

**University of Calgary**

**Department of Communication, Media and Film**

**Film Studies (FILM) 305 L01/B01  
Topic in Genre: Global Melodrama**

**Spring 2022**

**May 4-June 16  
(excluding May 23)**

**Lectures:** In-person, SS203, Monday and Wednesday, 10:00am-11:50am  
**Screenings:** Monday and Wednesday, 12:30pm-3:15pm\*

\*Please note that some screenings will be in person, and some will be remote – please see the schedule below for details.

**Instructor:** Dr. Leah Vonderheide  
**Email:** leah.vonderheide@ucalgary.ca  
**Webpage:** D2L (access via MyUofC portal)  
**Office Hours:** Tuesday, 1:00pm-3:00pm, via Zoom

**Course Description**

This course explores melodrama – a filmic mode of “excess emotion” or a group of films sometimes referred to as “women’s weepies” – across national cultures and in a variety of genres. Students will examine key examples of melodrama from silent cinema and Hollywood’s golden age, as well as iterations from around the globe and transformations through colonial circuits and globalization. Students will also be asked to consider how melodrama mixes with other modes (romance, comedy, and realism), expresses itself across mediums (film, television, and music videos), and impacts diverse audiences (related to categories of class, race, gender, and sexuality).

**Additional Information**

The weekly schedule of topics, screenings, readings can be found at the end of this outline and on D2L. Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline. Attendance at the weekly screening (when in person) and lecture is mandatory and will be noted at every screening and lecture. In order to continue to protect the most vulnerable members of our community, students are required to wear masks at in-person screenings and lectures.

Also, because the class will represent a diversity of individual beliefs, backgrounds, and experiences, every member of this class must show respect for every other member of this class. Our course materials and classroom discussions will often focus on mature, difficult, and potentially challenging topics. Some of us will have emotional responses to these topics; some of us will have emotional responses to our peers’ understanding of

these topics; all of us should feel responsible for creating a space that is both intellectually rigorous and respectful while being mindful of the ways that our identities position us in the classroom. As your instructor, I value your voice and perspective and am firmly committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion in this course and in all areas of campus life.

### **Objectives of the Course**

- Students recognize genre as an enduring categorization system used by producers, distributors, consumers, critics, and scholars to examine and classify works of film.
- Students develop the analytic, expressive, and imaginative abilities needed to understand the historical as well as formal elements of melodrama as a genre.
- Students integrate their critiques and evaluations beyond the context of the film genre and apply their ideas to greater national, international, and global socio-cultural and political issues.
- Students learn to think, speak, and write critically, clearly, and creatively regarding film analysis while engaging both genre and global film studies.

### **Textbooks and Readings**

Required readings will be available on D2L. See the schedule for details.

### **Learning Technologies and Requirements**

In order to complete courses, University of Calgary students are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security and malware updates, with current antivirus software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection, and a current and updated web browser;
- A webcam (built-in or external), and a microphone and speaker (built-in or external) or headset with microphone (for online courses only).

If you need access to other software programs to complete assignments, your instructor will provide relevant information and links.

If you have technical difficulties, contact IT support services. See

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/student-campus-services-information-technologies-it.html>

### **Policy on the Use of Electronic Communication Devices**

Laptops, tablets, and phones must be turned off and put away during in-person screenings. If you would like to take notes during a screening, you will need to write notes by hand.

It is also my preference that you write notes by hand during lectures. Research shows that most of us process information more deeply and retain it more fully and easily when we write notes by hand. For this reason, I also suggest that you bring a hard copy of the weekly reading to the lecture for reference. That said, if you find it necessary to use a screen (laptop/tablet) in class, you may – for notetaking or to reference an assigned reading. But please note that inappropriate laptop/tablet use will not be tolerated – and phones should be turned off and put away for the duration of all lectures.

Please familiarize yourself with the University’s policy on the recording of lectures, which is outlined at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html>, and carefully review the section on Instructor Copyright at the end of this outline.

### Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed Components	Due
15%	<b>Participation</b> This includes not only a student’s presence at screenings and lectures, but also the demonstration of the ability to contribute to discussion in a thoughtful and meaningful manner.	Weekly
25%	<b>Timed Online Quiz</b> 40 minutes (but students will be allowed 60 minutes in case of technical difficulties). The quiz will be available for 24 hours, beginning at 9am on June 1. The quiz will cover lectures, readings, and screenings; the format will include a mix of multiple-choice and true/false questions.	June 1
30%	<b>Discussion Board Posts</b> Students will be asked to respond to a discussion board prompt engaging the week’s screening and reading ahead of one lecture each week; response posts should be 100-150 words in length (see schedule below).	Weekly
30%	<b>Group Podcast Assignment</b> In groups of 5 or 6, students will create a 20-25-minute video/podcast discussing topics and films from the syllabus (prompt will be provided by May 11).	June 16

**Registrar-scheduled Final Examination:** No

Note: You must complete all assignments, or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

### Submission of Assignments

Please submit discussion board posts in the discussions section on D2L (weekly topics will be created). Please submit the podcast assignment by uploading it to the designated D2L dropbox. Private information related to individual students is treated with the utmost regard by University of Calgary faculty. Student assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty, and personal information is collected

in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. Please note that instructors may use audio or video recording for lesson capture, assessment of student learning, and self-assessment of teaching practices.

