Course Description: English 432 is an introduction to world film history. This semester we will look at several important aspects of film history through representative films from several countries in various decades. As we proceed, we will consider the connections between technology, business, culture, and motion picture history. In addition, we will talk about ways of looking at film from a variety of perspectives (aspects of the "aesthetics" of the course title). This course will give you a sense of some of the various collaborators involved in the filmmaking process, but no background in film studies or filmmaking is needed for this course.

Since the early twentieth century, many thousands of feature films have been made, as well as countless documentaries, shorts, and experimental and avant-garde films. I do not claim to know all of the films made. You may very well be familiar with movies that I or others in the class have not heard of or seen. Don't hesitate to make references to those movies in class. If things go according to schedule, we will have the opportunity to see more than a dozen historically and culturally significant feature films as well as clips, shorts, and some documentaries. There are thousands of titles we might see and discuss in the history of film, but we will be able to consider only a representative number of significant films.

The textbooks for this course are a short, readable history of U.S. and international cinema and The A List, which includes reviews of 100 important films. The history contains many more names and terms than you can reasonably expect to internalize in one semester. I will on occasion give you some study questions related to the text and films, and a list of names and terms to know that come from our readings, discussions, and viewings; this material should also serve as a solid foundation for learning about key aspects of the development of film history and for preparing for the examinations. Please keep up with the reading assignments and bring questions about the material to class. Also, familiarize yourself with the layout of the text, the timelines, glossary, bibliographies, index, and illustrations. These are valuable aids. The A List will complement the viewings and offer some suggestions for films for your papers.

You are welcome and encouraged to see as many films as you can on your own. In addition to our discussions, you will have an opportunity to explore aspects of film history in two short papers. Your findings for these papers will be shared with the class through either abstracts or summaries or brief oral presentations. The oral presentations are an excellent way to develop presentation skills; they also introduce us to films that we might not otherwise discuss or see. The exact nature of the two film papers will be discussed in class, but the first one may be focused on films from a specific decade (prior to the mid-term) and the second paper may be on a specific decade, a particular genre or theme, or some other aspect of film history.

Student learning outcomes:
1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the history of motion pictures related to significant U.S. and international cinema;
2. Students will demonstrate skills in visual literacy — being able to read films — in more significant ways than before this class;
3. Students will demonstrate a familiarity with ways of discussing and evaluating films as reflections of cultures and periods of history;
4. Students will participate in a “community” interested in discussing/analyzing films beyond the surface level of narrative or character.

Evaluations: Grades will be determined by two examinations, two short papers, class participation, response to study questions, and brief oral presentations or abstracts on your papers. Honors students will be asked to submit an annotated bibliography to accompany one of the two papers that will include, minimally, three substantive reviews of the movie (350+ words) and a minimum of ten substantive scholarly/academic sources related to the film under discussion. No Wikipedia or general encyclopedias or dictionaries.
Exam 1=15%  
Exam 2=20%  
Papers =30% (15%=#1; 15%=#2)  
Oral presentations/abstracts=10%; Responses to St Ques or Readings=15%  
Class Participation=10%

**Examination Policy:** The tests will be given on the dates indicated on the class schedule, unless we decide otherwise. In-class tests will consist of short answer and essay questions.

**Make-up Exams:** Except for extraordinary circumstances, make-up examinations—which I dislike—will be given only once, at a time and place to be announced.

**Final Examination:** The final examination will consist of questions that focus on the materials from the second half of the term (similar format to the first exam) plus a cumulative essay question that brings together materials from the entire semester.

