

Media 14: Early Film History

Santa Rosa Junior College

Semester: Fall 2020
Sections: 1572 (Tuesday 1:30-4:30 p.m.)
1. zoom link: <https://santarosa-edu.zoom.us/j/98248788420>
2. Meeting password: 183951
Instructor: Lex Pulos, Ph.D.
Office Hours: M 3-5 & W 12-4, and by appointment
Zoom link: <https://santarosa-edu.zoom.us/j/91208081086> Meeting Password: 512187
e-mail: APulos@santarosa.edu
Required Text: Thompson, K. & Bordwell, D. (2019). *Film history: An Introduction* (4th Ed.).

COURSE DESCRIPTION (What did I just get myself into)

This course is designed to introduce students to key issues in film studies, focusing on the history of American cinema from 1895 to 1960. We will pay particular attention to the “golden age” of Hollywood, with forays into other national cinemas such as German Expressionism and Soviet Montage. The course will also cover the historical evolution of the narrative form and formal devices such as the shot, mise-en-scene, editing, and sound design. Screenings will range from actualities and trick films, to the early narrative features of D. W. Griffith, to the development of film. Reading and writing assignments and in-class discussions will address how to interpret film on the formal/stylistic level (sequence analysis, close reading, visual language) as well as in the context of major trends and figures in film history.

Assumptions: This course has been designed with a series of expectations that are laid out within this syllabus. If you are willing to take the time and commit to these expectations, the course should be challenging, at times, and enjoyable at others. Additionally, this course, class, and instructor is dedicated to actively creating an open and inclusive environment that pushes us to explore the related content and its relation to our experiences. However, we must recognize that all experiences are not shared equally and as a class we will acknowledge the validity of these experiences, our role in perpetuating the positive and negative elements of these and learn to value and take seriously the complex nature of the human experience. While the class is dedicated to pushing each other, challenging our preconceived assumptions, and questioning ourselves, disparaging comments will not be tolerated.

Student Learning Outcomes and Objectives

Through demonstration and application of their knowledge on the assigned tests, papers, activities, and quizzes, students successfully completing this course will:

1. Differentiate among the various movements in international film history through the 1950s.
1. Evaluate the impact of historical movements, social and cultural trends, and new technologies on the development of motion pictures.

Objectives:

1. Evaluate the historical development of the film.
2. Analyze the economic, social, cultural, technological, and aesthetic impacts of film.
3. Critically analyze film and the film industry.
4. Demonstrate a critical understanding of films impact on their daily lives

Grades (Ok, cool, what do I have to do?)

Class Participation: Student contributions to class discussions are vital and individual comments, questions, and examples are highly encouraged. The professor recognizes that we all come from different cultural backgrounds and have unique learning styles and encourages you to engage class material through these perspectives. It is my goal that you learn as much as possible, and this may require students to move outside of their comfort zone at times. However, we cannot move forward, or start a conversation, if you are not prepared to do so. A quick reading of the assigned material will do little to prepare for the assignments, quizzes and discussions in this class, I will therefore assume that you have familiarized yourself with the required readings. I am excited to hear your perspective and insights, and to have discussions about them, and they will always be more productive if we have some shared knowledge to expand upon. I will work to push our understanding of the content, and at times I will challenge you as a student but this will always about the content; as a teacher I am dedicated to the processes of learning and I look forward to the challenging and mutual processes of education.

