

Course Syllabus
**(This is a generic syllabus; the full syllabus for each semester is available
to enrolled students on eLearning)**

FILM 2332-HN1: UNDERSTANDING FILM

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Course Description:

Focusing primarily on canonical and classical film texts, this course is designed to familiarize students with the history and formal and stylistic elements of cinema as a medium of art and expression, to develop students' ability to analyze films practically and ideologically, and to enable them to become more informed and sophisticated film viewers, evaluators, and cultural critics. Roughly the first half of the course will be devoted to exploring how and why cinema became a mass medium and in outlining the features and techniques of film art. The remainder of the course will be devoted to examining the many ways these elements were employed by filmmakers working in Hollywood and elsewhere over the past century. Generally, classes will consist of lecture (augmented by brief screenings of relevant material) as well as discussion of the reading and screening for the week. Assessment of students' progress in achieving the learning objectives of the course will occur through three examinations that employ multiple-choice, matching, and/or short-answer components as well as a group discussion project and two papers (4-5 pages each).

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes: students will learn to analyze the artistic, industrial, and social-cultural dynamics of cinema (assessed via exams and class discussion and presentations and short papers)

Core Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

- *Critical thinking skills* – Students will engage in creative and/or innovative thinking, and/or inquiry, analysis, evaluation, synthesis of information, organizing concepts, and constructing solutions.
- *Communication skills* – Students will demonstrate effective written, oral, and visual communication.
- *Teamwork* – Students will demonstrate the ability to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal and consider different points of view.
- *Social responsibility* – Students will demonstrate intercultural competency and civic knowledge by engaging effectively with local, regional, national, and global communities.

For FILM 2332-HN1 specifically, students will cultivate the following skills and be assessed according to the associated rubrics:

- *Critical thinking skills* – students will learn to analyze the artistic, industrial, and social/cultural dynamics of cinema (assessed via exams, group presentations, papers, and class discussion).
- *Communication skills* – students will demonstrate mastery of critical concepts and approaches that deepen engagement with cinema (assessed via exams, group presentations, papers, and class discussion).
- *Teamwork* – students will work collaboratively in groups to ascertain how films and film criticism produce meaning and create experiences (assessed via group presentations and discussion).
- *Social responsibility* – students will demonstrate knowledge of how society and culture shape film aesthetics and reception (assessed via exams, papers, group presentations, and class discussion).

Required Textbooks and Materials:

Michael Wood, *Film: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2012), ISBN 9780192803535.

Additional *required* weekly readings are posted on eLearning and electronic reserve.

Note that full-length films are assigned weekly for viewing before the regular class session. *These films are required texts as well.* All are on reserve at McDermott Library, but are also available from a number of other sources.

CLASS CALENDAR

DATE	TOPIC/EXAMS AND ASSIGNMENTS
Week 1	<i>Introduction and Course Mechanics</i>
Week 2	<i>Background and History of Film and/as Form</i>
Week 3	<i>History Continued; Narrative and Narration</i> ... Group projects begin ...
Week 4	<i>The Shot: Mise-en-scène, Color</i>
Week 5	<i>The Shot: Camerawork and Cinematography</i>
Week 6	... EXAM 1 (covers material through week 5) ...

Week 7	<i>Shot to Shot: Editing</i> ... PAPER 1 due Tuesday ...
Week 8	<i>Sound and Sound Design</i>
Week 9	<i>Genre and Documentary</i>
Week 10	<i>The Avant-Garde and Experimental Filmmaking</i>
Week 11	... EXAM 2 (covers material through week 10) ...
Week 12	<i>Italian Neorealism</i>
Week 13	<i>The French New Wave, European Art Cinema</i>
Week 15	<i>The “New Hollywood”; What Is (a) Film Today?</i> ... PAPER 2 due Tuesday ...
Week 16	... EXAM 3 (covers material through week 15) ...

Grading Policy

Grades will be figured as follows:

Attendance and Participation	15%
Group Project	10%
Exams 1-3	45% total
Papers 1 and 2	30% total

Grading scale:

97-100 = A+ / 94-96 = A / 90-93 = A-
87-89 = B+ / 84-86 = B / 80-83 = B-
77-79 = C+ / 74-76 = C / 70-73 = C-
67-69 = D+ / 64-66 = D / 60-63 = D-
0-59 = F

Course & Instructor Policies

Students are expected to attend all classes, to be attentive and considerate, and to keep up with the assignments listed on the syllabus; screenings and reading are all to be completed *before* the class session. *If a student must miss a class, he or she remains responsible for all course material covered in that class; there are no make-up classes, and each class will only be taught once.* Each class period represents one week's worth of work, so roll will be taken for every class. The exams are in-class exams; and all students are fully responsible on exams for all in- and out-of-class screening material, including clips used in lecture. There will be no incompletes given in the course unless proper procedure is

followed (see below); all course requirements must be met (including attendance; if a student misses more than four class periods, he or she will generate an automatic failing grade for the course); all exams and assignments must be completed in full; and make-up exams will be permitted only in the most serious circumstances (family emergency or illness) which must be documented to the instructor's and the university's satisfaction.

Field Trip Policies

Off-campus Instruction and Course Activities

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address

http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm.

Additional information is available from the office of the school dean.

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do

the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of F.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office

hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22
PO Box 830688
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar

disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.