

English 1118 WA: Introduction to Film Studies

Course Location: ATAC 1007

Class Times: Tuesday and Thursday 4:00 – 5:30 p.m., Jan. 7 – Apr. 2, 2020

To our Student: Should you require information or documents from our office in another format, please let us know. We are happy to help you. Contact your instructor or our Department of English Administrative Assistant.

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Instructor Information

Taina Maki Chahal

Office: UC0036B

Email: tchahal@lakeheadu.ca

Telephone: 343-8082

Office Hours: Wed. 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and by appointment

Teaching Assistant Information

- Matt Beaucage
- Office: RB 3032; office hours TBA
- Email: mbeaucag@lakeheadu.ca
- Telephone: 343-8855

Course Description

This course is designed as an introduction to reading films from a variety of genres, periods, and directors. We will look at cinematic form and narrative as well as film theory and social, cultural, historical, and political contexts. We will build a critical vocabulary with which to think and write about film as text. Further, we will discuss film, both its production and viewing, as a cultural site of identity formation, individual and collective, where ideologies and hierarchies of gender, class, ethnicity, and sexuality are both produced and disrupted.

Course Objectives and/or Learner Outcomes

- read films critically and assess their ideological, cinematic, and aesthetic strategies as well as their historical, political, social, cultural, and economic contexts.
- identify and assess the creative choices of filmmakers and the narrative and cinematic techniques and strategies they use to construct particular effects.
- write about films using cinematic language, theoretical concepts, and grammatically clear prose to effectively communicate critically informed interpretations about film.
- examine film as a product and practice of meaning making and identity formation, personal and collective, where normative hierarchies are both produced and challenged.
- use library resources to research a topic and develop critical readings of cinema.
- develop essay writing by applying standards of MLA format and style.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

1. Richard Barsam and Dave Monahan. *Looking at Movies: An Introduction*. 6th ed. (2019)
2. online articles, clips, and websites (links on the D2L)
3. films accessed online through Paterson Library media streaming databases: Kanopy and Criterion Collection; Netflix; DVDs on reserve at the library; the web.

Course Website

- Desire2Learn; links to online content are posted on the D2L

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment	Due date	Value	Length
MLA assignment	Jan. 21	10%	2 pages
Scene or Short Sequence Analysis	Feb. 4	10%	500-700 words
Cinematography Analysis	Feb. 13	15%	800 words
Horror Film Analysis	March 10	10%	600-800 words
In-class pop quizzes, writing, group work and participation plus attendance log (AL#1 + AL#2))	Random dates AL #1 due Feb.13 AL#2 due April 3	total 15%	about 10 m. each
Research Essay <i>or</i> short film with pre- and post-production notes	April 3	20%	1500-1750 words (6-7 pp.) <i>or</i> 3-5 m. film + pre- and post-production notes
Final Exam	TBA	20%	3 hours

Details of Assignments

- See the D2L

Lateness Policy

- Unless you ask for (and receive) an extension, the MLA assignment, Scene or Short Sequence Analysis, Cinematography Analysis, and Horror Film Analysis will be penalized 2% per day up to five days (to a maximum of 10%). Penalties accrue from the due time.
- The Research Essay (or Short Film + notes) has a late policy of one day with 10% penalty: Sat. Apr. 4 at 11:59 p.m.
- If not submitted in class, late papers can be dropped off at my office UC0036B or if before 4:30 p.m. to the English Admin Assistant, English Department office RB3029. Should the English office be closed (it's closed daily between 12:30-1:30) or after 4:30 p.m., have your paper date stamped by the Security Office then place it on the metal office cabinet by my office door, UC0036B.

Assignment Policies

- Watch the assigned films and read the assigned readings before coming to class on the day/s they will be discussed.
- If you require accommodations to complete assignments, see me early in the

term. Please read **Accommodations** on the last page of this syllabus.