Assignments

14 Class Discussions	<p>The discussion posts will be completed in class and most often in small groups. Each student will submit a short write of the discussion answers and reflections which will then be submitted to Canvas. These assignments will be due by the end of the class period, so students are encouraged to complete these during the class period.</p> <p><i>There will be 14 Discussion assignments. At the end of the semester the 2 lowest scores will be dropped.</i></p>
4 Film Notes	<p>Four Sets of Film Notes - This class will consist of film screening, short lectures, and class discussion with peers. At times students might be called upon, asked to lead a discussion through respectful and engaged dialogue or to offer a question about the reading/film. To help facilitate and ground the discussion students will learn to create films notes which will be used as a discussion resources and will be periodically turned in for points.</p>
12 Reading Quizzes	<p>For all the textbook readings assigned by the class instructor, there will be a graded quiz. All quizzes will be held via CANVAS and will be due at 11:59 PM on Friday. The quizzes are designed to assure that you read and understood the text. You will have 40 minutes to take the quiz so please be sure to prepare before you take the quiz.</p> <p><i>There will be 12 quizzes (one each week of content). At the end of the semester the 2 lowest scores will be dropped.</i></p>
2 Exams	<p>Exams will cover text materials in the book, extra readings, as well as concepts from in class discussions and films. You will have 4 HOURS to take each exam through Canvas. Exams will consist of T/F, Multiple Choice, short answer, and essay questions. You MUST take the exam within the scheduled week. Exams will be open book/open note, but this does NOT mean that you will not have to prepare ahead of time. To be successful on these exams, you must read, highlight, and take notes on the chapters. You MUST close ALL TABS within Canvas as well as on your computer before taking the exam. You CANNOT have the PowerPoint slides, or anything else open when taking the exam or you will get kicked out of the exam.</p>
2 Essays	<p>There will be two essay assignments during this class and students are free to choose their topic within a given framework.</p> <p>Essay 1: Star Analysis/Key figure: Star Analysis/Key Figure Topic: Analyze a celebrity or key figure within the Hollywood Studio System. Papers should clearly articulate the individuals signature persona and explain how it reflects the dominant ideology of the era using specific examples from selected films. In other words, why do audiences identify with the star/figure? Why were they significant to the film industry or to the history of film? How did they challenge or push elements of the industry forward? What lasting impact did they have? Etc. While students may choose to select popular stars like Humphrey Bogart, Katherine Hepburn or Orson Welles, Students may want to consider key figures like Pattie LaBelle, Anna May Wong, or George Cukor.</p> <p>Essay 2: Film Technique/Genre Topic: What was the development of a specific film technique? Why is this important to understand? How do the specific cinematic techniques or elements of a film support the message or point it is making? What do these techniques do for the audience? How did this impact or change film making, production, reception, etc.? What lasting impacts has this technique had or how has it changed? As much as possible, choose the films that highlight the techniques you are covering.</p>

	<p>Analyze a classic film genre. Papers should clearly articulate standard aesthetic and thematic characteristics of the genre using specific examples from at least four films. Study films should be from the 1960s or earlier. What are the elements of the genre? How do we know a film fits into or does not fit into this genre? What social/cultural structures are present in the genre? What ideologies does the genre speak to/uphold/challenge?</p> <p>General structure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write an essay of about 1200-1300 words (about 5 pages) on the topic. 2. Analyze at least 4 other films to help inform the analysis, and to clarify the content be sure to draw upon the various elements of film that we have covered in class such as intertextual references, motifs, parallel structures, cycle/ cluster elements, cinematography, mise-en-scene, movement, editing, sound, acting, etc. Naturally, you will want to observe all the rules of good writing – that is, of grammar, organization, logic, etc. 3. Student papers will utilize at least 5 academic source citations. 4. Consider the audience, write to a film audience not to the instructor: Oh! That Film Blog, Cinema Autopsy, Slant, Cleo, Indi Wire, Bitch Flicks, etc. <p>Examples: Alien, LGBT Problem, Melancholia, Argo, or Falling Skies.</p>																
Grading Summary	<p>Students will demonstrate their understanding and mastery of the topics in Media 14 through the following:</p> <table> <tr> <td>First week homework (2@10)</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr> <td>Discussion (12 @ 10)</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr> <td>Film Notes (4 @ 15)</td><td>60</td></tr> <tr> <td>Essay (2 @ 100)</td><td>200</td></tr> <tr> <td>Reading quizzes (10 @ 10)</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr> <td>Mid-Term Exam</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr> <td>Final Exam</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total Points Possible</td><td>700</td></tr> </table>	First week homework (2@10)	20	Discussion (12 @ 10)	120	Film Notes (4 @ 15)	60	Essay (2 @ 100)	200	Reading quizzes (10 @ 10)	120	Mid-Term Exam	100	Final Exam	100	Total Points Possible	700
First week homework (2@10)	20																
Discussion (12 @ 10)	120																
Film Notes (4 @ 15)	60																
Essay (2 @ 100)	200																
Reading quizzes (10 @ 10)	120																
Mid-Term Exam	100																
Final Exam	100																
Total Points Possible	700																
Extra Credit	<p>There is no extra credit available in this course. An ‘A’ grade cannot be earned by turning in more ‘C’ level work than the rest of the students. It is possible that a unique opportunity may arise during the semester due to research or special events and, if so, I will let you know. Do not request extra credit. If you are struggling with material, please try to meet with me early on to give optimal opportunity for improvement.</p>																
Late work (I just bought a tiger and is more work than I anticipated):	<p>The media are a deadline-based industry. Therefore, assignment deadlines are of utmost importance. In all evaluations, if work is submitted after the due date, the grade will be reduced by <u>10% per day (not class period) late (for up to 5 days)</u>. Exams and quizzes must be made or taken on the due date – if you miss a quiz, that grade is a zero.</p> <p>But never fear, there is some flexibility to the grades. As a reminder: Quizzes/Discussions/journals – lowest 2 scores are dropped (or for the cheeky few, you may skip two).</p>																

