

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO / COMM 203 Topics in Cinema History: Fall 2023

Course Number & Section	COMM 203 - 001
Class Time and Day	WEDNESDAY: 4:15 PM – 6:45 PM
Room Number & Building	1032 W Sheridan Rd, Cudahy Library Room 318

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name	Miguel Silveira
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Office Hours	By Appointment
Office Location	Loyola University Water Tower Campus, 111 E. Pearson St. School of Communication, 9 th Floor.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Every spoken language film is a foreign language film to most people in the world, but cinema as a medium is in and of itself a universal language shared by filmmakers and audiences anywhere on the planet. In this class, we will look at Independent and Peripheral Cinema as often neglected examples of the unifying artistic principle that connects all cultures and all humanity through a common language of sounds, visuals, and emotions. Through lectures, screenings, and conversations with guests, each student will be granted the opportunity to look at recurring themes present in the independent cinema world, such as social justice, science, and ecology. Furthermore, the course will go over the differences in the financing structures between national cinemas, Hollywood, and the independent cinema scene. **NOTE: The list of films to be screened will be released on a weekly basis.**

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- To understand how the historical timeline of cinema, from its inception in the last decade of the 19th century until now, has mirrored global events and allowed us to glimpse at the past while imagining the future.
- To be able to identify, define, and produce critical projects related to national cinemas across the globe recognizing the main characteristics of some of the most significant film movements in history.
- To develop a critical, informed, and inclusive understanding of national and International Cinema that takes into consideration films directed by minorities that were forgotten, or purposefully erased from history, that now, due to the scholarly work of many artists and researchers, have found their way back to the public.
- To produce creative projects and reviews that connect the work of artists from the past and the present with the work you are interested in developing in the future, regardless of your area of expertise - you don't have to be a filmmaker to dream!

GRADE REQUIREMENTS AND COURSE EXPECTATIONS: Regular attendance is strongly encouraged. A note from the doctor or infirmary will excuse you for illness. Work must be turned in on time. Speak with me **before** the deadline if you have a conflict. If you have not heard from me via email in 24 hours, then please re-email. Always print or back up a copy of your work for yourself. Plagiarism follows [SOC guidelines](#) and will result in an “F” for the course. Speak to me in case you have any questions

Your final grade will be based on the following percentages:

1) 15 Film Reports and Binder – 1 page each	15%
2) Group Presentation	15%
3) Mid Semester Research Proposal – 3 pages	15%
4) Film Still Project	15%
5) Final Research Project – 5 to 10 pages	30%
6) Participation	10%

LETTER GRADE SCALE:

100-95%	= A
94.99- 90%	= A-
89.99-87%	= B+
86.99-83%	= B
82.99-80%	= B –
79.99-77%	= C+
76.99-74%	= C
73.99-70%	= C –
69.99-67%	= D+
66.99-65%	= D
64.99%- and Below	= F

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **15 Film Reports and Binder (15% of your grade):** Every week a film will be assigned for viewing and/or screened in class. Each one of you will write a review/report on the film. The report (15 reports in total) will be due on the following Wednesday, one week after the film viewing. Each report will be no longer than a page and will average 300-350 words. The report will cover aspects related to the year in which the film was released, in what region of the world it was made, the recognizable themes and style applied by the filmmaker(s), as well as its historical relevance. Each one of the reports is worth 1% of your grade, totaling 15%. No late reports will be accepted. You will be responsible for organizing each report in a physical binder. This binder will be an instrumental part of your research for this class. The binder will include all reports and any extra research related to the other assignments in this class. I will be physically reviewing each binder twice, once in the middle of the semester and once at the very end. This binder will contain the record of all your work and research related to this course.

2. **Group Presentation (15% of your grade):** I will form a few groups (the number of groups is still to be determined) to research the national cinema from a particular region or country. A game of chance will be utilized to select the region or country, which means that each group will have its research focus selected via a randomizing device to be introduced in class as the groups are formed. Each group will watch films (as many films as the number of group members) from the selected region or country and prepare a presentation for the rest of the class. The presentation can be in any multi-media format of choice and must be presented live to the entire class. An extra film report, one per participant in the group, must be produced, discussed, and delivered to me for review. All materials must be added to your individual Binders.
3. **Mid-Semester Research Proposal (15% of your grade):** After the mid-semester break, each student will present a 3-page project proposal listing the intended theme of your research, your approach, and the medium of choice for delivery of your final research project. This proposal is a vital step toward the successful creation of your final project, it will allow me to understand your ideas and to provide you with important feedback and mentorship as you start working on your final projects. It is important to mention that regardless of your medium of choice (Podcast, Film, Still Photo, Essay, Screenplay), your final project must be accompanied by a 5–10-page project description. If your medium of choice is either an essay or a screenplay, it must be 10-12 page long - prepare your 3-page Mid-Semester Research Proposal with this in mind. All materials must be added to your individual Binders.
4. **Film Still Project (15% of your grade):** Using Cindy Sherman’s [photo series](#), “Untitled Film Stills” as inspiration ([see web link](#)), recreate a film still from any movie that suggests conflicted desire, pathos, power relations, or a particular element you identified in one of the films we watched. Use eye-line, lighting, foreground/background, costumes, etc., and write a one-page (300 words) description explaining your mise-en-scene, camera angle, and directing choices to achieve desired emotional/narrative response. Use cell phones, digital cameras, and any other props, lights, and costumes available to you. Compose, recreate, and photograph a still image. You will need to shoot 3-5 stills based on your theme of choice. Create a slide show on a loop (no longer than 1 minute) and feel free to add music to it. Your work will be presented in class. All materials must be added to your individual Binders.
5. **Final Research Project (30% of your grade):** Based on your mid-semester research proposal, create a project in your medium of choice (Podcast, Film, Still Photo, Essay, Screenplay) and share it with me and the class via SAKAI. The project must be informed by the work we develop during our class, and the films we watched, and must demonstrate your fluency in all the listed learning outcomes of this class. Remember that your final project must be accompanied by a 5–10-page project description. If your medium of choice is either an essay or a screenplay, it must be 10-12 pages long.

