

FILM 2332: UNDERSTANDING FILM

summer 07 • t/th 6-9 pm • www.utdallas.edu/~kmarshal/courses/film/2332 • jo 2.604

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INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Kelli Marshall

OFFICE: JO 5.109; 972-883-6287

E-MAIL: kmarshal@utdallas.edu

OFFICE HOURS: Tu. 4:45-5:45 PM or by appt.

ONLINE HOURS: Mon. 9-10 AM; AOL, kmarshal;
Yahoo, KelliRMarshall; MSN, kmarshal@utdallas.edu

GRADUATE ASSISTANT: Heather Wood

OFFICE: JO 4.118; 972-883-2018

E-MAIL: woodh@utdallas.edu

OFFICE HOURS: T/Th 5-6 PM



COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the critical study of film, this course familiarizes students with canonical films (i.e., critically acclaimed and historically influential works), various methods of filmmaking, and several ways to interpret and evaluate films. Specifically, we will consider the following: *conventions and techniques of film art* (mise-en-scene, cinematography, editing, sound); *specific types of films* (film noir, documentaries); significant *film movements* (Italian Neorealism, French New Wave); and some *critical theories* regarding audiences, gender, and race. Classes will consist of lecture, some discussion, and brief film screenings.

Because of time constraints, we will screen few entire films in class. Consequently, students will be required to watch full-length films, which may be rented from a local video store or viewed in McDermott Library, on their own. Some students have found companies like Netflix helpful for this course; be sure, however, that you request the films *in the order listed on the syllabus*.

NOTE: *Understanding Film* is not designed to teach students how to make their own films or to provide students with an opportunity to watch contemporary "movies" and then chat casually about why they are "boring" or "cool." Please keep the above goals in mind throughout the semester.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

- *The Film Experience: An Introduction*, Corrigan/White (2004).
- All films are considered required texts as well.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Students will screen, interpret, and evaluate several canonical (and some uncanonical) films.
2. Students will identify the following: conventions and techniques of film art, specific types of films, significant film movements, and some approaches to film theory.
3. Students will develop the above skills through class discussion, film screenings, a shot analysis, and in-class exercises.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

FILM 2332 has been designed with the following set of assumptions in mind. If you fit the profile below and are willing to make the commitment, you should find the course challenging but manageable. If not, you might think carefully about how you will work this course along with its expectations and requirements into your existing schedule.

1. Students attend class regularly and participate in class. Students whose personal schedules prevent on-time arrivals and early departures are encouraged to find a more appropriately scheduled course.
2. Students have Internet and email access. NOTE: Emails will be sent to the class periodically throughout the semester.
3. Students do NOT wait until the last minute to screen films.
4. Students will be patient with, open-minded about, and respectful of the written and visual texts they encounter this semester. All films are shown for specific reasons.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

With the exception of participation grades (see below), all undergraduate grades will be given on a 10-point scale, with pluses and minuses: A = 100-90, B = 89-80, C= 79-70, D = 69-60, F = 59-below.

Class Web Site: Students should access regularly the *Student Updates* section on the course Web site for screening tips, reminders, helpful links, potential syllabus changes, and (occasionally) participation opportunities.

Participation (20%): Participation points may be earned via any or all of the following.

- *Reading/Screening Quizzes:* answer five questions about the assigned readings or screenings.
- *Daily Reports:* "What points are most clear to you?" and "What do you still not understand?"
- *Three-Minute Theories:* respond to a question or a statement based on a reading, screenings, or lecture.
- *Q&As:* submit an exam question (and answer!) based on the day's reading, screenings, or lecture.
- *Online Finds:* respond to an online exercise (check the course site!).
- *Group Work:* varied exercises for groups of roughly 3-5 students.

Participation assignments will be graded as follows: 5 points, superior; 4 points, good; 3 points, adequate; 2 points, deficient; 1 point, failing. NOTE: None of these exercises may be made-up.

Exams: Exam material comes from the lectures, readings, and screenings. All exams are in-class exams. When you arrive on exam-day, please deposit onto the stage *all belongings:* food, drinks, caps, hats, jackets, backpacks, purses, and all *silenced* technological devices. Also, you will not be allowed to leave the Performance Hall until you have completed your exam, so please take care of all "restroom matters" before the exam begins.

- *Exam 1 (30%)* is a shot analysis of 3-4 shots from *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942). Familiarize yourself with the **study guide** on the course site so that we do not have to spend class time explaining the exam's format. Please note: this exam may NOT be made up; **do NOT miss it.**
- *Exam 2 (25%)* consists of clip questions, multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, and application questions (see examples on Web site). While this exam mostly covers lecture and screening material from Weeks 4 and 5, it will cover some of in- and out-of-class screenings from Weeks 1-3 as well.
- *Exam 3 (25%)* is formatted like Exam 2, but it covers lecture material and screenings only from Weeks 6-7.

