

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Film Studies (FILM) 301.18

French Cinema

Winter 2020

Jan. 14, 2018 - April 14, 2020

(excluding Feb. 18 & 20)

Instructor: Dr. Matthew Croombs
Office: SS 216
Office Phone: TBD
E-Mail: Matthew.croombs@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: D2L
Office Hours: Via email

Course Amendments

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our class will move online starting March 17th. Both the films and lectures will be uploaded to D2L under the “content” tab, and can be found under each week’s heading, along with the required and recommended readings. The films will be uploaded by Tuesday 3:30 pm and the lectures by Thursday 3:30 pm each week. As only the final essay remains in this course, the assignment breakdown and due dates will remain unchanged. The final essay will be submitted via a dropbox on D2L. I am available by email should students have any questions.

Course Description

This course will provide students with a broad overview of the history of French cinema from the origins of the film medium in 1895 up until the present day. In adopting aesthetic, economic, and social perspectives, we will explore the most influential French film movements, including: Impressionism, Surrealism, Poetic Realism, the New Wave, Political Modernism, and the New French Extremity. Students will become familiar with the complex intersections between tendencies in French film and related developments in literature, art, and theory. We will also consider how French cinema has provided a rich body of representation for thinking about the geopolitical issues that have defined the 20th and 21st centuries. Readings and weekly discussion will engage with topics ranging from the rise of fascism, to the feminist, Marxist, and anti-colonial movements of the 1960s and 1970s, to the contemporary “war on terror.”

Objectives of the Course

Following the completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate familiarity with the key aesthetic tendencies that have defined the history of French cinema.

2. Make meaningful connections between French film, art, and theory.
3. Draw connections between the films screened in class and their broader social contexts.
4. Perform critical analyses and write well-crafted arguments about visual culture.

Textbooks and Readings

All assigned readings for the course will be uploaded to D2L.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptops should be used for note-taking purposes only. Cell phones should be turned off during screenings and lectures to avoid deductions from your participation grade.

Viewing Requirements

Students are required to attend all screenings. If you miss one, it is your responsibility to view the film(s) at the Media Library (3rd floor, TFDL) as soon as you are able. Certain titles (though not all) may be available at local video stores, as well. These resources are not a substitute for the scheduled screenings, but may prove helpful for review purposes.

Assignments and Evaluation

10%	Participation	weekly
25%	First Response Paper	Feb. 11
25%	Film Review	March 5
40%	Final Assignment	April 14

Reading Response Paper: 25%

Students will submit a response essay on February 11th. This essay will be handed in at the beginning of class, and can address any of the readings covered up until that date. Students should provide a cogent and brief précis of their chosen reading followed by a critical analysis. Critical analyses might include situating the reading in relation to other arguments surveyed in the course, relating the reading to a film screened in class, or following a particular strand of the reading's argument in order to pursue it further. Ultimately, the response essay is an opportunity for students to work through their thoughts in written form, and to develop their writing skills before the major research paper.

Film Review (25%)

France has what is arguably the most robust tradition of film criticism in the history of world cinema. Following examples provided in class, students will write a three page review of one of the films on the course outline, due March 5th. They will use the course readings and lectures as their "press kit", and address elements of form, theme, and historical context in an accessible prose style that is suitable for a non-specialized readership.

Participation: 10%

Since this class involves both challenging films and ideas, attendance, class participation, and completion of the readings are absolutely necessary. Lecture content will usually move

beyond the week's assigned readings, so students will need to have read the required materials by the Thursday lecture in order for the class experience to remain meaningful.

Final Research Paper: 40%

An assignment sheet on the final paper will be given out February 27.

Length: 6-8 pages, double-spaced

Due Date: Tuesday April 14th at the beginning of class.

*Note: Each written assignment will be accompanied by a rubric and instruction sheet on D2L

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO

All assignments and exams must be completed or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

Submission of Assignments: Please hand in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Please include your name, ID number, and the instructor's name on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at marked final exams in SS 320. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/foip-hia>

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission). Including a version date in your file name may be useful.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Student Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

- Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should advise their instructors in

advance if they will be missing quizzes, presentations, in-class assignments, or group meetings.

- When accommodations are granted, they may take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test.
- For information on Deferrals of Final Exams and Term Work, see sections G.6 and G.7 of the *University Calendar* at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html> and <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

Final grades are reported as letter grades. In this course, letter grades will be used for all assignments. The following chart outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. In calculating final grades in this course, letter grades will be converted to the midpoint of the percentage range, as shown in the final column of the table below.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations* **
4.00	Outstanding performance	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent performance	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70	Approaching excellent performance	A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30	Exceeding good performance	B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good performance	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70	Approaching good performance	B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance	C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory performance	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	F	0 - 49.99%	0%

* If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades.

** These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but

also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the writing support services in the Student Success Centre (3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library). Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there.

For information on citation and documentation styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, IEEE, etc.), visit the Student Success Centre resource links at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support> or the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) Research and Citation Resources at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, please consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, 3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success?utm_source=ssc&utm_medium=redirect&utm_campaign=redirect

Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation

Course materials created by the instructor (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the same course section and term may be allowed under fair dealing. Check with the instructor if you have any questions about sharing materials with classmates.

