



**LOYOLA**  
UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

*Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives*

**COMM 274-003 (5226)—INTRODUCTION TO CINEMA**  
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION FALL 2020



Instructor: Milan Pribisic, Ph.D. (he/his/him) [mpribis@luc.edu]

***“Seeing is in some respect an art, which must be learnt.”* William Herschel, 18<sup>th</sup> century German-British astronomer and composer**

Class meetings: **ONLINE—ASYNCHRONOUS**

Online Office/Student hours: In Sakai using Zoom every Thursday from 8:00 pm to 9:00 pm CDT

Email correspondence: Every effort will be made to respond to your e-mails within 24 to 48 hours of receiving the mail.

**TEXTS:** *Film Art: An Introduction (FA)* by Bordwell/Thompson/Smith 12<sup>th</sup> ed. [ISBN: 978-1-260-48512-7]

**FULLY ONLINE ASYNCHRONOUS CLASS:** In an asynchronous online class all instruction, learning activities, assignments and assessments are conducted online with **NO REQUIRED** face-to-face component, virtual or in-person. Students are provided learning materials, activities, weekly schedule of assignments, and assessments due dates online, every Monday morning, for all coursework. Students complete the week-by-week coursework on their own schedule, although they

**MUST** follow the weekly pacing of instruction and assignments due dates set by the instructor

[All the materials for the week will be in Sakai on Monday mornings and the due date for that week's short assignment (250 to 300 words) is Sunday at the end of the day. Short weekly assignments count as Participation points for the week and students cannot submit their work for that week past the Sunday deadline; an exception for this rule is an official doctor's excuse submitted to the instructor].

Exams or final assessments are designed to be completed online during an exam window. Exams are timed once students begin them [2 hours for the final exam]. There are scheduled Zoom office/student hours every Thursday from 8:00 pm to 9:00 pm CDT--these are optional and to be used at the student's discretion.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is an introduction to the study of cinema as a complex medium of communication. It provides students with the basic terminology, observational and critical skills, and theoretical background for the study of film history, its aesthetics and language and cultural and formal approaches to the production and analysis of cinematic texts. The class will watch each week a selection of films that will engage us with a series of questions starting with a couple of basic ones: How are films made? Why are they made? What is film medium capable of? What is cinema and what elements are (or not) making each selected film a work of art? Why were these stories told? Were they worth the effort and the time? We will approach these and other questions by performing a close analysis of each film that explores its cinematic elements; the weekly viewings will be accompanied with readings provided by our textbook in which some of the key issues of cinema art are explored (e.g. relation of form and content, spectator's positioning, politics and economics, genres, etc.). The viewings and the readings should familiarize the students with the development of film art and the critical and technical vocabulary used in cinema studies allowing them to describe, analyze and formulate arguments (orally or in written form) about cinematic productions.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

# to acquire the basic film vocabulary (e.g. shot/reverse shot, sequence, lighting, montage, narrative/narration, point of view/POV, sound ...) as tools for analyzing films as media texts/media representations [FILM STUDIES LITERACY]—Final Exam

# to familiarize with and differentiate among variety of film forms (e.g. documentary, animation, experimental film), film genres (e.g. horror, western, musical, melodrama...),

film movements and styles, and national cinemas [VISUAL LITERACY]—Individual Digital Text Project

# to apply the basic approaches to film studies, such as narrative studies analysis, formalist vs. realist analysis, etc. in critical practices (e.g. in film critiquing, film reviewing ...) [CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS]—Film Analysis paper assignment

# to evaluate, verbally or in written form, films from different eras and cultures [ANALYTICAL THINKING SKILLS]—Weekly Short Reflections assignment

# to reflect and imagine, using critical thinking skills, the possibilities of film medium through a group project assignment to be delivered as a digital presentation at the end of the semester [TEAMWORK, PRESENTATION SKILLS]—Group Project assignment

