

CMUN 274: Introduction to Cinema

Fall 2018

Classroom:
Cudahy
Library, 318

Class time:
Wed: 7:00-9:30

Instructor:
Elizabeth
Coffman



[Original Poster, *Man with a Movie Camera*]

Office:
WTC, School of
Communication,
219

Office Hours:
Wed, 2:30-3:30,
my WTC office

Wed, 6:00-7:00,
Info Commons
café, LSC and by
appointment

“Our eyes, spinning like propellers, take off into
the future on the wings of hypothesis.”

Dziga Vertov, 1929

Objectives and Outcomes:

Why do films, television shows and other mobile media generate such powerful emotions in the viewer? How do producers, directors and film crews create cinematic stories from images in motion? How do they create persuasive arguments?

Introduction to Cinema examines the development of cinema throughout the last century, beginning with its material and economic roots in the early 1900's and continuing with cinema's development as a complex medium of digital storytelling. In this class students will learn terminology and the historical backgrounds necessary to understand the basic conceptual techniques of cinema—mise-en-scene, cinematography, editing, sound and story. Students will be encouraged to raise questions, practice script analysis, storyboarding, image/sound capture techniques, and produce original research that explores the past, present and future of cinematic storytelling in the digital age.

Learning Outcomes:

- Acquisition of the critical, technical and aesthetic vocabulary to describe, analyze and produce cinema.
- Improved critical and creative thinking, writing and media skills.
- Increased ability to evaluate cinematic works in light of aesthetic and historic precedents.
- Increased ability to articulate and to defend your views verbally, in writing and in multimedia formats.

Texts, Supplies & Screenings:

Required: *Film Art: An Introduction*, 10th or 11th eds. By Bordwell, Thompson, Smith; Articles on Sakai; Hand-held cell phone camera. (May be borrowed from Digital Media Lab in IC.) All film screenings are available online or on reserve at Cudahy Library. You may incur costs for renting films online if you cannot watch on campus.

Grade Scale:

Participation--Written feedback (5 total) (3 on readings, a beat sheet, and film review)	25%
Group Reading Presentation	10%
Visual Exercises (1)	15%
Midterm Exam	25%
Multimedia Research Project (& proposal, 5%)	25%
Extra Credit Writings (2% each, up to 3)	6%

Course Expectations:

- **Participation** includes both the value that you add to the discussion and written **responses to weekly readings**. You will create at least 5 individual posts (250 words each; 5 points each) on Sakai, including a film review and a beat sheet analyzing a film. Other reviews cover the reading topic for that week and any film that we've discussed or you've watched inside/outside of class that is relevant to readings. Integrate film readings with interesting examples (include Youtube URL links in your response). You have one week after each reading is due to leave post for that week. 3 posts are due before Midterm Exam date, which includes film review and beat sheet. You may write more for extra credit.
- **Group presentation** will be a similar response to readings, identifying an important point, supported with an interesting example(s) that you share with class. You may work in groups. (Any examples need to be shorter than two minutes. Your speaking time is around two minutes each.) Creativity is encouraged...
- **Visual Exercise**—Complete using a cell phone, digital camera and any other props, lights, costumes available to you.
 1. Recreate a film still from a movie made by a director and write a one-page (300 word) description explaining your mise-en-scene, camera angle, and directing choices.
- **Midterm** will be taken online, and is open book, open note. Test is multiple choice and short answer.

- You are required to complete a **Multimedia Research Project** 6-8 pages (1200-1500 words) of text with sources, images and links). Topic (with research list of at least 5 sources, two peer reviewed) must be turned in after fall break.
- All work must be original and done for this class. Review these guidelines. http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml. If you need help completing assignments, please see me or go to the Writing Center for outside help.
- You must view additional media outside of class time. If you are sick, we must see a note from the infirmary or a doctor. If you have any kind of disability that requires accommodation, review these guidelines or speak with me privately. <http://www.luc.edu/sswd/index.shtml>

Course Schedule—All readings and assignments are due on day listed.

Week 1: August 29th

Can cinema reflect on history, current events?

Look at in class: John Frankenheimer's *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962); *Homeland*-Nick Brady, [season 1](#); [Fandom Wiki](#) ; *Homeland* season 2 [Homeland Season Two trailer](#)

Optional Read: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2017/01/13/some-call-trump-a-manchurian-candidate-heres-where-the-phrase-originated/?utm_term=.d58538e19a14; New Yorker article, "Homeland and the Manchurian Candidate." (Sakai).