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the

consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the *University of Calgary Calendar* at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Research Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants, including surveys, interviews, or observations as part of your university studies, you are responsible for obtaining research ethics approval and for following university research ethics guidelines. In some cases, your instructors may apply for course-based research ethics approval for certain assignments, and in those cases, they must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, please see <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/arts-researchers/resources-researchers-and-instructors/ethics>

Deferrals of Course Work and Requests for Reappraisal

For university regulations and procedures related to deferrals of exams and course work, requests for reappraisals, and other matters, please see the relevant sections in the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html>

Student Support Services and Resources

Please visit <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for information about student support services and resources, including Wellness and Mental Health Resources, Student Success programs and services, the Student Ombuds Office, the Student Union, and Safewalk.

For resources on D2L, visit <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students>. IT support is available at itsupport@ucalgary.ca or by calling 403-220.5555.

* * *

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

January 14

Introduction

Screening:

Girlhood (France, Sciamma, 2014)
A selection of early shorts, including:
Leaving the Factory Louis Lumière (France, Lumière, 1895)
A Trip to the Moon (France, Méliès, 1902)

January 21

The Avant-Garde Cinemas of the 1920s

- Screening: *Ballet mécanique* (France, Léger, 1924)
Entr'acte (France, Claire, 1924)
La glace à trois faces (France, Epstein, 1927)
Un Chien Andalou (France, Buñuel, 1929)
- Reading: Malcolm Turvey, *The filming of modern life: European avant-garde film of the 1920s*, excerpts.
- Recommended: Remi Fournier Lanzoni, "Avant-Garde Cinema, French Impressionism, and Surrealism: Louis Delluc, Abel Gance, Marcel L'Herbier, Luis Buñuel, and René Clair," in *French Cinema: From its Beginning to the Present*, pp. 45-52.

January 28 Towards a Social Cinema: Vigo and Renoir

- Screening: *The Rules of the Game* (France, Renoir, 1939)
- Reading: Christopher Faulkner, "*The Rules of the Game*," in *Film Analysis: A Norton Reader*, pp. 280-297.
- André Bazin, "The Evolution of the Language of Cinema," in *What is Cinema? Volume 1*, pp. 23-40.
- Recommended: Alan Williams, "Politics, Poetics, and the Cinema," in *Republic of Images: A History of French Filmmaking*, pp. 213-242.

February 4 Vichy and Liberation

- Screening: *Le Corbeau* (France, Henri-Georges Clouzot, 1943)
 Excerpts of: *Orphée* (France, Cocteau, 1950)
- Reading: Judith Mayne, "Henri Georges Clouzot's *Le corbeau* and the crimes of women," pp. 319-341.

February 11 *FIRST RESPONSE PAPER DUE FEB 6

The French New Wave

- Screening: *Les quatre cents coups* (France, Truffaut, 1959)
- Reading: Richard Neupert, "Cultural Contexts: Where did the Wave begin?" in *A History of the French New Wave Cinema*, pp. 3-44.

Recommended: Anne Gillain, "The script for delinquency: François Truffaut's *Les 400 coups* (1959)," in *French Film: Texts and Contexts*, pp. 142-157.

February 18 **READING WEEK - NO CLASSES HELD**

February 25 **The Left Bank, Alain Resnais, and the Ghosts of Memory**

Screening: *Les statues meurent aussi* (France/Japan, Resnais and Marker, 1959)
Nuit et brouillard (France, Resnais, 1956)
La jetée (France, Marker, 1962)

Reading: Naomi Greene, "Alain Resnais: The Ghosts of Memory," in *Landscapes of Loss: The National Past in Postwar French Cinema*, pp. 31-63.

Recommended: Richard Neupert, "On the New Wave's Left Bank: Alain Resnais and Agnès Varda," in *A History of the French New Wave Cinema*, pp. 299-353.

Matthew Croombs, "La Jetée in Historical Time: Torture, Visuality, Displacement," *Cinema Journal*, 56.2 (2017): pp. 25-45.

March 3 ***SECOND RESPONSE PAPER DUE MARCH 5**

Feminism and the Colonization of Everyday Life

Screening: *Cléo de 5 à 7* (France, Varda, 1962)
La noire de ... (Senegal/France, Sembene, 1966)

Reading: Sandy-Flitterman Lewis, "From *Désse* to *Idée*: *Cleo From 5 to 7*," *To Desire Differently: Feminism and French Cinema*, pp. 268-274.

Rachel Langford, "Black and White in Black and White Identity and Cinematography in Ousmane Sembène's *La Noire de.../Black Girl* (1966)," in *Studies in French Cinema* 1.1 (2001): pp. 13-21.

March 10 **Godard, May '68 and Counter-Cinema**

Screening: *2 ou 3 choses que je sais d'elle* (France, Godard, 1967)
 Excerpts: *Weekend* (France/Italy, Godard, 1967)

- Screening: *Caché* (France, Haneke, 2005)
- Reading: Ipek Celik, “‘I wanted you to be present’: Guilt and the History of Violence in Michael Haneke's *Caché*,” *Cinema Journal*, 50, no. 1, pp. 59-80.
- Recommended: Martine Beugnet, “Blind Spot,” *Screen*, 48, no. 2, pp. 227-231.
- Elizabeth Ezra and Jane Sillars, “Introduction,” *Screen*, 48, no. 2, pp. 211-213.
- April 14** ***FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE**
- Screening: Class vote!