University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Film Studies FILM 409.06 L01
Special topics in film studies:
FILM IN THE DIGITAL AGE
FALL 2018

Thursday, Sept. 06 – Thursday, Dec. 06 (excluding Nov. 13th and Nov. 15th)

Discussion, Th 3:30 – 5:20
Lab (film screening), Tu 3:30 – 6:15

Instructor:	Ryan Pierson
Office:	SS 214
Office Phone:	220-6720
E-Mail:	ryan.pierson@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L
Office Hours:	T/Th, 14:00 – 15:00

Course Description
This course explores issues related to the ongoing digitization of film. Since the 1970s, movies have become increasingly dependent on computers in their production, distribution, and exhibition. This course engages in some of the questions that arise when a celluloid-based art becomes based in information. In particular, the course familiarizes students with issues of medium-specificity, the changing poetics of digitally-driven images, and digital compositing in a historical context.

Objectives of the Course
This course will focus on developing three major skills. First, observing and analyzing formal elements of film; second, reading high-level historical and theoretical film scholarship; third, writing and speaking about film, developing an original argument. These skills will be brought together in a final PechaKucha-style presentation done by each student.

Textbooks and Readings
Post-Cinematic Affect, by Steven Shaviro (Zero Books, 2010), abbreviated as PCA
Plastic Reality, by Julie Turnock (Columbia, 2014), abbreviated as PR
        Other readings will be posted on D2L.

Internet and electronic communication device information
Laptops and tablets may be used only for taking notes and consulting the readings for discussion; they may not be out during screenings. Other screen devices (cell phones, etc.) may not be used at any time. Violations will affect your participation grade.

Assignments and Evaluation

Participation (ongoing):   *15%*
Each student is expected to make a substantial contribution to every week's discussion. You may do this in one of two ways:

1) Speak in class, at least one substantial statement that extends, synthesizes, or argues with a point made by the week's reading or film

2) Post to the week's discussion board, some entry (150-250 words) that does the same. During each week's discussion, we will read each post aloud and offer additional remarks, rebuttals, etc., just as if someone had raised their hand and made a comment in class.

Participation grades for each discussion day are given as pass/fail (10/10 or 0/10). If you miss a day of discussion, you have exactly five calendar days to make a discussion board post for full credit.

Worksheets (ongoing):   *15%*
On D2L, you will find a worksheet that asks you to fill in major arguments and concepts from the week's reading. Please fill out a worksheet for **one** required reading each week, and submit it on paper at the beginning of each discussion day. Worksheets will be graded for completeness, clarity, and demonstrated knowledge of the reading, on the following scale:

A: complete, with relatively lucid demonstration of concepts and arguments
C: complete, with vague or confused demonstration of concepts and arguments
D: incomplete, up to half the answers missing
F: less than half the worksheet complete

If you are absent, submit your worksheet by email by the hour class begins for full credit.

Bonus reading worksheet (ongoing):   *10%*
Each student will sign up for one week where they will fill out a worksheet for one **bonus** reading for the week. These worksheets will be posted on D2L for possible future reference by the class. On the day you sign up for a bonus worksheet, you will not be responsible for a worksheet from a required reading. In other words, you'll never have to do more than one worksheet in a week.

Group presentations/discussions (ongoing):   *15%*
Each week, a small group will do a presentation on the week's reading in a **5x5x20+clip** format (similar to a PechaKucha presentation). This format will be a timed Powerpoint or Keynote presentation, made up of five sections of five slides apiece, with each slide lasting exactly 20 seconds. You may also add one video clip of up to 60 seconds at any point in the presentation. Details on the format will be posted on D2L.

Proposal for final (due in class 10/16):   *15%*
A short document proposing a topic and approach for your final presentation. The proposal should include a brief description of your major research questions or arguments, and roughly how you plan on executing them. It should also include a formatted bibliography. If you like, you may include a rough outline of the intended presentation.

Final presentation + statement (in class week of 12/4):   *30%*
A presentation in roughly 5x5x20+clip style of an original argument on some topic from the course. It should present as a succinct précis of a 7-10 page seminar paper. Along with the

presentation, you will submit an accompanying statement (3-4 pages) that further details aspects of your argument.

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

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO

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 and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at final exams in SS 320 after classes have ended. 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/secretariat/privacy

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.
For courses in which assignments are submitted electronically, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the correct copy of the assignment is submitted. (Including the version date or version number in your file name may help you avoid submitting the wrong version of your written assignments.)

Policy for Late Assignments
For late assignments not already specified, ten points will be subtracted from the assignment for each 24-hour period.

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_0.pdf .

Please note:
1. Students seeking accommodations for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) should contact their instructors directly. Whenever possible, students should advise their instructors in advance if they will be missing quizzes, presentations, in-class assignments, or group meetings.
2. 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.
3. For information on Deferrals of Final Exams and Term Work, see sections G.6 and G.7 of

the *University Calenda*r at
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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. For details see http://comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow. 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 Centre. Visit the website for more details: http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support

Grading & Grade Scale of the Department of Communication, Media and Film
Final grades are reported as letter grades, and assignments, exams, and other work in this course will be graded using letter grades, except as noted in the description of assignments above.