**Attendance:** Please try to attend all classes. Without being in class you lose the benefit of participating or listening to responses to the films. *While class absences will have a negative effect on the evaluation of classroom participation, it is extremely important to you and your classmates and to me that if you are sick (or a carrying something like the flu), that you not attend class.* I will note your absences; except for certain circumstances (such as medical matters), absences in excess of three will contribute to the lowering of your grade. After six absences you will be dropped from the class. If there are truly extraordinary circumstances, it is incumbent upon you to notify me about your situation to see if you are able to remain in the class. *It is my understanding that those who are dropped from class without having attended regularly and who are on financial aid may be required to repay their financial aid.* In some quarters there is the notion that some absences are excused and others are not. I consider any absence an absence, whether it be sleeping late, car trouble, work, a doctor's appointment, a family emergency, or a university athletic event.

We meet only twice a week, and it is unlikely that material shown in class will be re-shown at a future time. Some of the films we will be seeing are on Youtube, DVD, or accessible through streaming (Netflix, Amazon, Hulu) or may be available from outlets such as Hastings or Family Video. Some, by coincidence, may be shown on such stations as AMC, TBS, Showtime, Cinemax, The Movie Channel, Independent Film Channel, Starz, Encore, etc. Those presented with commercials may be edited for tv, and even, occasionally, stations without commercials may edit a film for content. Some of the films may be available at the Media Center on campus. (This is also a place, in the library, to study films for your papers if the films are on DVD or video and you don't have access to equipment.) I encourage you to view a film more than once. If you read film history, you will discover how filmmakers such as Tarantino, Scorsese, Truffaut, Godard and countless others came to film by carefully watching films, some as many as twenty times or more. (See, for example, what Tarantino says about some of his influences on *Kill Bill, Parts 1 & 2.*) Many films, like other "texts" (books, paintings, photographs, etc.), are worth multiple viewings, or like music, listening multiple times. The more you look at films and think about them, the more you will see.

Occasionally, it is possible that classes may run a bit longer than scheduled—until the completion of a film or the end of a discussion. Since some of you may have rides or another class, I will try not to let that happen, and if I know in advance it will occur, I will notify you. If you have a problem with attendance policy, please let me know. I do not intentionally try to keep you over.

**Papers:** Specific films and assignments will be worked in the weeks ahead, but the *A-List* (on Reserve) may be our starting point for some. Since you may not know many of the films listed, I will work with you on your choices. I will distribute guidelines for the two papers.

Length & Format: The first paper will be 5-7 pages, double-spaced, plus documentation using at least three substantive sources and one (non-textbook) review. The second paper will be 6-8 pages, and will focus on an aspect of film history that interests you. Films and topics need to be approved by your instructor at least two weeks prior to the due date. You will need to submit two copies of each finished paper.

**Plagiarism/Academic Honesty:** Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1,2,3]).
Our word plagiarism is derived from a word that means "to kidnap." Plagiarism is a form of kidnapping someone else's ideas, opinions, arguments, or research, and presenting them (it) as your own. Plagiarism "includes (but is not limited to) failure to indicate the source with quotation marks or footnotes where appropriate if any of the following are reproduced in the work submitted: 1. A phrase, written or musical; 2. A graphic element; 3. A proof; 4. Specific language; 5. An idea derived from the work, published or unpublished, of another person" or group.

Much of the confusion and unintentional dishonesty in undergraduate papers results from ignorance or carelessness with regard to attribution of sources. When you borrow from what others have said, you are obligated to acknowledge your sources. We all solicit opinions about our writing from family, friends, or colleagues. Your indebtedness to others for sharing ideas with you about your paper or for reading and commenting on it can be indicated in an acknowledgements page accompanying each formal assignment. If you go beyond conversations with friends or colleagues to other outside sources, you need to acknowledge these sources in your paper and in a Works Cited page. If you are uncertain about your documentation, please see your instructor before you submit your paper. Intentional plagiarism will result in a zero for the work and appropriate disciplinary action.


Common Decency: All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. In addition, you are requested to turn off your cell phones before entering the classroom. Common courtesy says you do not receive or answer calls during class. And no text messaging in class. I, too, will try to remember to turn off my cell phone. If you are expecting an emergency call, please let me know ahead of time, put your phone on vibrator mode, and sit close to the exit so you can leave discreetly to take the call.

