

**ARTH 1112 Introduction to Film
Fall 2015**

SYLLABUS

Professor Sandra Cheng

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Office Hours: Mon 10:00-11:00 am,
Tu/Th 9:00 am-10:00 am
and by appointment

Class Time/Location: **THIS IS A HYBRID COURSE: ONLINE & Thursday 11:30 am – 12:45 pm, Atrium 631** (3 credits)

Course Description: An introduction to the history of film from its beginnings in the late nineteenth century to the present. Through illustrated lectures, selected screenings, and discussion, students will develop a historical appreciation of film genres including narrative, documentary, and experimental, and of the legacy of major filmmakers. Changing styles and techniques are outlined chronologically to examine the relationship between film and the visual arts.

Required Textbook: David Bordwell and Kirstin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction*, 10th Edition, McGraw-Hill, 2013 (it is OK to use earlier editions, copies are on reserve in the library) and access to Netflix or Hulu is Recommended

Learning Outcomes:

Students will,

- develop a historical appreciation of film genres including narrative, documentary, and experimental, and of the legacy of important filmmakers,
- learn and use critical tools and vocabulary to analyze cinematic form and content,
- acquire an understanding of different forms, traditions, and styles of filmmaking in different national and international contexts

General Education Learning Outcomes:

- demonstrate an ability to think critically, to distinguish between fact and opinion, in the analysis of different kinds of film,
- demonstrate the ability to evaluate critical and historical materials for the study of film in order to construct a coherent and substantiated argument, written in clear and correct prose,
- develop communication skills and demonstrate the ability to reflect critically on the learning process

Class Expectations: *Look and think about what you're looking at!*

Students are responsible for the following: films, cinematic techniques, names, and vocabulary on the handouts, information presented in lecture and assigned readings, including the general historical context for all stylistic periods.

Class participation will be considered in determining final grades.

*Syllabus is subject to change.

Screenings: Since this course is a hybrid course, you will watch much of the films (excerpts and entire films) on your own time. In addition, we will watch numerous excerpts in class. Due to the time restrictions of our 75-minute meetings, we will begin class promptly and at times, we will begin immediately with a film. Therefore, please arrive to class on time.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Some films that we screen for class contain elements that some viewers might find personally objectionable due to language, references to sex or violence, or political subject matter. Some films are rated R. If you think that you will have difficulties studying such films, it would be better to drop the course.

Website: You must access the class website by logging into [CityTech's OpenLab](http://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu) via <http://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu> /. Instructions on how to signup are on the OpenLab homepage. To access the OpenLab, you will need to register with your CityTech email account (if you have not activated your CityTech email, you need to go to a student helpdesk—6th Floor Computer Lab in the General Building). Once you register on the OpenLab, locate my course (Humanities Department, Fall 2015). **Click JOIN to be a member!**

Terms and Film List handouts will be distributed each week and posted online. Go to the **Documents** tab on the website to find the latest handouts. The weekly terms/film lists have the important names, vocabulary, and films that you are responsible for on exams. You will also have access to readings under **Documents** but these are password-protected (passwords will be provided in class). Although I will show slides of films and images that are not on your handouts or in Bordwell and Thompson's *Film Art*, these unlisted works will not be on the exams.

Grading:

4 Icons Paper	5%
Film Analysis Paper #1	15%
Film Analysis Paper #2	15%
Group Project	15%
Homework/Attendance	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%

PLEASE NOTE: Failure to turn in a paper or submit an exam/assignment will result in a zero (0).

Important Dates:

September 24, Thursday	4 Icons Paper
October 8, Thursday	Paper #1 DUE
October 22, Thursday	Midterm Exam
November 9, Monday	Last day to withdraw with W grade
November 12, Thursday	Paper #2 DUE
December 3, Thursday	Group Project and Presentation DUE
December 17, Thursday	Final Exam, 11:30 am - 12:45 pm <i>no incomplete work accepted after this date</i>

Exams: Exams consist of identifications (film name, director or actor, dates, significance of work), short answer questions, and definitions of terms/concepts. The essay component is a take-home exam and will need to be submitted with the midterm and final exam. Make-up exams will only be given for reasons of documented emergency.

Writing Assignments: There are 3 short papers for this course. Information on required papers will be given in **separate handouts**. Because of the short length, you must avoid including long quotes and aim to put your ideas into your own words. Extensive use of quotes will negatively affect your grade.

All papers (with the exception of the 4 Icons paper) are submitted through **SafeAssign** on Blackboard, which checks your paper against a google search engine and other student papers on file. **You will receive 0 points for your paper if the matching rate exceeds 30%.** Please do not copy and paste from other sources, nor plagiarize because such practice will adversely affect your grade. See City Tech's Policy on Academic Integrity below.

Film Analysis Paper #1 (3 pp)

- This paper is a narrative analysis of two films. You will be given a list of film pairs to choose from (both are on reserve and available for viewing in the Media Lab of the CityTech Library).

Film Analysis Paper #2 (3 pp)

- This paper is an analysis of genre or mise-en-scene of two films. You will be given a list of film pairs to choose from (both are on reserve and available for viewing in the Media Lab of the CityTech Library).

