

**History of Cinema I, 1895–1945**  
**MCS 207 | Section 101 | Autumn 2019**  
**T/Th, 9:40–11:10 AM, Lincoln Park Campus, Levan 507**

**Instructor:** Ian Bryce Jones, College of Communication  
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**Office Hours:** Th 1PM–3PM, Lincoln Park Campus, Byrne Hall 455

(Additional office hours by appointment, if scheduling conflicts make them necessary.)

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

CMS 207 examines the history of cinema, one of the most influential cultural forms of the 20th century. We will study the aesthetic and technological developments of cinema during its first 50 years, as well as examine the social and economic factors shaping its history. We will trace the changing styles, techniques, content and methods of filmmaking as an art form, as popular culture, and as an industry. We will consider how cinema is bound to its social context via audience relations, economics, technology and ideology. We will look primarily at feature-length narrative films as the dominant mode of filmmaking, although we will also examine some of the films and theories that sustained other forms of cinematic experimentation. The class will be based on the readings, the screenings and the discussions.

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this class, students will:

- Become conversant in the development and debates about international film history during its first 50 years.
- Understand cinema's connection to social and political history.
- Identify how technological, economic, social and cultural factors transformed the medium.
- Understand the cultural and structural interrelations between the film industry in the US and other film industries.
- Discuss how issues of class, race, gender, sexuality and nation have determined the perspectives of films throughout film history.

### **REQUIREMENT FULFILLMENT:**

#### **Arts and Literature Domain of the Liberal Studies Program**

This course is part of the Liberal Studies Program. It fulfills credits for the Arts and Literature domain. The central goals of the Liberal Studies Program are reflectiveness, value consciousness, critical and creative thinking, and a multicultural perspective. Courses in Arts and Literature develop critical and creative thinking about the composition, understanding, and evaluation of artistic works. They encourage reflectiveness by helping students to articulate their responses to works and by locating these responses within broader aesthetic and cultural traditions. They implicitly address fundamental questions of human value, among them creativity and discipline. Work in this domain includes literature, the visual arts, media arts, music, and theater.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS OVERVIEW**

- 1) Attendance and class participation, including participation in any in-class small group work. (Unexcused absences at 2 or more class sessions will significantly lower your final grade. Continued absences will be considered reason for FX grade designation.) (25% of final grade.)
- 2) Take-home reading response quizzes, of various formats (35% of final grade)
- 3) First written assignment, 900 words (15% of final grade)
- 4) Second written assignment, 1300 words (25% of final grade)

A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	84-86%
B-	81-83%
C+	78-80%
C	75-77%
C-	72-74%
D+	69-71%
D	66-68%
F	0-65%

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND MISCONDUCT**

The DePaul Student Handbook defines plagiarism as follows: “Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following: (a) The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's. (b) Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax even with acknowledgement. (c) Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency. (d) The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.”

Plagiarism, as defined here, will be considered grounds for failure of a given assignment, and, given repeated offenses, failure of the course.

Consult your student handbook or visit Academic Integrity at DePaul University (<http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu>) for further details.

### **HARASSMENT**

The DePaul University's guidelines for sexual and gender harassment will be strictly enforced. All incidents of sexual harassment or gender harassment should be reported by the complainant to either a person in a supervisory capacity or the Director, Sexual Harassment Policy Office. For these procedures and contact information go to: <http://condor.depaul.edu/~harass/>

### **ACCOMMODATIONS STATEMENT**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the course instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate reasonable accommodation based on your needs, contact should be made **as early as possible in the quarter**. Before approaching the course instructor, make sure that you have previously contacted the:

- PLS Program (for LD, AD/HD) at 773-325-1677, Student Center #370, and/or
- The Office for Students with Disabilities (for all other disabilities) at 773-325-1677, Student Center #370

## **COURSE READINGS AND ADDITIONAL STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

There is no textbook for this course. All reading materials will be available online as PDFs on D2L, or else will be made available through the library reserve system. Students will be expected to be active and critical readers of the course materials. Identify the main arguments the author is making, ask what types of evidence the author uses to substantiate these arguments, and think about the unexamined assumptions the author is making. These skills are especially important in a class in which there is no central textbook, and the historical narrative of the course is weaved together from different authors with different points of view.

Short films and clips will be shown in-class from day one of the course. In addition to these, beginning on week three students will be required to view feature films. Since there is no official screening slot for the course, students will be expected to view these films on their own time, as homework in addition to the reading. The logistics of access to these films may vary from week to week, but thorough instructions will always be provided in-class and on D2L.

## **TERMS OF ENROLLMENT**

1. You agree that this syllabus is a contract, and that you are abiding by its terms and policies (including grading).
2. You understand that any issues or problems you have with grading will be dealt with through the policies laid out in the DePaul Student Handbook.
3. The course instructor reserves the right to alter course readings and films in response to unforeseen logistical issues, given that 1) new versions are made readily available upon alteration, and 2) timely notification is given to students about any alterations. Nothing listed above—learning objectives, course requirements, grading, or student responsibilities—will be changed.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **Week 1 – Early Cinema**

#### **Thursday, September 12**

No reading. General introduction to the syllabus, course policies, and course goals. Viewing and discussing of short early cinema films in-class.