- If you unexpectedly experience mental health disabilities, you may request interim accommodations but must then provide official documentation to me from Student Accessibility Services, Student Health and Wellness, or a doctor or other health practitioner to show that you are proactive in getting help.
- No email submissions of any assignment.
- Assignments are due at the start of class on the due date. The Research Essay is dropped off at my office UC0036B or the English office by its due date.
- The Attendance Log is submitted in two sections: AL#1 covers the first 6 weeks and is due Feb. 13; AL#2 covers the weeks after Winter Break and is due April 3.
- As our class is a cell/smart phone free space (see Course Policies below), if you go on your phone, marks will be deducted from your Participation grade.
- If you opt to make a short film, you must notify me or Matt about your option by Feb. 27. The film must be submitted in an easy-to-access digital form.
- If you need an extension, ask me in person before the due date; do not email your request.
- The final exam must be written on the date scheduled; do not make travel plans during the exam period until the exam schedule is posted.
- Only upon special circumstances and consulting with me will I accept in-class writing assignments outside of the class in which they were assigned.
- Exceptions to the policies above are allowed only with a doctor's note, other official documentation, or through in-person consultation with me.
- Late submissions do not receive comments, only a grade.
- All writing must be MLA style and format. Failure to use MLA style and format will result in a diminished mark.
- Use a grammar tool to edit out typos, spelling mistakes, and grammar errors to avoid a diminished mark.
- Read and follow the guidelines on the Writing Standards page on the D2L.
- The maximum words that you can go over in word count is 50 words. If you are under the word count by more than 25 words, you will be penalized for not having met the assignment requirements

Course Schedule

The schedule below is a guide. The syllabus and schedule of readings may change due to class progress, interests, technical problems, or unforeseen reasons. Changes to the reading schedule, assignments, due dates, or course outline will be announced in class. Online readings are accessed on the D2L. Writing instruction sprinkled throughout the term. Some content is posted on the D2L. It is required reading or viewing.

Content warning: Some films include profanities and visual representations of violence, killing, death, sexual assault, suicide, and other disturbing content which some students may find offensive, traumatizing, or emotionally challenging.

DATE	READING & WATCHING	ASSIGNMENT
Jan. 7 & 9	INTRODUCTION TO FILM ANALYSIS Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 1 “Looking at Movies.” 1-29 • “What about Animation?” Ch. 3, pp. 105-109 • Tim Corrigan. Ch. 2 “Beginning to Think...” in <i>A Short Guide to Writing about Film</i>. 18-35. web Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kitbull</i>. Rosana Sullivan. 2019. 9 m. web 	
Jan. 14 & 16	FORM & GENRE Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 2 “The Significance of Film Form.” 31-61 • Ch. 3 “Types of Movies.” (omit Documentary, Experimental and Horror sections, 69-81 + 95-97) Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In This Corner of the World</i>. Sunao Katabuchi. 2016. 129 m. Netflix. 	
Jan. 21 & 23	MISE-EN-SCÈNE Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 5 “Mise-en-Scène” Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pan’s Labyrinth</i>. Guillermo del Toro. 2007. 112 m. Criterion Collection 	MLA Assignment, 2 pages. Due Jan. 21
Jan. 28 & 30	CINEMATOGRAPHY Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 6 “Cinematography” Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Badlands</i>. Terrence Malick. 1973. 95 m. YouTube and DVD on reserve at Paterson Library 	
Feb. 4 & 6	NARRATIVE Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 4 “Elements of Narrative” • Ch. 7 “Acting.” 235-279 Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Beyond the Lights</i>. Gina Prince-Bythewood. 2013. 116 m. Criterion Collection 	Scene or Short Sequence Analysis, 500-700 words. Due Feb. 4.
Feb. 11 & 13	SOUND Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 9 “Sound” 	Cinematography Analysis, 800 words. Due Feb. 13