# to become astute viewer, and possibly maker, of films [GENERAL COMPETENCY SKILLS]

**STUDENTS' ROLE/RESPONSIBILITIES:** Students are expected to complete mandatory viewings, readings and assignments in timely fashion observing the given weekly deadlines; it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor if they have questions about course content or assignments/deadlines. Students should plan to login into Sakai at least several times a week, to check for updates and instructor's feedback. In a three credit hours class, students should expect to work a minimum of **seven hours a week** which includes film viewings [between 90 and 120 minutes per film], readings, and homework assignments. This estimate is to help you be aware of the level of effort expected; turning in a sloppy work that took ten minutes to complete will be obvious. Please keep track of time spent working for the class and if it is more time than this estimation mentioned above, contact me so we can talk about it.

**INSTRUCTOR'S ROLE/RESPONSIBILITIES:** I strive to create a learning environment for the students that supports a diversity of experiences, perspectives, and thoughts, and honors our unique identities (including race, gender, sexuality, class, religion, ability ...). For me, this starts with a land acknowledgement, that is by naming Ojibwe, Potawatomi, Odawa, as well as Menominee, Miami, and Ho-Chunk nations upon whose land the university stands. Regarding the names, if you have a name and/or set of pronouns different from those on your Loyola records, please let me know; I am here to help guide you through the course materials and address any questions/concerns you might have. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside the class, please do not hesitate to contact me. I will respond to your requests in a timely manner (within 24 when possible) and will provide constructive feedback on them (this also includes the assignments). I am still (like many of us) in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said/posted in class by classmate or instructor that made you feel unsafe, please contact me. I will be available online during specified office/student hours [see page one] or could also meet with you online by appointment.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents. Academic cheating is a serious violation of academic integrity. **Cheating** includes, but is not limited to, obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher; providing information to another student during examination; obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination; using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor; attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted; unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom; falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines or any other action that, by omission or commission, compromise the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

**Plagiarism** is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty; it is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of other without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited, to submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.; submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material; allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit, or purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper. The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at <https://www.luc.edu/english/thewritingprogram/writingprogramresources/theuseandmisuseofsourcematerial/>

In addition, a student may not submit the same paper or other work for credit in two or more classes. A student who submits the same work for credit in two or more classes will be judged guilty of academic dishonesty and will be subject to sanctions described below. This applies even if the student is enrolled in the classes during different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard. Plagiarism or any act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the appropriate area head and to the Office of the Dean of the School of Communication.

The Office of the Dean of the School of Communication may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Dean's office may convene a separate hearing board to review these instances. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the Dean of SoC. If the student is not a member of the SoC, the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled shall be part of the process. Students have the right to appeal the decision of any hearing board and the deans of the two schools will review the appeal together. Their decision is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean or deans.

Students have a right to appeal any finding of academic dishonesty against them. The procedure for such an appeal can be found at:

[http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg\\_academicgrievance.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicgrievance.shtml)

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to a similar organization.

**STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY CENTER (SAC):** Loyola University Chicago provides reasonable accommodations for students in special circumstance that may have some impact on their course work and for which they may require accommodations; if you have a special condition please contact SAC as soon as possible. Formal arrangements must be made through the Center before course adjustments can be made. All information will remain confidential. Additional information about the services available at: <https://www.luc.edu/sac/sacstudents/>

**MANAGING LIFE CRISES AND FINDING SUPPORT:** Should you encounter an unexpected crisis during the semester (e.g., securing food or housing, addressing mental health concerns, managing a financial crisis, and/or dealing with a family emergency, etc.), I strongly encourage you to contact the Office of the Dean of Students by submitting a CARE referral (<https://www.luc.edu/csaa/>) for yourself or a peer in need of support. If you are uncomfortable doing so on your own, please know that I can submit a

referral on your behalf – just email me or schedule a meeting with me during office/student hours. To learn more about the Office of the Dean of Students, please find their websites here: <https://www.luc.edu/dos/> or <https://www.luc.edu/csaa/>

