

Grab the Popcorn! Put on the 3D Glasses! It's Time For . .

Introduction to Cinema: COMM 274-201 Fall 2020

An **asynchronous** course in which students access pre-recorded lectures and digital curriculum materials, respond through email, discussion boards, social networking, and collaborative documents at a time of their own convenience.

COURSE GOALS:

Intended outcomes:

- Dazzle and amaze friends and family with your astute analysis of cinematic works! (You'll acquire the critical and technical vocabulary to describe and analyze cinema in the comfort of your own media room.)
- Beneficial collateral advantages. (You'll improve your critical reading, writing, thinking skills.)
- Be sincerely snobby! (You'll increase your abilities to evaluate cinematic works in light of aesthetic and historic precedents.)
- Win those post-screening arguments with your dates and friends! (You'll increase your ability to articulate and to defend your views, both orally and in writing!)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES: This is an overview course designed to introduce students to the major genres of commercial motion pictures, the rules and expectations for each genre, and how movies work as both entertainment and cultural barometers, all through our study of aesthetics, history, production and criticism. This class will use lectures, screenings, forum discussions, assigned readings and You Be A Critic reports to facilitate this analysis.

The class is not about how to write essays, make movies or create film reviews, although it touches upon these topics. This is a "how-to-read-a-movie" class that constantly requires students to answer three questions: *What did you see? What did you hear? What does it mean?* Students will be responsible for a minimum of two movie viewings per week, in addition to a quiz, one You Be A Critic report and discussion on Forums.

About the Syllabus: Our syllabus provides a blueprint of what the class will cover. However, because we will be conducting an asynchronous class with students around the nation (and in Mexico City), potential guest speakers may be added to our schedule as they also become available. Likewise, as new assets come along, these may involve syllabus changes.

This will be the first asynchronous teaching experience for many students during this pandemic period. It is also mine. Because we are entering uncharted academic waters, I ask all of us to be patient, forgiving and supportive for the next 16 weeks. We might be hit with technical issues. We can work through them.

All of these factors may play into changing the syllabus. I will keep you informed by using emails, announcements in Sakai and some direct address in class recordings. It will still be your responsibility to keep up with these changes.

Texts & Screenings:

Text: LOOKING AT MOVIES: AN INTRODUCTION TO FILM. Sixth edition by Richard Barsam and Dave Monahan. (Note from instructor: This is not an easy read. Be prepared to take time to absorb tightly compacted information. Most reading assignments will not include full chapters, but selected excerpts the instructor deems the most relevant.)

Articles (supplied via Sakai or emails)

Film clips (provided by the instructor and through the e-textbook)

Film Screenings (mostly through free educational services, and a minimal number of paid VOD films from \$1.99 to \$3.99 as allowed by a student questionnaire)

Instructor: Dann Gire dgire@luc.edu. 847 650 4227 for urgent issues. I will reply quickly, unless I am in screenings or trying to hit a newspaper deadline, or conducting interviews. I will answer your questions as soon as I am able.

Student Tech Support: If you need technology support, please consult these Loyola sites:

ITS: <https://www.luc.edu/online/resources/index.html>

DMS:

<https://www.luc.edu/its/dms/equipmentloan/browseouquipment/extendedloan>

Managing Life Crises and Finding Support

Should you encounter an unexpected crisis during the semester (e.g., securing food or housing, addressing mental health concerns, managing a financial crisis, and/or dealing with a family emergency, etc.), I strongly encourage you to contact the Office of the Dean of Students by submitting a CARE referral (LUC.edu/csaa) for yourself or a peer in need of support. If you are uncomfortable doing so on your own, please know that I can submit a referral on your behalf – please email me or schedule a meeting with me during office hours. To learn more about the Office of the Dean of Students, please find their websites at LUC.edu/dos or LUC.edu/csaa. Or you may contact them directly at 773-508-8840 and at deanofstudents@luc.edu.

Students with Learning Disabilities

Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan and meet his/her own needs and assignment due dates.

School of Communication Statement on Academic Integrity

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents. These examples of academic dishonesty apply to both individual and group assignments.

Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;
- Providing information to another student during an examination;

- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;
- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor;
- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted;
- Taking an examination by proxy. Taking or attempting to take an exam for someone else is a violation by both the student enrolled in the course and the proxy.
- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom;
- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines; or
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. Plagiarism involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, and other sources;
- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material;
- Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit; or
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a written paper.
- Submitting the same work for credit in two or more classes, even if the classes are taken in different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

The above list is not exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found

at https://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml .

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the Associate and Assistant Deans of the School of Communication. Instructors must provide the appropriate information and documentation when they suspect an instance of academic misconduct has occurred. The instructor must also notify the student of the findings and sanction.

The Associate and Assistant Deans of the School of Communication may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Dean's office may convene a separate hearing board to review these instances. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the Dean of SOC. If the student is not a member of the SOC, the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled shall be part of the process. Students have the right to appeal the decision of any hearing board and the deans of the two schools will review the appeal together. Their decision is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean or deans. Students have a right to appeal any finding of academic dishonesty against them. The procedure for such an appeal can be found at:

http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicgrievance.shtml .

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a

graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations.

So don't plagiarize, okay?

Scores and Evaluation

Students are expected to complete assignments and readings on time. Late coursework will automatically be penalized a letter grade (10%).

NOTE: Tests, quizzes, You Be A Critic reports and all other assignments will be placed in SAKAI for you to download. Completed assignments must be delivered to the instructor through SAKAI. Emails will not be accepted for assignments. If you experience tech issues, let the instructor know, and contact the Student Tech Support teams listed above.

Assignment Deadlines

Because the asynchronous format offers no natural time structure, the assignment deadlines have been created to provide students with a maximum amount of time for more challenging assignments (quizzes and UBA Critic reports), and tighter deadlines for less challenging assignments (Forum Contributions and film viewings).

By Wednesday nights at midnight, students should complete (A) watching the instructor's weekly lecture available by noon every Monday (B) viewing the primary movie (the instructor-assigned film, NOT the UBA Critic report film you get to choose) (C) Part 1 of the Class Participation Forum assignment (see below)

By Friday nights at midnight, students should complete Part 2 of the Class Participation Forum assignment (see below)

By Sunday nights at midnight, students should complete the weekly quiz (when assigned) and the You Be A Critic report on a film of the student's choice (from a list of titles approved by the instructor)

How Scores Work

Semester grades use a 1,000-point scale with the following breakdown:

Midterm: 100 points.

Final: 100 points

Quizzes: 200 points (10 quizzes at 20 points each) *Due every Sunday night at midnight.*

“You Be A Critic” reports: 360 points (15 films X 24 points) *Due every Sunday night at midnight.*

Class Participation (Forums) 240 points (12 films X 20 points) *Part 1 due every Wednesday night at midnight. Part 2 due every Friday night at midnight.*

NOTE ONE: You should complete any assigned readings before viewing the primary movie, and most assuredly before viewing the You Be A Critic selection.

NOTE TWO: You Be A Critic reports (YBACR) earn one of three scores: 24 points for completely fulfilling the assignment; 12 points for fulfilling part of the assignment; 0 points for not fulfilling the basics of the assignment.

NOTE THREE: Class Participation (Forum Contributions) earns 20 points per primary film (the instructor-assigned film, NOT the UBA Critic report film you get to choose). This process has two parts:

- 1) Each week, the instructor will post in Assignments three elements of cinema. You will write a single paragraph about how ONE of those elements has been handled in the primary film. 10 points will be earned for meeting the assignment requirements. *Due every Wednesday night at midnight.*
- 2) Next, each student will go on the Forums page, find two other student paragraphs (addressing cinema elements NOT chosen by the original student) and write a ONE or TWO sentence comment on what the two other students wrote. 10 points. *Due every Friday night at midnight.*

Final grade scale

1000-940: A 939-900: A- 899-880: B+ 879-830: B 829-800: B- 799-780: C+ 779-730: C 729-700: C- 699-680: D+ 679-640: D 639-600: D- 599-0: F

Additional Classroom Policies.

- All written assignments must be typed, readable and proof-read to remove errors in spelling, grammar and usage before being returned to SAKAI.
- It is recommended to use Firefox as your internet browser when working in Sakai. The quizzes (and Sakai generally) will sometimes malfunction if you use Internet Explorer or Safari as your browser.
- If you want to see a particular movie that is not on the approved list for the You Be A Critic report, ask the instructor for clearance on seeing it for credit first.

Fall 2020 Schedule (subject to change)

Week 1: Aug. 24-28

Introductory Film Short. Intro to the course. (Review of syllabus. “You Be the Critic” project explained) Read Chapter One in “Looking at Movies” *before* viewing the movie JUNO as the primary film. This film is probably one of the only two movies that will require a rental fee. This one is \$3.99. But it is a huge part of Chapter One and therefore required viewing.