There are **extra-credit opportunities** on two exams. We will be watching numerous film clips in the classroom. Even though we are not watching these films in their entirety, many of them are extremely important to film history and the field of film studies. For those of you who want to screen all of *Chinatown* (Exam 2) and *The Bicycle Thief* (Exam 3), there will be extra-credit opportunities for you on the exams.

Make-up exams will only be given to students with documented emergencies that I am made aware of *before the exam is handed out* (e.g., bereavement, serious illness, scheduled medical procedure, court hearing). Letters from parents are not acceptable. One time for make-up exams will be scheduled, and a more difficult, usually all-essay exam will be administered. If a student misses an exam and does not have the required information, he/she will earn a zero on the exam. **Again, EXAM 1 may NOT be made up.**

CLASS CALENDAR

Week 1	May-29	What Films Do, and the Economics of Film (Distribution, Promotion, Exhibition)
	May-31	Mise-en-Scene READING: Chapter 2. SCREENING: <i>Do the Right Thing</i> (Spike Lee, 1989; 120 m).
Week 2	Jun-5	Cinematography READING: Chapter 3. SCREENING: <i>Grand Illusion</i> (Jean Renoir, 1937; 111 m) or <i>Rules of the Game</i> (Jean Renoir, 1939; 106 m).
	Jun-7	Editing READING: Chapter 4. SCREENING: <i>Rear Window</i> (Alfred Hitchcock, 1954; 113 m).
Week 3	Jun-12	Sound and Sound Design READING: Chapter 5. SCREENING: <i>The Conversation</i> (Francis Ford Coppola, 1974; 113 m).
	Jun-14	Exam 1: Shot Analysis SCREENING: <i>Casablanca</i> (Michael Curtiz, 1942; 102m).
Week 4	Jun-19	Narrative Cinema READING: Chapter 6 and "A Terrible Twist Ending" (handout). SCREENING: <i>Citizen Kane</i> (Orson Welles, 1941; 119 m).
	Jun-21	Genre: Film Noir SCREENING: <i>The Maltese Falcon</i> (John Huston, 1941; 101m). READING: Chapter 8 and Chapter 11 (432-37 only).
Week 5	Jun-26	Documentary Film READING: Chapter 7 (257-61; 275-85). SCREENING: <i>Bowling for Columbine</i> (Michael Moore, 2002; 120 m).
	Jun-28	Exam 2
Week 6	Jul-3	Postwar Movements and The New Hollywood READING: Chapter 9 (342-64) and Chapter 10 (365-75). SCREENING: <i>Bonnie and Clyde</i> (Arthur Penn, 1967; 105 m).
	Jul-5	Film Focus: Audiences and Reception READING: Chapter 1 (5-9; 28-29), Chapter 10 (398-408), Chapter 11 (460-65). SCREENING: <i>The Crying Game</i> (Neil Jordan, 1992; 112m).
Week 7	Jul-10	Film Focus: Race and Representation READING: Chapter 10 (388-91) and Chapter 11 (465-67). SCREENING: <i>Boyz N' the Hood</i> (John Singleton, 1991).
	Jul-12	Film Focus: Gender and Sexuality READING: Chapter 10 (383-87) and Chapter 11 (457-60). SCREENING: <i>Silence of the Lambs</i> (Jonathan Demme, 1990; 118 m) or <i>American Gigolo</i> (Paul Schrader, 1980; 117 m).
Week 8	Jul-17	Exam 3 (same time, same place)

The class calendar is subject to change: if a change occurs, it will be announced in class and posted on the course Web site. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of such changes.

If you lose this syllabus, an extra copy may be printed from the course Web site.

POSSIBLE IN-CLASS SCREENINGS

This is a tentative list of films from which we may or may not screen clips. The films that we *do* screen, students will be responsible for on the exams.

★★ *To help prepare for exams, print an IN-CLASS SCREENING GUIDE from the course site!* ★★