### **Week 2 – US Dominance and the Development of Narrative Film Language**

#### **Tuesday, September 17**

**Readings:** Tom Gunning, “The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde,” Stephen Bottomore, “The Panicking Audience? Early Cinema and the “Train Effect””

#### **Thursday, September 19**

**Readings:** Charles Musser, “The Travel Genre in 1903–1904: Moving Towards Fictional Narrative”

### **Week 3 – Classical Hollywood of the 1920s**

#### **Tuesday, September 24**

**Readings:** Eileen Bower, “The Feature Film” (from *The Transformation of Cinema, 1907-1915*)

**Take-home Viewing Assignment:** *The General* (Buster Keaton and Clyde Bruckman, USA, 1926)

#### **Thursday, September 26**

**Readings:** Robert Sklar, “The House That Adolph Zukor Built” (from *Movie-Made America*)

**Week 4 – German Expressionism****Tuesday, October 1****Readings:** J.P. Telotte, “German Expressionism”**Take-home Viewing Assignment:** *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Robert Wiene, Germany, 1920)**Thursday, October 3****Readings:** Barry Salt, “From Caligari to WHO?” (from *Moving Into Pictures*)**Week 5 – Soviet Montage: Theory and Practice****Tuesday, October 8****Readings:** Lev Kuleshov, “Montage as the Foundation of Cinematography” (from *Art of the Cinema*)**Thursday, October 10****Readings:** Sergei Eisenstein, “The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram,” Dziga Vertov, “Kinoks: A Revolution”**Take-home Viewing Assignment:** *Man with a Movie Camera* (Dziga Vertov, USSR, 1929)**Week 6 – The Development of Sound Cinema****Tuesday, October 15****Readings:** David Bordwell, “The Introduction of Sound” (from *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*)**DUE at the START OF CLASS: First written assignment, 900 words****Thursday, October 17****Readings:** Helen Hanson, excerpts from chapters of *Hollywood Soundscapes: Film Sound Style, Craft and Production in the Classical Era***Take-home Viewing Assignment:** *Applause* (Rouben Mamoulian, USA, 1929)**Week 7 – American Independents and Alternative Traditions****Tuesday, October 22****Readings:** Barbara Tepa Lupack, “Race Matters: The Evolution of Race Filmmaking” (from *Richard E. Norman and Race Filmmaking*)**Thursday, October 24****Take-home Viewing Assignment:** *The Blood of Jesus* (Spencer Williams, USA, 1941), *Meshes of the Afternoon* (Maya Deren, USA, 1943)**Readings:** Maya Deren, “Amateur vs. Professional,” “Planning By Eye,” “Magic Is New”**Week 8 – Genre and Exhibition****Tuesday, October 29****Readings:** Mary Carbine, “‘The Finest Outside the Loop’: Motion Picture Exhibition in Chicago's Black Metropolis, 1905–1928”**Thursday, October 31****Take-home Viewing Assignment:** *I Walked with a Zombie* (Jacques Torneur, USA, 1943)**Readings:** Rick Altman, “Where Do Genres Come From?” (from *Film/Genre*)

**Week 9 – The Hollywood Studio System****Tuesday, November 5****Take-home Viewing Assignment:** *His Girl Friday* (Howard Hawks, USA, 1940)**Readings:** Tino Balio, multiple excerpts from chapters of *Grand Design: Hollywood as a Modern Business Enterprise, 1930-1939***Tuesday, November 7****Readings:** Robert Sklar, “The Golden Age of Turbulence and the Golden Age of Order” (from *Movie-Made America*)**Week 10 – Wartime Cinema****Tuesday, November 12****Readings:** Richard M. Barsam, “American Propaganda and Counter-propaganda for World War II” (from *Non-Fiction Film: A Critical History*)**Thursday, November 14****Take-home Viewing Assignment:** selected portions of *Why We Fight* (Frank Capra, USA, 1942–1947) and *Triumph of the Will* (Leni Reifenstahl, German, 1935)**Readings:** Rainer Rother, “The Auteur of Nazi Filmmaking” (from *Leni Reifenstahl: The Seduction of Genius*)**Week 11 – Make-up/overflow, final class discussion****Tuesday, November 19**

Readings, if any, TBA. This class section will be designated as an overflow area for any material that we fell behind with during the quarter, used as a space to explore issue that students are especially interested in and felt did not receive adequate attention, and/or used for any presenting of student project material.

**DUE TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26 at 11:59 PM: Second written assignment, 1300 words****ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS****Reading response quizzes**

Don't let the name throw you: these aren't “quizzes” in the sense of having limited time to complete them in-class. Rather, they are take-home assignments, regularly conducted as a way of ensuring engagement with the week's reading. They will take multiple forms throughout the quarter. Some will be a mix of short answer and longer-answer, others entirely based around one long answer question. Whatever their form, they will never ask you to write more than 250-400 words (the standard length I require for single long answer quizzes). At 35% of your grade, *these assignments should not be taken lightly.*

**Written assignments**

Students will be required to complete two longer-form written assignments, one 900 words in length and one 1300 words in length. The first paper will be an analysis of one or more film, the second a more extended-form research paper examining the cultural context and consequences of an artistic movement, filmmaking trend, or industry practice. Both papers will have specific prompts, to be distributed before the papers' due dates. Students' writing in these papers should engage with the reading materials of the course, applying methodologies studied in service of well-articulated ideas and well-crafted arguments. Papers should present clear theses, respond to each question asked by the prompt, and display basic competence in English-language composition.

Assignment lengths are given in **word counts**, rather than page counts. Assignments must **meet or exceed** the requested word count in order to qualify for full credit. If a reading from the course is directly cited or otherwise referenced, **correct citation must be adhered to**. Please refer to course policies on academic misconduct and/or University policies on plagiarism if you have any questions and concerns in this area. Since it is always better to be safe than not (and plagiarism is grounds for immediate failure of the assignment), you should feel free to email me if you have specific questions that are not addressed in either of those policies.

The first paper is due by the start of class on Tuesday of Week 6. The second paper is due by 11:59 PM on November 26. Both are due electronically. Preferred formats include .doc, .docx, .rtf., or posting online via Google Docs. PDFs are allowed, but discouraged, as they are more difficult to add comments to.