

University of Calgary

Department of Communication, Media and Film

**Film Studies (FILM) 403 L01/B01
Topic in the Director's Cinema: Agnès Varda**

Fall 2021

**September 7 to December 9
(excluding Sept. 30 and Nov. 7-13)**

Lectures: In-person, SS203, Thursday, 10:30am-12:20pm

Screenings: Select screenings will be in-person, SS203, Tuesday, 9:30am-12:15pm
(see schedule below; in-person screenings are **highlighted**)

Students will be responsible for watching other assigned films ahead of lectures on their own; students will be granted access via D2L

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR IN-PERSON COURSE DELIVERY

Note: This course will be delivered in-person. If you are unable to participate in-class owing to time differences or geographical location, please arrange to take this course in a future term. Masks are mandatory in the classroom and must be worn at all times during class (i.e., covering mouth and nose). Failure to comply with this policy will result in dismissal from the classroom and possible disciplinary action under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Instructor: Dr. Leah Vonderheide
Email: leah.vonderheide@ucalgary.ca
Webpage: D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours: Thursday, 2:00pm-4:00pm, via Zoom

Course Description

This course considers the broad scope of Agnès Varda's film production, including major works such as *La Pointe Court*, *Cleo from 5 to 7*, *Vagabond*, *The Gleaners and I*, and *Faces, Places*, as well as many of her often-overlooked shorts, such as *L'Opéra-Mouffe*, *Salut les Cubains*, *Oncle Yanco*, and *Black Panthers*. Active participation is essential for success in this course. In order to fully participate in class discussions, screening and reading assignments should be completed by the day listed on the schedule below.

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 and lecture is mandatory and will be noted at every screening and lecture. In accordance with university policy and to continue to protect the most vulnerable members of our

community, students are required to wear masks at the 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 the major debates surrounding an auteur-approach to film studies.
- Students develop a sense of the formal, thematic, ideological, and economic/industrial aspects of the films of Agnès Varda.
- Students integrate their critiques and evaluations beyond the context of the auteur and apply their ideas to a greater socio-cultural and political context.
- Students learn to think, speak, and write critically and clearly regarding film analysis by engaging the cinema of Agnès Varda, auteur theory, and contemporary screen culture through original research.

Textbooks and Readings

Kelley Conway, *Agnès Varda*, Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2015.

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

Learning Technologies and Requirements

In order to complete online (or blended) 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.

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 (either the textbook or a printed copy of a reading posted to D2L) to the lecture for reference. That said, if you find it necessary to use a screen (laptop/tablet) in class, please don't hesitate to talk with me. 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%	Participation 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
20%	Discussion Board Posts Students will be asked to respond to a discussion board prompt engaging the week's screening and reading ahead of each lecture.	Weekly
20%	Group Discussion Panel In groups of 5 (or 6), students will discuss one of our assigned films in a 15-20-minute conversation moderated by the instructor during a lecture (prompt will be provided by September 23).	Each group will be assigned a specific date, starting on October 7
15%	Research Paper Proposal Ahead of writing their research paper, students will be asked to submit a proposal, including an abstract and bibliography (prompt will be provided by October 21)	November 4
30%	Research Paper Students will be asked to write a 5-7-page research paper on a topic of their choosing related to the cinema of Agnès Varda (prompt to be provided by October 21).	December 9

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 research paper proposal and research paper by uploading them to the designated D2L dropbox. Include your name and ID number on the file itself. Be sure to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to submit the proper version.

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/. 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

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

Readings followed by (KC) can be found in the course textbook, *Agnès Varda* by Kelley Conway. All other readings can be found on D2L.

Week One: Agnès Forever

Thursday, September 9

Screening:

Varda par Agnès (2019, 119min)

Introduction to the Course

Week Two: Planning and Precision

Thursday, September 16

Screening:

La Pointe Courte (1955, 86min)

L'Opéra-Mouffe (1958, 16min)

Reading:

Planning and Precision: *La Pointe Courte* (KC);

L'Opéra-Mouffe (KC)

Week Three: Cultivating the New Wave Spectator

Tuesday, September 21

In-person screening:

Cleo from 5 to 7 (1962, 89min)

Thursday, September 23

Reading:

Cultivating the New Wave Spectator: *Cleo from 5 to 7* (KC)

Week Four: No Class Meeting

Thursday, September 30

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (No screening or lecture)

Week Five: Filmic and Feminist Strategies

Thursday, October 7

Screening:

Le Bonheur (1965, 80min)

Reading:

Rebecca DeRoo, "Filmic and Feminist Strategies: Questioning Ideals of Happiness in *Le Bonheur*" from *Agnès Varda between Film, Photography, and Art* (2017)

Week Six: The Limits of Documentary

Tuesday, October 12

In-person screening:

Salut les cubains (1964, 29min)

Oncle Yanco (1967, 19min)

Black Panthers (1968, 31min)

Thursday, October 14

Additional screening:

Daguerréotypes (1975, 80min)

Reading:

Rebecca DeRoo, "The Limits of Documentary: Identity and Urban Transformation in *Daguerréotypes*" from *Agnès Varda between Film, Photography, and Art* (2017)

Week Seven: Reconsidering Contradictions

Thursday, October 21

Screening:

L'Une chante, l'autre pas (1977, 116min)

Reading:

Rebecca DeRoo, "Reconsidering Contradictions: Feminist Politics and the Musical Genre in *L'une chante, l'autre pas*" from *Agnès Varda between Film, Photography, and Art* (2017)

Week Eight: Improvisation and Formal Patterning

Tuesday, October 26

In-person screening:

Sans toit ni loi/ Vagabond (1988, 105min)

Thursday, October 28

Reading:

Improvisation and Formal Patterning: *Vagabond* (KC)

Week Nine: Time, Scale and Cinephilia in the Cinematic Elegy

Thursday, November 4

Screening:

Jacquot de Nantes (1991, 118min)

Reading:

Kristi McKim, "Time, scale and cinephilia in the cinematic elegy: Agnès Varda's *Jacquot de Nantes*" (2008)

Reading Days: Sunday-Saturday, November 7-13

Week Ten: Social Criticism and Self-Portrait

Thursday, November 18

Screening:

The Gleaners and I (2000, 82min)

Reading: Social Criticism and the Self-Portrait: *The Gleaners and I* (KC)

Week Eleven: Looking Backward, Moving Forward

Thursday, November 25

Screening: *The Beaches of Agnès* (2008, 110min)

Reading: Looking Backward, Moving Forward: *The Beaches of Agnès* (KC)

Week Twelve: Faces Places

Thursday, December 2

Screening: *Visages Villages* (2017, 89min)
Course Wrap-up

Week Thirteen: No Class Meeting

No screening or lecture; additional office hours available for students by appointment

Final Research Paper due on Thursday, December 9 by 5pm (MT)