Presentations
        Draft: Scene Analysis Due. Draft Workshop

WEEK FIFTEEN
11/25:  No class: Thanksgiving

WEEK SIXTEEN
12/2:   Final Movie Screening
        Final Version: Short Scene Analysis Due
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

BLOGS

An important part of becoming a student of movies is sharing your ideas and questions with others: it’s how you join the cinema studies community.

After the screening of each week’s movie, you will post a blog response of at least 500 words. The blogs can be found in the “Blogs” folder on the “Assignments” page on Blackboard. Your response should include:

- Any aspects of the movie that you feel are significant for advancing our understanding of the history and development of American cinema
- References to at least two scenes that you feel relate to or illustrate recent ideas and concepts from class discussion
- At least two questions for other members of the class to respond to. In coming up with these questions, think about what you really want to hear and learn about from others in the class.

Your primary readers are the members of our class; gear your responses to them. I will score each week’s entry from 0-15 points based on effort and timeliness. Each blog should be posted by Friday afternoon at 5.

After writing your own blog entry, read the entries of at least two other students and post short reactions and responses in the comment box at the bottom of each blog.

ONLINE QUIZZES

Each week there will be a quiz at the beginning of class based on that week’s reading assignment.

TEAM DISCUSSIONS

Each week you will work with a team of other students to review the quiz and to formulate a response to a case study question related to the history of American cinema. Your team will also engage in a self-evaluation at midterm and at the end of the semester.

MIDTERMS

There will be two midterm exams, each listing 10 terms or ideas from our readings and from class for you to define in your own words, using specific examples from the movies we will watch. We will develop the questions for these midterms together as a class. These will be take-home midterms, and I will score them on how well they demonstration your personal understanding of the concepts involved.

SCENE ANALYSIS

A 2-3 page analysis of a scene of your choice from one of the movies we will watch this semester. Your analysis should feature a thesis of interest to your readers (the other
students in the class and myself) and make use of the specific terms and concepts we will study in class. A brief scene proposal, explaining what scene you want to analyze and why, is due November 11. We will workshop rough drafts of the essay on November 18 and the final version is due in class on December 2. All essays should be double-spaced and follow MLA Style (a link to a web site explaining MLA style is available on the Blackboard site).

**FINAL MOVIE PROPOSAL AND FINAL EXAM**

In order to reflect on and apply what you have learned in class, your team will propose a final movie for us to watch in class and a final exam question based on that movie that will allow you to demonstrate that learning. Each team will formally present their proposal to the class, and we will vote to decide which proposal we will accept. As part of the proposal process, you should:

- Organize your group and decide on individual responsibilities
- Brainstorm and do research to identify candidates for your proposal
- Do further research about the movie you are proposing in order to make a persuasive case to the class
- Prepare a formal presentation (preferably using PowerPoint, Keynote, Prezi or other presentation program) for the class. Clips and previews are welcome.
- Compose a final exam question based on your proposed movie that will allow for a 500-750 word response that will allow the class to demonstrate what they have learned this semester.

The final is also take-home and will be due Wednesday, December 9 at 1.