Week 1	May-29	What Films Do, and the Economics of Film (Distribution, Promotion, Exhibition) Lumière films (1895-1897) <i>The Aviator</i> (Martin Scorsese, 2004) <i>The Player</i> (Robert Altman, 1992)
	May-31	Mise-en-Scene <i>A Trip to the Moon</i> (Georges Méliès, 1902) <i>The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari</i> (Robert Weine, 1919) <i>City Lights</i> (Charlie Chaplin, 1931) <i>Summer Stock</i> (Charles Walters, 1950) <i>The Birds</i> (Alfred Hitchcock, 1963) <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> (Robert Mulligan, 1962)
Week 2	Jun-5	Cinematography <i>42nd Street</i> (Lloyd Bacon, 1933) <i>Touch of Evil</i> (Orson Welles, 1959) <i>The Graduate</i> (Mike Nichols, 1967) <i>Days of Heaven</i> (Terrence Malick, 1978) <i>The Truman Show</i> (Peter Weir, 1998)
	Jun-7	Editing <i>William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet</i> (Baz Luhrmann, 1996) <i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i> (Stanley Kubrick, 1968) <i>The Good, the Bad and the Ugly</i> (Sergio Leone, 1966) <i>Psycho</i> (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960) <i>North by Northwest</i> (Alfred Hitchcock, 1959) <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925) <i>The Untouchables</i> (Brian De Palma, 1987)
Week 3	Jun-12	Sound and Sound Design <i>Blazing Saddles</i> (Mel Brooks, 1974) <i>Singin' in the Rain</i> (Stanley Doren and Gene Kelly, 1952) <i>Hamlet</i> (Laurence Olivier, 1948) <i>Contact</i> (Robert Zemeckis, 1997) <i>Office Space</i> (Mike Judge, 1999) <i>Rebecca</i> (Alfred Hitchcock, 1940) <i>The Wizard of Oz</i> (Victor Fleming, 1939)
	Jun-14	Exam 1: Shot Analysis – <i>Casablanca</i>
Week 4	Jun-19	Narrative Cinema <i>Koyaanisqatsi</i> (Godfrey Reggio, 1983) <i>The Great Train Robbery</i> (Edwin S. Porter, 1903) <i>The Band Wagon</i> (Vincente Minnelli, 1953) <i>Sunset Boulevard</i> (Billy Wilder, 1950) <i>Groundhog Day</i> (Harold Ramis, 1993) <i>Lady in the Lake</i> (Robert Montgomery, 1947)
	Jun-21	Genre: Film Noir <i>Double Indemnity</i> (Billy Wilder, 1944) <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i> (Frank Capra, 1946) <i>Murder My Sweet</i> (Edward Dmytryk 1944) <i>LA Confidential</i> (Curtis Hanson, 1997) <i>Chinatown</i> (Roman Polanski, 1974)

Week 5	Jun-26	Documentary Film <i>Hoop Dreams</i> (Steve James, 1994) <i>Nanook of the North</i> (Robert Flaherty, 1922) <i>Titanic</i> (James Cameron, 1997) <i>Looking for Richard</i> (Al Pacino, 1996) <i>The Thin Blue Line</i> (Errol Morris, 1988) <i>A Mighty Wind</i> (Christopher Guest, 2003)
	Jun-28	Exam 2
Week 6	Jul-3	Postwar Movements and The New Hollywood <i>Un Chien Andalou</i> (Luis Buñuel, 1929) <i>The Bicycle Thief</i> (Vittorio De Sica, 1948) <i>Umberto D</i> (Vittorio De Sica, 1952) <i>Breathless</i> (Jean-Luc Godard, 1960)
	Jul-5	Film Focus: Audiences and Reception <i>Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story</i> (Rob Cohen, 1993) <i>A Woman of Paris</i> (Charles Chaplin, 1923) <i>Basic Instinct</i> (Paul Verhoeven, 1992) <i>The Rocky Horror Picture Show</i> (Jim Sharman, 1975)
Week 7	Jul-10	Film Focus: Race and Representation <i>Birth of a Nation</i> (D. W. Griffith, 1915) <i>The Pirate</i> (Vincente Minnelli, 1948) <i>Bamboozled</i> (Spike Lee, 2000) <i>Bringing Down the House</i> (Adam Shankman, 2003) <i>Chappelle's Show, Season 2</i> (Dave Chappelle, 2003-04).
	Jul-12	Film Focus: Gender and Sexuality <i>The Big Heat</i> (Fritz Lang, 1953) <i>Unforgiven</i> (Clint Eastwood, 1992) <i>Flashdance</i> (Adrian Lyne, 1983) <i>Alien</i> (Ridley Scott, 1979) <i>True Lies</i> (James Cameron, 1994) <i>The Terminator</i> (James Cameron, 1984)
Week 8	Jul-17	Exam 3

COURSE POLICIES

- **Arrive on time for lectures.** If you arrive *after* class has begun, please sit near the back.
- **No talking during lectures or screenings.** If students continually engage in conversation while the professor is talking, they will be asked to move. Unnecessary talking and discourteous behavior are not tolerated in the classroom.
- **No laptops.**
- **No beepers, PDAs, text-messaging, and/or cell phones.** If you are expecting an emergency call during class (e.g., birth, babysitter's call, death), notify Dr. Marshall *before* class begins.
- **Use email etiquette.** Your email messages say as much about you (and your intellect!) as your speech and your written assignments: address the person to whom you are speaking; type with proper punctuation and capitalization; always sign your name, even if it is just a quick reply; and finally, proofread before hitting *send*. All electronic correspondence between UTD students and faculty should be transmitted from UTD email accounts: To activate or maintain your free computer account and/or to set email forwarding options, go to <http://netid.utdallas.edu>.
- While FILM 2332 students are not graded on attendance, they should keep in mind that many in-class films--on which *exam questions will be based*--are not always readily available for out-of-class screening.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND 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).

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.

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.

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.