Week 2: September 5th Storytelling, Production Process and CHC

Look at in class: *Lumieres and Edison shorts, Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, Man with a Movie Camera, Birth of a Nation*

Sign up for Group Presentations

Read: *Film Art*, Chapter 1, Film as Art, Creativity and Business; Ch.12 Film as History, Early Cinema (up to German Expressionism) pp.452-463

Optional Read: Jerome Christensen, America's Corporate Art

Complete: Consider writing a participation response to reading/viewing; watch related film

Week 3: September 12th Studios, Screenwriting and Narrative Forms

Look at in class: *Jurassic Park, The Wizard of Oz, Collateral, Zorns Lemma, Citizen Kane*

Read: *Film Art*, Ch. 2, 3, look through Blake Snyder's Save the Cat! Web site for beat sheet exs. [Groups 1 & 2 presentations]

Complete: Write beat sheet analyzing major narrative beats in a film, documentary or video game.

Week 4: September 19th The Shot—Mise-en-Scene

Look at in class: *Metropolis, North by Northwest, Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, Badlands*

Read: *Film Art*, Ch. 4; Ch. 12, German Expressionism, French Impressionism pp.463-470 [Group 3 Presentation]

Optional Read: Kracauer excerpts

Complete: Consider writing a participation response to reading/viewing; watch related film

Week 5: September 26th No class--Go to a film or binge watch a Netflix series, write your film review

Read: *Film Art*, Chapter 5

Complete: Write 250 word film review about narrative/image structure by 2/19; EC to go screen her film in Georgia , write response

Week 6: October 3rd The Shot—Cinematography

Look at in class: *Visions of Light, Koyaanisqatsi, Touch of Evil, Bicycle Thief*

Read: *Film Art*, Ch. 6, 12 Italian Neorealism 477-482. 2 Oscars for Cinematography (Sakai)

Optional Read: Bazin weblink (Sakai)

Complete: Visual exercise one; recreate a film still

Week 7: October 10th Montage: Shot to Shot, Continuity Editing

Look at in class: *Battleship Potemkin, Breathless, Vivre Sa Vie, Bourne Legacy*

Read: *Film Art*, Chapter 6; Ch. 12 Soviet Montage, pp 470-473; French New Wave, 479-482; [Group 5 Presentation]

Optional Read: Sergei Eisenstein “A Dialectic Approach to Film Form”;

<http://sensesofcinema.com/2002/cteq/breathless/>

Complete: 3 written posts (250 words each) and 1 visual exercises; All due on Sakai by Oct. 14rd, midnight.

Week 8: October 17th

MIDTERM EXAM (will be completed online during class time)

Week 9: October 24th

Filmmaker screening/visit TBD

Week 10: October 31st Sound, Music and Emotion

Read: *Film Art*, Chapter 7; Ch. 12 CHC after Coming of Sound, pp 474-477 [Group 6 Presentation]

Optional Read: Randy Thom, “Designing Movies with Sounds

Complete: Consider writing a participation response to reading/viewing; watch related film

Week 11: November 7th Genres—Documentary

Look at in class *Titicut Follies, Night and Fog, Fog of War, Almost There, Act of Killing*

Read: *Film Art*, Chapter 9; 10 pg 350-369 ; Nichols, *Six Modes* reading

[Group 7 Presentation]

Complete: Consider writing a participation response to reading/viewing; watch related film

Week 12: November 14th Experimental and Animated

Look at in class: Chris Marker’s *La Jetee*, Maya Deren, Stan Brakhage, Sadie Benning, Pipolitti Rist/Beyonce

Read: *Film Art*, Chapter 10, pg 369-398;

Optional Read: Patty Zimmerman, “The Amateur, the Avant-garde, and Ideologies of Art”;
[Group 8 Presentation]

Complete: Final Project Topic-1 page with research list/bibliography including peer review material.

Week 13: November 21st Thanksgiving—No class

**Week 14: November 28th New Narratives and Indie films
Treatments and Storyboards**

Look at in class: *Battle of Algiers, Raising Arizona, Sweetie, Pan's Labyrinth*

Read: *Film Art*, Chapter 12 pg. 478-492 [Group 9 & 10 Presentation]

Optional Read: "Mexican New Wave and Globalization" (Sakai)

Complete: Work on final research project

Week 15: December 5th

Complete: Final Research Projects Due on Sakai (midnight)-Turn It In

Complete: Final Written Feedback due (2)—by midnight

Syllabus and Calendar are open to change by professor. All changes will be posted to Sakai.