<https://www.amazon.com/Juno-Ellen-Page/dp/B0014GVCI8> also on Netflix, Hulu, HBO Max and other service.

Paragraph and reaction assignment in SAKAI.

UBA Critic assignment: See any movie of your choice that is NOT one of the assigned movies in the rest of this syllabus. The movie must be listed on the AFI’s top 100 Movies here:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AFI%27s_100_Years...100_Movies

Reading assignment for next week: pages 95-97, 103-105, 370-371. Read before watching lecture and seeing movie

Week 2: Aug. 31-Sept. 4

HORROR TALES: Intro to the genre lecture.

Assignments: After the lecture, see THE HAUNTING (1963, NOT 1999) Here it is. Pay particular attention to the use of mirrors and what they mean.

<https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/luc271748/watch?token=F40A9904D909A506>

Paragraph and reaction assignment in SAKAI.

UBA Critic assignment: See a horror movie of your choice that is on this list of Rotten Tomatoes 100 best horror tales. PLEASE CHOOSE ONLY from the 1-50 top ranked titles from this list.

Reading assignment for next week: pages 90-93 Read before watching lecture and seeing movie.

Week 3: Sept. 7-11

FILM NOIR: Intro to genre.

Watch “Double Indemnity,” considered to be the greatest example of film noir. **DOUBLE INDEMNITY 1944**

<https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/luc271748/watch?token=0F8C6E7D29EB465E>

Paragraph and reaction assignment in SAKAI

UBA Critic assignment: See Lawrence Kasdan’s “BODY HEAT” — compare the use of smoking in it vs. the use of smoking in “Double Indemnity.”

<https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/luc271748/watch?token=9CEB66912A87A738>

Reading assignment for next week: Reread Cultural Invisibility section on page 10. Read before watching lecture and seeing movie.

Week 4: Sept. 14-18

WHITE SAVIOR Movies. Intro to genre lecture.

Watch “Men of Honor” with Cuba Gooding Jr. and Robert De Niro. I am working on getting a free download of this title, otherwise there might be a small rental.

Paragraph and reaction assignment in SAKAI (a special topic this time)

UBA Critic assignment: See any movie of your choice that is on the instructor’s list of potential White Savior motion pictures to be found in Assignments and Announcements.

Reading assignment for next week: Musicals pages 100-102 plus 102-109 on Genre Transformation.

Week 5: Sept. 21-25

MUSICALS Intro to genre lecture. Character types examined.

Watch LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS (1986 musical, NOT the original 1960 version)

<https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/luc271748/watch?token=3F81CFCDDFA9AB26>

Paragraph and reaction assignment in SAKAI.

UBA Critic assignment: See any movie of your choice that is on the AFI List of 25 Greatest Musicals

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AFI%27s_Greatest_Movie_Musicals

Reading assignment for next week: To be announced. Fantasy readings to come.

Week 6: Sept. 28-Oct. 2

FANTASY: Intro to genre lecture.

Watch "Groundhog Day"

<https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/luc271748/watch?token=2A4BBE14082C97B4>

Paragraph and reaction assignment in SAKAI.

UBA Critic assignment: See any movie of your choice that is on the list of the top 60 from this list of best fantasy films. <https://editorial.rottentomatoes.com/guide/best-fantasy-movies-of-all-time/2/>

Reading assignment: To be announced on the power of media to promote diversity and acceptance.

Week 7: Oct. 5-9

MOVIES TO PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING & TOLERANCE. Lecture

See "Get Out". — I am trying to get a free download of this title.

Paragraph and reaction assignment in SAKAI.

UBA Critic assignment: See any movie of your choice that is on the list of films supplied by the instructor. It will be available on Sakai's assignments.

Reading assignment for next week: cult movies pages 55-60.

MIDTERM deadline Sunday Oct. 11.

Week 8: Oct. 12-16

CULT MOVIES. Intro to genre lecture

Watch "Donnie Darko" (only the original 2001 release, NOT 2004 director's cut)

<https://luc.kanopy.com/video/donnie-darko>

Paragraph and reaction assignment in SAKAI.

UBA Critic assignment: See any movie of your choice that is on the list of the top cult movies from Entertainment Weekly.

<https://www.filmsite.org/cultfilmsew2.html>

Reading assignment: pages 380-385.

Week 9: Oct. 19-23..

INTERNATIONAL WORKS: Intro to genre.

Watch Italy's "The Bicycle Thieves."

THE BICYCLE THIEVES 1948

<https://luc.kanopy.com/video/bicycle-thieves>

Paragraph and reaction assignment in SAKAI.