Late papers will be accepted only if students have received prior approval for late submissions.

Group Project: Students will be assigned a group to work on a small project about important directors. Each group will present their findings in a **10-min presentation** in class and each group will submit a hard copy of their presentation. Information on the required project will be given in a **separate handout**.

Homework: Your homework consists of blogging on the class website about that week's films. Students are responsible for submitting **at 6 homework posts** (200-300 words) and **6 homework comments to posts** (200 words) for a total of 12 contributions. ***Participation on the homework is mandatory.***

Extra Credit: You have the option to do one extra credit project worth 5 points. The extra credit assignment is due by the last lecture BEFORE the final. This is a short written assignment of approx. 1,000 words. If you complete the project well, it is possible to increase your final grade average by 5 points. You will find the extra credit assignment posted on the class website.

ATTENDANCE (ONLINE and IN CLASS): Students are expected to attend all classes. **More than 3 absences will result in course failure.** Attendance for the virtual portion of the course will be based on online activity (see homework above), in the form of blog posts and comments on our OpenLab site. Excessive lateness will affect your grade. Three late marks equal one absence.

Plagiarism and Cheating: Presenting work by others as your own is completely unacceptable. Plagiarism includes using material from books or the Internet without acknowledging the source as well as submitting something written by someone else. **Either will result in a 0 (zero) for that particular assignment/exam. A second instance will result in an automatic F for the course.**

Decorum: Please turn off your cell phones, beepers, alarms, etc. and **no sleeping, internet surfing, txt msgs** while in lecture.

New York City College of Technology Policy on Academic Integrity:

Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions, and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting, and citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and at New York City College of Technology and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion.

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LECTURE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Reading assignments should be completed before the first class of each week.

Additional reading assignments are listed on weekly handouts.

Week	Date	Topic	Reading
1	8/27 and ONLINE	What is Film? and The Birth of Cinema (1880s-1904)	Bordwell/Thompson Ch 1 “Film as Art” and pp. 462-466
2	9/3 and ONLINE	Film Form: From the Silent Era to Talkies in Hollywood	Bordwell/Thompson Ch 2 “Significance of Film Form”, Ch 3 “Narrative Form”, and pp. 466-469
	9/10	NO CLASS — UNIVERSITY FOLLOWS A MONDAY SCHEDULE ON THURSDAY 9/10	
3	9/17 and ONLINE	Film as Global and Cultural Form: German Expressionism to Russian Formalism	Bordwell/Thompson Ch 4 “The Shot: Mise-en-Scene” and pp. 261-263, 343, 429-433, 469-479
4	9/24 and ONLINE	Hollywood in the 1930s DUE 9/24 4 Icons Paper	Bordwell/Thompson pp. 403-406 and 480-483
5	10/1 and ONLINE	Focus on Orson Welles	Bordwell/Thompson Ch 5 “The Shot: Cinematography,” Ch 6 “The Relation of Shot to Shot: Editing,” and pp. 224-225, 243-244, 315-326, and 406-410
6	10/8 and ONLINE	Focus on Alfred Hitchcock DUE 10/8 Film Analysis Paper #1: Narrative	Bordwell/Thompson Ch 5 “The Shot: Cinematography,” Ch 6 “The Relation of Shot to Shot: Editing,” and pp. 224-225, 243-244, 315-326, and 406-410
7	10/15 and ONLINE	Hollywood: The Western and Film Noir MIDTERM TAKE-HOME ESSAY handed out on 10/15	Bordwell/Thompson Ch 9 “Film Genres” and pp. 235-239

8	10/22 and ONLINE	IN-CLASS MIDTERM on THURSDAY 10/22 at 11:30 AM Hollywood: The Musical	Bordwell/Thompson pp. 344-349
9	10/29 and ONLINE	Postwar European Cinema: Italian Neorealism and French New Wave, Auteur Theory	Bordwell/Thompson Ch. 7 “Sound in the Cinema”, Ch. 8 “Summary: Style and Film Form”, pp. 257-261, 415-420, and 483-488
10	11/5 and ONLINE	Documentary and Experimental Films I: Cinéma Vérité to Pop Cinema	Bordwell/Thompson Ch. 10 “Documentary, Experimental, and Animated Films”
11	11/12 and ONLINE	Documentary and Experimental Films II: Legacy of Direct Cinema DUE 11/12 Film Analysis Paper #2: Genre or Mise-en-scene	Bordwell/Thompson pp. 433-438
12	11/19 and ONLINE	The Fall and Rise of Hollywood	
	11/26	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING – UNIVERSITY CLOSED	
13	12/3 and ONLINE	Return of the Hollywood Blockbuster DUE 12/3 GROUP PRESENTATIONS IN CLASS	Bordwell/Thompson pp. 445-449 and 488-490
14	12/10 and ONLINE	Independent Cinema FINAL TAKE-HOME ESSAY handed out on 12/10	Bordwell/Thompson pp. 410-415 and 490-494
15	12/17 and ONLINE	Independent Cinema cont’d IN-CLASS FINAL on 12/17 please note the final exam date and time is *** THURSDAY DECEMBER 17th 11:30 AM *** NO exams will be given at an earlier or later date	