**HEALTH AND SAFETY DURING COVID-19:** Our class is completely online and asynchronous, but in case you are on/going to campus please refer to safety measures as described here:

<https://www.luc.edu/returntocampus/healthandsafety/requiredpersonalsafetypractices.shtml>

**GRADING ASSIGNMENTS:** I am using the cumulative point system which means each assignment carries a certain number of points. For the composite grade D for the Course you need to earn 65% of the total points or 162 points out of 250. For weekly assignments, please respect the **24/7 grading policy**—wait **24** hours after receiving the grade to talk to me about it but talk to me about the grade within **7** days if you have a question. No late submissions are accepted for short, weekly assignments unless a doctor’s excuse has been provided; no term task (e.g. film analysis paper; group digital presentation) extensions are available unless an agreement with the instructor has been achieved BEFORE the deadline.

**GRADING ASSIGNMENTS (cumulative point system):**

Participation [weekly short online assignments—8 for the semester]	100 pts
Group Project [digital presentation]	50 pts
Written assignment [film analysis]	50 pts
Exam [online]	50 pts

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TOTAL: 250 POINTS

A [EXCELLENT] =237-250; A- =230-236

B+ [GOOD] =221-229; B=213-220; B- =206-212

C+ [AVERAGE] =198-205; C=191-197; C-=183-190

D+ [FAIR] =176-182; D=162-175

F [POOR] = below 162

**Statement of intent:** By remaining in this course, students are agreeing to accept this syllabus as a contract and to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document.

### **COURSE OUTLINE BY WEEK**

**(this is a plan; please check Sakai every Monday morning during the semester for that week's module details and possible updates, including the mandatory viewings)**



#### **WEEK 1 (August 24):**

VIEWING: *Vertigo* (1958)

FILM AS ART—FILM, CINEMA, MOVIES (TECHNOLOGY, CREATIVITY,  
BUSINESS)

READ: FA PART 1: Chapter 1

#### **WEEK 2 (August 31):**

VIEWING: *Night of the Living Dead* (1968)

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FILM FORM (elements, functions)

READ: FA Chapter 2

**WEEK 3 (September 7):**VIEWING: *Oldboy* (2003)

NARRATIVE AS A FORMAL SYSTEM

READ: FA Chapter 3

**WEEK 4 (September 14):**VIEWING: *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul* (1974)

READ: FA Chapter 4: THE SHOT: MISE-EN SCENE

**WEEK 5 (September 21):**VIEWING: *The Last Black Man in San Francisco* (2019)

THE SHOT: CINEMATOGRAPHY

READ: FA Chapter 5

**WEEK 6 (September 28):**VIEWING: *Le Samourai* (1967)

THE RELATION OF SHOT TO SHOT: EDITING

READ: FA Chapter 6

**WEEK 7: (October 5):**VIEWING: *Eighth Grade* (2018)

SOUND IN CINEMA

READ: FA Chapter 7

**INDIVIDUAL DIGITAL TEXT DUE: (OCTOBER 11)****WEEK 8 (October 12):** VIEWING: *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* (2014)

FILM STYLE

READ: FA Chapter 8

**WEEK 9 (October 19):**VIEWING: *Hereditary* (2018)

FILM GENRES

READ: FA Chapter 9

**WEEK 10 (October 26):**VIEWING: *Whose Streets?* (2017)

TYPES OF FILMS: DOCUMENTARY

READ: FA Chapter 10 (p. 352-371)

**WEEK 11 (November 2):**VIEWING: *The Quay Brothers Collected Short Films: Volume One (Street of Crocodiles [1986])*

WRITING ABOUT FILM

READ: FA Chapter 11 + "In Critical Condition" [www.davidbordwell.net/blog](http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog)