Week 10: Nov. 26-30

WESTERNS: Intro to genre.

See "Stagecoach"

STAGECOACH 1939

<https://luc.kanopy.com/video/stagecoach>

Paragraph and reaction assignment in SAKAI.

BA Critic assignment: See any movie of your choice that is on the list of the top westerns here—
Pick from the first 10 titles, please. <https://www.filmsite.org/greatwesterns.html>

Reading assignment for next week: pages 93-95

Week 11: Nov. 2-6

SPORTS MOVIES Intro to genre.

See "The Natural" Am trying to get a free download.

UBA Critic assignment: See any movie of your choice that is on the list of the top 30 list of
Sports movies here

<https://www.rollingstone.com/movies/movie-lists/best-sports-movies-rocky-rudy-71467/no-no-a-dokumentary-2014-26418/>

Reading assignment for next week: to be supplied by instructor.

Week 12: Nov. 9-13

COMEDIES Intro to genre

See "There's Something About Mary" I am working on getting a free download.

UBA Critic assignment: See any movie of your choice that is on the list of the top list of
Comedy films — CHOOSE FROM TOP 30 here: <https://www.timeout.com/london/film/100-best-comedy-movies>

Reading assignment for next week: pages 93-95.

Week 14: Nov. 23-27

SCIENCE FICTION. Intro to genre

See "

UBA Critic assignment: See any movie of your choice that is on the list of the top list of
Sci-fi films (GO TO BOTTOM OF LIST TO NO. 1. Choose from top 50 films only.)

<https://www.timeout.com/london/film/the-100-best-sci-fi-movies>

Reading assignment: Chapter 11, pages 436-442, Audience Demographics through the end of
the chapter.

NOTE: NO delayed or make-up assignments from excused absences will be accepted after
Nov. 29.

Week 15: Nov. 30-Dec. 4

See "Munger Road," an independent movie made in the Northwest suburbs of Chicago. I am
working on getting a free download of this title. Guest speaker scheduled. Writer/director
Nicholas Smith will discuss funding, producing and distributing the movie he wrote and directed

in Chicago's Northwest suburbs, "Munger Road" — starring Academy Award nominee Best Supporting Actor Bruce Davison.

Final Exam prep.

FINALS! There is no assigned time period for this asynchronous class. But the final exam must be administered the week of Dec. 7-12. Stay tuned for details as they become available.

ABOUT YOUR INSTRUCTOR:

Chicago Daily Herald film critic Dann Gire has served 22 years as the president of the Chicago Film Critics Association. He is a founding director of the 401-c-3 organization. For two terms, Gire served as the Ethics Committee Chair for the Chicago Headline Club Board of Directors. In 2011, he became a Contributing Critic for "Ebert Presents" TV series. He earned the 2011 Outstanding Journalism Alumnus Award from Eastern Illinois University. In 2013, he received the Friend of Scholastic Journalism Award from both the Illinois Journalism Education Association and the National Journalism Education Association.

Gire has worked at the Daily Herald in suburban Chicago as a government reporter, crime reporter, Metro reporter (assigned to the Cook County Criminal Courts), and film critic. He worked as the film critic for Chicago's Fox TV News from 1988 to 1991. He has won the prestigious Peter Lisagor Award for Exemplary Journalism in Arts Criticism 10 times. He has also earned awards from the Association of Sunday and Feature Editors, the Associated Press, and other journalism organizations.

Gire taught Business Speaking at Loyola University Chicago's School of Communication 2018-2020. He taught journalism at Chicago's Columbia College and Aurora University (Ill.) and taught Speech-Communications at Eastern Illinois University. From 1984 to 2006, Gire joined the adjunct faculty of the English and Journalism departments at William Rainey Harper College in Palatine, Ill., where he taught drama, novels & short stories, film & literature, introductory journalism, mass communication and feature writing.

From 2000 to 2006, he became the faculty adviser to Harper's Harbinger newspaper. He was fired from the college after a dispute with a Harper vice-president over censorship issues. He subsequently provided testimony to the Higher Education committees of the Illinois Senate and Illinois House to promote passage of State Senator Susan Garrett's Illinois College Campus Press Act that would make political firings of college newspaper staffs and faculty advisers illegal. The act became law on June 1, 2008.

In 2006, Gire teamed up with James Bond 007 novelist and film historian Raymond Benson to create "Dann and Raymond's Movie Club," a lively and popular monthly

lecture/film clips series that has broken attendance records at suburban Chicago libraries.