The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Department. If letter grades are used for an assignment or other course component, the percentage equivalent in the final column will be used for calculating the final grade:

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%

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.

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. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436 . If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor TFDL, http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support).

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 (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/resources/ethics

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 artsads@ucalgary.ca
CAMPUS SECURITY • **Calgary Police Service** • **Emergency Text Messaging** • **Emergency Evacuation & Assembly** • **Safewalk Program**	http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ **403-220-5333** **403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911** http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort (**220-5333).** For more information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/
DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support • **IT help line**	http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students 403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca
STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE	http://ucalgary.ca/ssc

• **Writing Support Services** • **Student Services Mobile App**	http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents
STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS • **Faculty of Arts Reps** • **Student Ombudsman**	 https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/ http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds
SU WELLNESS CENTRE • **Counselling Services** • **Health Services** • **Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE** • **Online resources and tips**	**403-210-9355** (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health **403-266-HELP (4357)** http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.

Schedule:

Week 1 (Sept 6): Introductions – what is digital cinema?
Primary reading:
      Lev Manovich, "What Is Digital Cinema?"
Screening:
      The Canyons (Paul Schrader, 2013)
*Note: because this is a shortened week, we will watch the film on discussion day. Please submit a participation post to the discussion board by the following Tuesday.

I. Ontology debates

Week 2 (Sept 11/13): The analog image
Primary reading:
      D.N. Rodowick, "Automatism and Photography," "Succession and the Film
      Strip," "Ways of Worldmaking"
Bonus reading:
      Andre Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image"
      Stanley Cavell, "Sights and Sounds"
Screening:
      News from Home (Chantal Akerman, 1975)

Week 3 (Sept 18/20): The digital image and illusion
Primary reading:

Tom Gunning, "What's the Point of an Index? Or, Faking Photographs"
Bonus reading:
    Brian Jacobson, "*Ex Machina* in the Garden"
Screening:
    Ex Machina (Alex Garland, 2014)

Week 4 (Sept 25/27): The digital image and time
Primary reading:
    D.N. Rodowick, "Lost in Translation" and "The Digital Event"
Bonus reading:
    Alexander Galloway, "Origins of the First-Person Shooter"
    Babette Mangolte, "Afterward: A Matter of Time…"
Screening:
    Hardcore Henry (Ilya Naishuller, 2015) or *Mother!* (Darren Aronofsky, 2017)

II. Affective life in the digital age

Week 5 (Oct 2/4): Networked sociality
Primary reading:
    PCA, Introduction
    Steven Shaviro, *Connected* (selections)
Screening:
    Ingrid Goes West (Matt Spicer, 2017)

Week 6 (Oct 9/11): Networked causality
Primary reading:
    Patrick Jagoda, "Emergent Aesthetics: Network Films"
Bonus reading:
    Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism*, chapters 1 and 2
Screening:
    The Big Short (Adam McKay, 2015)

Week 7 (Oct 16/18): Control societies
Primary reading:
    PCA, chapter 1, "*Corporate Cannibal*"
Bonus reading:
    Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on Societies of Control"
Screening:
    Corporate Cannibal (Nick Hooker, 2008)
    Black Panther (Ryan Coogler, 2018)
PROPOSALS DUE 10/16

Week 8 (Oct 23/25): Games
Primary reading:
    PCA, chapter 5, "*Gamer*"
Bonus reading:
    Patrick Jagoda, "Games and Other Forms of Play"
Screening:
    Gamer (Neveldine/Taylor, 2009)

Week 9 (Oct 30/Nov 1): Neoliberalism and the "good life"
Primary reading:
    Lauren Berlant, "Nearly Utopian, Nearly Normal"
Bonus reading:
    Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, "Postmodernization, or the Informatization of Production"
    Wendy Brown, "Undoing Democracy"
Screening:
    Rosetta (Jean-Pierre Dardenne and Luc Dardenne, 1999)

III. A History of digital image control

Week 10 (Nov 6/8): Optical effects
Primary reading:
    PR, chapter 1, "Optical Animation"
Bonus reading:
    Gene Youngblood, "Toward Cosmic Consciousness" and "*2001*: The New Nostalgia"
Screening:
    2001: A Space Odyssey (Stanley Kubrick, 1968)

Week 10 (Nov 13/15): Fall break, no classes

Week 11 (Nov 20/22): Blockbuster effects
Primary reading:
    PR, chapter 3, "The Expanded Blockbuster"
Bonus reading:
    Ariel Rogers, "Awe and Aggression: The Experience of Erasure in *The Phantom Menace* and *The Celebration*"
Screening: *The Phantom Menace* (George Lucas, 1999)

Week 12 (Nov 27/29): Contemporary effects
Primary reading:
    Julie Turnock, "The ILM Version"
Bonus reading:
    Steven Shaviro, "*Melancholia*, or the Romantic Anti-Sublime"
    Lars von Trier and Thomas Vinterberg, "The Vow of Chastity"
Screening: *Melancholia* (Lars von Trier, 2011)

Week 12 (Dec 4/6): Final Presentations + Statements