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Sunlight Through Bullet Holes.” Tammy Oler. <i>Slate</i>. 2017. web Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Near Dark</i>. Kathryn Bigelow. 1987. 99 m. DVD on reserve at Paterson Library 	
WINTER BREAK	<i>Feb. 17 - 21</i>	
Feb. 25 & 27	EDITING Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 8 “Editing” Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Psycho</i>. Alfred Hitchcock. 1960. 109 m. DVD on reserve at Paterson Library 	
March 3 & 5	HORROR Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 3 section on “Horror” 95-97 • “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema.” Laura Mulvey. 1975. web Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Jaws</i>. Steven Spielberg. 1975. 124 m. DVD on reserve at Paterson Library • Excerpts from: <i>Nosferatu</i> 1922 F. W. Murnau and <i>Cabinet of Dr. Caligari</i> 1920 Robert Wiene. Kanopy 	<p>March 5: Matt Beaucage will lecture on <i>Jaws</i></p> <p>Note: Fri. March 6: Last day to drop without academic penalty</p>
March 10 & 12	FILM HISTORY Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 10 “Film History.” 357-407 Watch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Snowpiercer</i>. Bong Joon-ho. 2013. 126 m. Netflix. • <i>Bong Joon-ho: Everything is Extreme in Korean Cinema</i>. TIFF 2018. 3 m. YouTube Listen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q with Tom Powers</i>. Bong Joon-ho. CBC Radio podcast: Dec. 10, 2019. 16 m 	Horror Film Analysis 600-800 words; due March 10
March 17 & 19	INDIGENOUS FILM IN CANADA Read:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Indigenous Feature Film Production in Canada: A National and International Perspective</i>. imagineNATIVE Film & Media Arts Festival, 2013. pp.1 – 22; 48 – 56. web <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rhymes for Young Ghouls</i>. Jeff Barnaby. 2014. 86 m. Criterion Collection 	
March 24 & 26	<p>DOCUMENTARY & EXPERIMENTAL</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 2 section “Documentary Movies” and “Experimental Movies” 69-81; and Ch. 10 section “1924-1930: The Soviet Montage Movement” 373-top of 376. <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Etlinisigu’niet (Bleed Down)</i>. Jeff Barnaby. 2015. 5 m. NFB. • <i>Meshes of the Afternoon</i>. Maya Deren and Alexander Hammid. 1943. 14 m. Kanopy. • Excerpts from <i>Man with a Movie Camera</i>. Dziga Vertov. 1929. 68 m. Kanopy 	
March 31 & Apr. 2	<p>BORDER CROSSINGS</p> <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Four Faces of the Moon</i>. Amanda Strong. 2016. 13 m. web <p>Exam Review</p>	critical essay due 5 p.m.
Apr. 3		Research Essay or film + notes due 11:59 p.m.

Marking Standards

See the specific assignment instructions for marking evaluation. Further, all assignments will be marked in accordance with the English Department Marking Standards¹.

Plagiarism Rules

Plagiarism is an offence. Papers with plagiarized content are not marked; your name, plagiarized work, or other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Chair of the English Department and to the Dean, who is responsible for judging academic misconduct and imposing penalties. The minimum penalty for academic misconduct is a 0 on the assignment in question. It might also be subject to more severe academic penalties. Please read the Code of Student Behaviour².

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of someone else's words, ideas, and/or photos. Not acknowledging your debt to the ideas of a secondary source, failing to use quotation marks when you are quoting directly, buying essays, using another student's work, taking content from the internet (words, photos, charts) and passing it off as your own, or getting someone to write your assignment all constitute plagiarism. Resubmitting material you've submitted to another course is also academic dishonesty.

Course Policies

- No handheld digital technologies (mobile phones, cell phones, etc.) allowed on the desk, in your hands, or in your lap during class. Exceptions because of accommodations must be discussed with me early in the term. Handheld digital technologies must be turned off and put away inside your packsack, pocket, purse, etc. Any occasional exceptions (e.g., you are expecting a call from work or a babysitter) must be discussed with me before class begins; in this case, when your phone vibrates, please leave the room to answer it.
- Class schedule may change; changes will be noted in class.
- Detail on schedule, assignments, and evaluation will be discussed in class.
- Attendance is mandatory and part of the participation grade. Lateness, absence, and leaving early have to be explained on your Attendance Log.
- Laptops, tablets, or other digital technologies can be used only for note keeping. If you take notes with a laptop or other digital device, please sit at the back of the class behind other students or at the edges of the classroom to avoid distracting nearby students. Close your laptop when we are watching clips from movies. I reserve the right to ask you to close your laptop.
- Do not do homework or study for tests for other classes during our class time.
- Once class starts, chatting outside of assigned group work is not permitted otherwise be prepared to share what you are talking about with the whole class.

¹ <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/academics/departments/english/marking-standards>

² <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/academics/academic-support/skills-for-success/responsibilities>

- If you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you have missed. Ask your colleagues for missed lessons and check the D2L; I do not provide lecture notes for missed classes, nor supply missed content via email.
- Students are expected to come to class having watched the assigned films and having read the assigned readings and prepared to answer questions and engage in class discussions.
- For questions outside of class time, speak to me after class, visit me during my office hours, or arrange an appointment to see me.
- Usually, emails and text messages are answered within 48 hours. I do not read emails or messages on Friday night, Saturday or Sunday. Emails or messages sent on the weekend will be read on Monday.

University Policies

- Students in this course are expected to conform to the Code of Student Behaviour.
- **Accommodations:** Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS)³ and register as early as possible.
- Accommodations are in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code⁴. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the course.
- This course outline is available online through the English Department homepage⁵ and/or the Desire2Learn or My Courselink⁶ site for the course.

³ <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-services/accessibility>

⁴ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ontario-human-rights-code>

⁵ <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/academics/departments/english>

⁶ <https://mycourselink.lakeheadu.ca/d2l/home>