### **Policy for Late Assignments**

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of 5% or a partial letter 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); SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/). Students who require an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. For the full policy on Student Accommodations, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-accommodation-policy>

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should provide supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require a medical note. For information on the use of a statutory declaration, see the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>

### **Expectations for Writing**

Department policy directs that all written assignments and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses 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 and proper documentation of research sources. For further information, please refer to the *University of Calgary Calendar* section on writing across the curriculum: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html>

### **Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale**

The following table outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. Final grades are reported as letter grades. For components graded using percentages or numerical scores, those values will be used directly in calculating the final course grade, while for components graded using letter grades, the letter grades will be converted to the midpoint values listed in the final column of the table below in calculating the final course grade.

In this course, percentage grades or numerical scores will be used for all assessments.

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%

\* Column 4: If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades. Column 5: These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

### 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](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html)

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support>

### **Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation**

Course materials created by the instructor (including lectures, 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.

To ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes & electronic versions of textbooks), all students are required to read the *University of Calgary Policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright* at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy> and the requirements of the *Copyright Act* (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>). Students who use material protected by copy-right 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 deferral of term work, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

For information about deferrals of final examinations, see

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>

For information about requesting a reappraisal of course work or of a final grade, see

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

### **Student Support Services and Resources**

Please see <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, Zoom, Yuja, etc., see <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students>. (Find the topic menu under the icon to the left of the ELEARN banner.)

### **Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings**

#### **Wednesday, May 4**

In-Person Lecture Introduction to the course

In-Person Screening *Lemonade* (Beyoncé Knowles-Carter, US, 2016, 65 min)

To prepare for lecture on Monday, May 9:

Watch (remotely) *Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans* (F. W. Murnau, US, 1927, 94 min)

Respond to Discussion Board Post 1

#### **Monday, May 9**

In-Person Lecture Discuss *Lemonade* and *Sunrise*

In-Person Screening *Stella Dallas* (King Vidor, US, 1937, 106 min)

To prepare for lecture on Wednesday, May 11:

Read Linda Williams's "Body Genres: Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess" (1991)

#### **Wednesday, May 11**

In-Person Lecture Discuss *Stella Dallas* and "Body Genres"

To prepare for lecture on Monday, May 16:

Watch (remotely) *Osaka Elegy* (Kenji Mizoguchi, 1936, 71 min)

Read Mori Toshie's "All for Money: Mizoguchi Kenji's *Osaka Elegy* (1936)"

Respond to Discussion Board Post 2

#### **Monday, May 16**

In-Person Lecture Discuss *Osaka Elegy* and "All for Money"

In-Person Screening *Brief Encounter* (David Lean, UK, 1945, 86 min)

To prepare for lecture on Wednesday, May 18:

Read Alison McKee's "Introduction: To Speak of Love" from *The Woman's Film of the 1940s*

**Wednesday, May 18**

In-Person Lecture                      Discuss *Brief Encounter* and “To Speak of Love”

**Monday, May 23 – Victoria Day – No Class**

To prepare for lecture on Wednesday, May 25:

Watch (remotely) *Beyond Oblivion* (Hugo del Carril, Argentina, 1956, 93 min)

Read (TBD)

Respond to Discussion Board Post 3

**Wednesday, May 25**

In-Person Lecture                      Discuss *Beyond Oblivion*

In-Person Screening                      *The Cloud-Capped Star* (Ritwik Ghatak, India, 1960, 126 min)

To Prepare for lecture on Monday, May 30:

Read Ritwik Ghatak’s “Human Society, Our Tradition, Filmmaking, and My Efforts”

Respond to Discussion Board Post 4

**Monday, May 30**

In-Person Lecture                      Discuss *The Cloud-Capped Star* and “Human Society”

In-Person Screening                      *All That Heaven Allows* (Douglas Sirk, US, 1955, 89 min)

**Wednesday, June 1**

Timed Online quiz (no in-person lecture or screening)

**Monday, June 6**

No in-person lecture or screening

To Prepare for lecture on Wednesday, June 8:

Watch (remotely) *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul* (Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Germany, 1974, 93 min)

Respond to Discussion Board Post 5

**Wednesday, June 8**

In-Person Lecture                      Discuss Sirk and Fassbinder

To Prepare for lecture on Monday, June 13:

Watch (remotely) *Far from Heaven* (Todd Haynes, US, 2002, 107 min)

Read Salomé Aguilera Skvirsky’s “The Price of Heaven: Remaking Politics in *All that Heaven Allows*, *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul*, and *Far from Heaven*”

**Monday, June 13**

In-Person Lecture                      Discuss *Far from Heaven* and “The Price of Heaven”

In-Person Screening                      *All About My Mother* (Pedro Almodóvar, Spain, 1999, 101 min)

**Wednesday, June 15**

In-Person Lecture

Discuss *All About My Mother*

Podcast assignment due: Thursday, June 16 at 5pm (MT)