

**ARTH 1112 Introduction to Film  
Spring 2015**

**SYLLABUS**

**Professor Sandra Cheng**

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**Office Hours:** Tu 9:30-10:00 am,  
Th 11:30 am-12:30 pm  
and by appointment

**Class Time/Location:** Tuesday & Thursday 10:00 am – 11:15 am, 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, a copy is on reserve in the library)

**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:** We will watch numerous excerpts in class and occasionally we will attempt to screen an entire film. 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 /](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 or need to reset it, you need to go to a student helpdesk—1<sup>st</sup> floor Information Booth in Namm or 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Computer Lab in the General Building). Once you register on the OpenLab, locate my course (Humanities Department, Spring 2015).

**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/Blogging	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).

<b>Important Dates:</b>	February 17, Tuesday	Last day to drop without W grade/or change classes
	February 26, Thursday	4 Icons Paper DUE
	March 12, Thursday	Paper #1 DUE
	March 24, Tuesday	Midterm Exam
	April 16, Thursday	Paper #2 DUE
	April 30, Thursday	Last day to withdraw with W grade
	<b>May 21, Thursday</b>	Group Project and Presentation DUE
		<b>Final Exam, 10:00 - 11:15 am</b>
		<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 Blog:** Your homework consists of blogging on the class website. Students are responsible for submitting **5 blog posts** (200-300 words) and **5 comments** (200 words). Instructions on how to *post* are located online under [Blogging Guidelines](#). *Participation on the blog is mandatory.*

**In-Class Assignments:** You will have the opportunity to work in small groups for in-class assignments throughout the semester. *Participation in class exercises 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 assignments 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:** Students are expected to attend all classes. **More than 3 absences will result in course failure.** 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	1/29 2/3	What is Film? and The Birth of Cinema (1880s-1904)	Bordwell/Thompson Ch 1 "Film as Art" and pp. 462-466
2	2/5 2/10	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
	2/12	<b>NO CLASS – LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY – UNIVERSITY CLOSED</b>	
3	2/17 2/19	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
	2/22	The Academy Awards!	
4	2/24  2/26	Hollywood in the 1930s  <b>DUE 2/26 4 Icons Paper</b>	Bordwell/Thompson pp. 403-406 and 480-483
5	3/3 3/5	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	3/10  3/12	Focus on Alfred Hitchcock  <b>DUE 3/12 Film Analysis Paper #1: Narrative</b>	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	3/17 3/19	Hollywood: The Western and Film Noir MIDTERM TAKE-HOME ESSAY handed out on 3/19	Bordwell/Thompson Ch 9 "Film Genres" and pp. 235-239

8	3/24 3/26	<b>IN-CLASS MIDTERM on TUESDAY 3/24</b>  Hollywood: The Musical (Screening only)	Bordwell/Thompson pp. 344-349
9	3/31 4/2	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
	4/7 4/9	<b>NO CLASS – SPRING RECESS – UNIVERSITY CLOSED</b>	
10	4/14  4/16	Documentary and Experimental Films I: Cinéma Vérité to Pop Cinema  <b>DUE 4/16 Film Analysis Paper #2: Genre or Mise-en-scene</b>	Bordwell/Thompson Ch. 10 "Documentary, Experimental, and Animated Films"
11	4/21 4/23	Documentary and Experimental Films II: Legacy of Direct Cinema	Bordwell/Thompson pp. 433-438
12	4/28  4/30	The Fall and Rise of Hollywood  <b>DUE 4/30 GROUP PRESENTATIONS IN CLASS</b>	
13	5/7 5/9	Return of the Hollywood Blockbuster	Bordwell/Thompson pp. 445-449 and 488-490
14	5/12 5/14	Independent Cinema FINAL TAKE-HOME ESSAY handed out on 5/14	Bordwell/Thompson pp. 410-415 and 490-494
15	5/19  5/21	Independent Cinema cont'd  <b>IN-CLASS FINAL on 5/21</b> <b>please note the final exam date and time is</b>  <b>*** THURSDAY MAY 21st 10:00 AM ***</b>  <b>NO exams will be given at an earlier or later date</b>	