- 6. Participation (10% of your grade):** Participation will be defined by the delivery of all work on the due dates, your physical presence in class, your work ethic, and by your respect toward one another. Some of us are introverts and others are extroverts, participation is not based on how much or how often one talks in the classroom, but on the work ethic and respect toward others demonstrated during the semester. If you turn in your final binder containing all the work you produced and delivered on time throughout the semester, that will carry considerable weight in the assessment of your participation grade.

All assignments must be typed in 12 pt. Courier, double-spaced. Type your full name, assignment description (e.g., “logline”), and due date at the top of the first page of each assignment.

***** Please, always start your Assignment filename with your LAST NAME. *****

REQUIRED READINGS:

- **INDEPENDENT FILMMAKING AROUND THE GLOBE** by Doris Baltruschat and Mary P. Erickson
- **CINEMA AT THE PERIPHERY** by Diana Iordanova, David Martin-Jones, and Belén Vidal.
- **SHOOTING TO KILL** by Christine Vachon

NOTE: Please don't acquire the books before our second meeting on September 6th.

RESOURCES & EXTRA READINGS will be assigned throughout the semester and posted on Sakai:

- <https://www.flickchart.com/Charts.aspx?genre=Foreign+Language+Film&decade=1930>
- <https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=criterion+collection&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>
- <https://www.netflix.com>
- <http://libraries.luc.edu>
- <https://mubi.com>

COMM 203 SCHEDULE: FALL 2023 (Subject to Change. Updates will be posted.)

NOTE: Starting on Week 3, please BRING a copy of the binder to class for workshop use.

WEEK 1. WEDNESDAY AUG. 30

- - Introduce yourself: Why are you here?
- - Class Overview. Intro and course expectations.
- - Film Examples.
- - [Mark Cousins: 40 Days to Learn Film.](#)
- - Screening of Mark Cousins': Women Make Film (Chapter 1).

ASSIGNMENT: Write REPORT 1 on the first chapter of Mark Cousins' [Women Make Film: A New Road Movie Through Cinema.](#) Available via the Library.

WEEK 2. WEDNESDAY SEPT. 6

- Cinema and the 20th Century.
- Important Film Movements.
- Important Historical Events.
- The Map of the World is the Map of cinema.
- Group project overview and group assignments.
- Peripheral Cinema vs Independent Cinema: Screening TBA
- *Reading TBA*

DUE: REPORT 1 on *Women Make Film.*

ASSIGNMENT: Write REPORT 2 on TBA

WEEK 3. WEDNESDAY SEPT. 13

- Global Cinema
- Independent Cinema in America
- Screening of: TBA
- Group Project Status – Brief Presentation in Class.

DUE: REPORT 2: TBA.

ASSIGNMENT: Write REPORT 3 TBA.

ASSIGNMENT: Meet with your group and work on group projects.

WEEK 4. WEDNESDAY SEPT. 20

- Cinema in the 4 corners (and in all centers) of the world.

DUE: Write REPORT 3 on: TBA.

DUE: Group projects update and prep for presentation.

ASSINGMENT: Write Report 4 on TBA.

WEEK 5. WEDNESDAY SEPT. 27

DUE: REPORT 4 on TBA.

DUE: Group Project Final Presentation Report.

ASSIGNMENT: Report 5 on TBA

WEEK 6. WEDNESDAY OCTOBER. 4

DUE: REPORT 5 on TBA

ASSIGNMENT: Report 5 on TBA

WEEK 7. WEDNESDAY OCTOBER. 11

DUE: REPORT 5 on TBA

DUE: GROUP PRESENTATION – Make Technical Arrangements Prior to Presentation.

ASSINGMENT: Write Report 6 on TBA.

ASSIGNMENT: Work on Midsemester Research Proposal.

WEEK 8. WEDNESDAY OCTOBER. 18

DUE: Report 6: TBA

ASSINGMENT: Write Report 7 on TBA

ASSIGNMENT: Finish Midsemester Research Proposal.

WEEK 9. WEDNESDAY OCTOBER. 25

DUE: Report 7 on TBA

DUE: Mid-Semester Research Proposal.

ASSIGNMENT: Write Report 8 on TBA

WEEK 10. WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER. 1

DUE: Report 8 on TBA

ASSIGNMENT: Write Report 8 on TBA

WEEK 11. WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER. 8

DUE: Report 9 on TBA.

DUE: Report on the Status of your Film Still Project.

ASSIGNMENT: Write Report 10 on TBA

WEEK 12. WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 15

DUE: Report 10 on TBA.

DUE: PRESENT FILM STIL PROJECT.

ASSIGNMENT: Write Report 12 TBA / Work on final Research project.

WEEK 13. WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER. 22

NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK

WEEK 14. WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER. 29

DUE: Report 11: TBA

ASSIGNMENT: Report 12: TBA.

ASSIGNMENT: For Reports TBA

ASSIGNMENT: FINAL RESEARCH PROJECT DUE.

WEEK 15. WEDNESDAY DECEMBER. 6

DUE: Reports 13, 14 & 15 (You can work on these throughout the semester.)

DUE: FINAL RESEARCH PROJECT.

REMEMBER TO DREAM.