TYPES OF FILMS: ANIMATED FILMS

READ: FA Chapter 10 (p. 389-400)

**WEEK 12 (November 9):**VIEWING: *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929)

TYPES OF FILM: EXPERIMENTAL FILMS

READ: FA Chapter 10 (p. 371-388)

**PAPER DUE (NOVEMBER 15)****WEEK 13 (November 16):****HAPPY THANKSGIVING!****WEEK 14 (November 23):**VIEWING: *Breathless* (1960)

HISTORICAL CHANGES IN FILM ART

READ: FA Chapter 12

**WEEK 15 (November 30): GROUP PRESENTATIONS DUE IN SAKAI UNDER RESOURCES (November 30)****Post Your Feedbacks to Group presentations  
Final Exam Study Guide and Review**

**CLASSES END ON SATURDAY, December 5; THIS IS ALSO THE LAST DAY TO SUBMIT ANY REMAINING HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS.**

**Final exams are from December 07 through 12. Our TWO-HOUR final is during the final examination week**

**REQUIRED VIEWINGS:**

*Vertigo* (1958) by Alfred Hitchcock (Swank)

*Night of the Living Dead* (1968) by George Romero (Kanopy)

*Oldboy* (2003) by Chan-wook Park (Kanopy)

*Ali: Fear Eats the Soul* (1974) by Rainer Werner Fassbinder (Kanopy)

*Le Samourai* (1967) by Jean-Pierre Melville (Kanopy)

*The Last Black Man in San Francisco* (2019) by Joe Talbot (Kanopy)

*Eight Grade* (2018) by Bo Burnham (Kanopy)

*A Girl Walks Home Alone* (2014) by Ana Lily Amirpour (Kanopy)

*Hereditary* (2018) by Ari Aster (Kanopy)

*Whose Streets?* (2017) by Sabaah Folayan & Damon Davis (Kanopy)

*The Quay Brothers Collected Short Films, Volume One* (2015) by Quay Brothers (Kanopy)

*Man with a Movie Camera* (1929) by Dziga Vertov (Kanopy)

*Breathless* (1960) by Jean-Luc Godard (Kanopy)

The mandatory film viewings serve as illustrations for the lectures; **all the assigned films are available for free viewing on the LUC Library's data bases Kanopy and Swank. Here is the link to all databases:**

<http://libraries.luc.edu/databases>

**Occasionally, it is possible that some film titles available for streaming in early August are removed from the platform in November; if this is the case, I will assign a different title as a substitute.**

**GROUP DIGITAL PRESENTATION (50 POINTS):** You will be divided in groups of five students. Your group project is a pitch for an original film you want to produce. Your pitch should include the following elements—the title of the project, the short synopsis and/or plot segmentation (where possible) of the story; your concept for the film (e.g. its form—feature length or short film, narrative/story film, documentary, animation or experimental film, its genre; style approach (e.g. realist or formalist/abstract in terms of mise-en-scene, cinematography, style of acting...), and reasoning behind the need to make this project. Provide also some visuals for the pitch such as the influences from film history, if any, photo illustrations, film clips, original storyboards... Include in your group digital document the list of sources (Works Cited slide) you used when applicable. You may use any of the available software for the presentations such as Google slides, PowerPoint, etc. You will post your digital document in Sakai, under Resources, in a folder named Group Digital Presentation on the due date for the assignment.

**PAPER (50 POINTS):** Paper guidelines will be assigned two weeks prior to due date (see weekly schedule for exact due date). Papers must be proof-read, double-spaced, use

a standard font (12pt. Times New Roman). Margins, headings, and citations must be in correct MLA format. Errors in grammar, spelling, and organization will be a factor in grading. Post your paper in Sakai under Assignments no later than the due date (November 15). **Analytical/academic approach** (1,000 words paper; close analysis of a single element of a film and how is it received and interpreted by the viewer using critical and theoretical lenses made available through readings and class discussions).