Tentative Course Schedule		
Date	Topic and Reading	Weekly Assignments
Week 1 8/18	Introductions and Class Structure	1. Introductory Quiz
Week 2 8/25	Chapter 1: Magic of Early Cinema	1. Discussion 1 2. Quiz 1 (Due by 11:59pm Friday)
Week 3 9/1	Chapter 2: Nickelodeons and Narratives	1. Discussion 2 2. Quiz 2 (Due by Friday)
Week 4 9/8	Chapter 3: D.W. Griffith and Hollywood Beginnings	1. Discussion 3 2. Quiz 3 (Due by Friday) 3. Star analysis/Key figure sign-up due
Week 5 9/15	Chapter 5: The Expressionist Movement	1. Discussion 4 2. Film Notes 1 3. Quiz 4 (Due by Friday)
Week 6 9/22	Chapter 6: Montage Movement	1. Discussion 5 2. Quiz 5 (Due by Friday)
Week 7 9/29	Chapter 7: Silent Film and Hollywood	1. Discussion 6 2. Essay 1 (Due by Friday) 3. Quiz 6 (Due by Friday)
Week 8 10/6	Chapter 8: Film art and the Documentary	1. Discussion 7 2. Film Notes 2 3. Quiz 7 (Due by Friday)
Week 9 10/13	Review Chapters 1-8	1. MIDTERM EXAM – Note – this is taken on Canvas and you have 4 hours to take the exam!!
Week 10 10/20	Chapter 9: Sound	1. Discussion 8 2. Quiz 8 (Due by Friday)
Week 11 10/27	Chapter 10: Hays Code and Hollywood Studios	1. Discussion 9 2. Film Notes 3 3. Technique/genre sign-up
Week 12 11/3	Chapter 10 Part II: Genre film	1. Discussion 10 2. Quiz 9 (Due by Friday)
Week 13 11/10	Chapter 11: War, studio pressure and international studios	1. Discussion 11 2. Quiz 10 (Due by Friday)
Week 14 11/17	Chapter 12: Propaganda and Neorealism	1. Discussion 12 2. Essay 2 3. Quiz 11 (Due by Friday)
Week 15 11/24	Thanksgiving Break	
Week 16 12/1	Chapter 15: Postwar Cinema	1. Discussion 13 2. Film Notes 4
Week 17 12/8	Chapter 15 part II: New Developments in Hollywood	1. Discussion 14 2. Quiz 12 (Due by Friday)
Week 18 12/15	Final Exam	1. Review Chapter 9-12 & 15 2. FINAL EXAM – Note – this is taken on Canvas and you have 4 hours to take the exam!!

Class Policies

CLASS PARTICIPATION

This is a discussion-based course, so your participation will help make the class run.

- (a) **Attendance:** Roll will be taken at the beginning of each class session and attendance will be given to the university for registration and enrollment purposes. I will assume that your attendance means that you want to be in the class and will therefore expect you to come prepared and ready to participate in class. If students are unable to follow the course guidelines or disruptive, I reserve the right to remove them from class for the day, if you are or unprepared then stay home, if your Snapchat streak is more important than class then feel free to do that instead, but if you come prepared to learn then so will the professor.
 - a. **University Non-Attendance Policy**
Faculty may report students who do not attend the first-class meeting of the semester/session as non-attending if they have not contacted the faculty member. Faculty are compelled to report students who fail to attend the first two classes as non-attending if they have not contacted the faculty member. All non-attendance for the full semester must be reported by the end of the add/drop period but should be reported as soon as two classes are missed. For online classes, faculty are compelled to report students who do not log into Canvas during the first week of class as non-attending.
- (b) **Technology Policy: Cell:** Students are simply not allowed to use a cell phone during class lecture or after a quiz, if I see that you are using a phone the professor reserves the right to read the texts to the student's peers, send the phone around to have peers post on the students Facebook wall, incinerate the phone or dissolve it with acid. We will have breaks during the class time in which you are free to use your phones then. **Tablets/ Computers:** Students may utilize these to take notes but if your technology becomes a resource for distraction, they may lose these privileges for yourself or the class.
 - a. Importantly: I do not want to have to manage your screen time, so please do not make me.
- (c) **In-class involvement:** Student contributions to class discussions are vital and individual comments, questions, and examples are highly encouraged. The professor recognizes that we all come from different cultural backgrounds and have unique learning styles and encourages you to engage class material through these perspectives. It is my goal that you learn as much as possible, and this may require students to move outside of their comfort zone at times.
- (d) **Class citizenship:** Individuals that are chronically late to class, tune out regularly during lectures or activities, or are impolite to fellow students (or me!), will be ask you to leave class for the day and I reserve the right to drop you from the class.
- (e) For athletes, university events, medical emergencies or disability services individuals must provide an official written documentation and schedule of anticipated absences (if applicable) within the first week of the semester.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The maintenance of academic standards and integrity includes the obligation not to cheat or plagiarize. A student who uses dishonest or deceitful means to obtain a grade is guilty of cheating; a student who submits another's work as one's own without adequate attribution is guilty of plagiarism. Identical work will earn a grade of zero. Students are fully responsible for learning the course content and material disseminated in the class. Technical difficulties do not release you from this responsibility. In addition, the instructor and class will follow a code of conduct that respects individual identities, sexualities, belief systems, cultural backgrounds and perspectives. The class will support an open and friendly space to encourage and discuss topics, and often challenge perspective, but will never attack or limit the agency or voice of other students.

PLAIGARISM

Presenting another's ideas as your own will not be tolerated. Plagiarized work will result in a failing grade for the assignment, a referral to the appropriate university officials for disciplinary review, and possible dismissal from the course.

STUDENTS WITH COGNATIVE VARIANTS

Santa Rosa Junior College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons. If you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to register with Disability Resources. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper DPS forms and meet with me at the beginning of the semester. More information on Disability Services can be found at <https://drd.santarosa.edu/>.

SYLLABUS CHANGES

This syllabus is subject to change at the professor's discretion. Students will be informed immediately of any changes to the syllabus and/or schedule, and changes will always benefit the students, not the professor.

CLASSROOM DECORUM

Please inform the professor if an emergency might require electronic contact during a class meeting. I will return this courtesy.

There are certain basic standards of classroom civility that should be adhered to, particularly in a communication course. Civility does not eliminate appropriate humor, enjoyment, or other features of a comfortable and pleasant classroom community. Classroom civility does, however, include the following:

1. Displaying respect for all members of the classroom community.
2. Attentiveness to and participation in lectures, group activities, and other classroom exercises.
3. Avoidance of unnecessary disruptions during class such as private conversations, reading the newspaper or doing the crossword puzzle, or doing work for other classes.
4. Avoidance of negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom community.

Diversity

Diversity describes an inclusive community of people with varied human characteristics, ideas, and world views related, but not limited, to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, religion, color, creed, national origin, age, disability, socio-economic status, geographical region, or ancestry. Institutions that value diversity provide a supportive environment that respects those human differences. It is our responsibility as citizens of the SRJC community to promote and value a campus environment and classroom climate that is antiracist, safe, fair, respectful, and free from prejudice.

Allied Zone

I am a member of the Allied Zone community network, and I am available to listen and support you in a safe and confidential manner. As an Ally, I can help you connect with resources on campus to address problems you may face that interfere with your academic and social success on campus as it relates to issues surrounding sexual orientation and gender identity. My goal is to help you be successful and to maintain a safe and equitable campus.

Name / Pronoun

My gender pronouns are he/she, him/her, his/hers. I will gladly honor your request to address you by your name and/or gender pronouns. Please advise me of these early in the semester.