Students with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services / Texas A&M University-Commerce / Gee Library, Room 132 Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 Fax (903) 468-8148

The Writing Center. The Writing Center is dedicated to helping writers take advantage of all opportunities for learning related to the writing process; to that end, the Center can assist writers at any stage of the writing process. In addition to your instructor, this is the place to go for additional assistance with your reading and writing projects at TAMU-Commerce. The Center can help you with your papers and digital texts for your classes. The Center is on the ground floor of the Hall of Languages (room 103), and maybe available on line or at the Gee Library. To schedule an appointment, come to HL 103 or call (903) 886-5280 to check out the hours or to see if there is on-line assistance available. DON’T, though, wait until the last minute to get assistance.

Teacher Certification: A number of you may be seeking certification to teach. If you plan to seek certification in English, Spanish, Bilingual, an endorsement in ESL, or in other areas at TAMU-C, you must
pass the required tests. You should contact the appropriate certification advisor in your discipline by the beginning of your junior year, if not sooner. If you plan to be certified or pursue Alternate Certification to teach in the public schools, you need to become familiar with all the details of the competencies and requirements as early as possible in your academic career. Read: ACT NOW.

Class Schedule: The key words here are tentative and flexibility. We meet only twice a week and will need to make very good use of all available class and lab time (viewing films or film clips). My presentations will involve some lecturing, but primarily we will discuss what you are reading and seeing. I hope to show one feature per week, as well as film clips. Because of logistics, availability, time constraints, the failure of technology, possible guests, and your preferences, we may make changes as we progress during the semester, especially when we get to the second half of the semester. The titles are suggestive, not definitive.

Key Dates: First set of Orals—March 3–March 5, 2015
- Paper 1 Due – March 5, 2015
- Mid-term—March 12, 2015
- Paper 2 Due—May 5, 2015
- Final Exam, Tuesday, May 12, 1:15-4:00 pm, HL 203

Week 1
1/20
- Course Introduction: Overview
- Read for Next Time: Flashback, Chpt 1

1/22
- Looking/Seeing Film
- The Beginnings of Cinema History
- Read for Next Time: Flashback, Chpt 2
  
  *YouTube: Lumiere Bros First Films, Melies, Voyage to the Moon,
Smashing Pumpkins, Tonight, Tonight, Edwin S.
Porter, The Great Train Robbery, Life of an American Fireman*

Week 2
1/27
- Discussion:
- Comments on Early Cinema
- Read for Next Time: Flashback, Chpt 3;

1/29
- Realism/Formalism/Classicism
- Film Comedy: Chaplin et al
- Handouts: film choices, list of terms
- Guidelines for Paper and Oral
- Read for Next Time: Flashback, Chpt 4,, 57-68;
  
  Watch Keaton shorts (on Youtube)

Week 3
2/3
- Grammar of Film/Early Comedy
- Montage/Soviet Cinema
- Read for Next Time: Flashback, 57-68 (again)

2/5
- German Cinema
- Read for Next Time: Flashback, 50-55, Chapter 6

Week 4
2/10
- Coming of Sound/Studio System/Stars
- Genre Films & Star System
- Read for Next Time: Flashback, Chpt 5

2/12
- Paper Topics / Studio System
- Gangsters, Comedy, and Class Distinctions
Read for Next Time: *Flashback*, Chpt 8

**Week 5**
2/17  The 40s --Comedy and Noir
Read for Next Time: *Flashback*, Chpt 9

2/19  A Film Classic of the 40s
Read: *Flashback*, Chpt 10

**Week 6**
2/24  Discussion of Film Classic
2/26  Post War Malaise: The 50s /HUAC / Blacklisting  Some **Oral Reports** +

**Week 7**
3/5  Oral Presentations  Orals
3/7  Oral Presentations  Orals

**Week 8**
3/12  Looking Back: Capturing the Ethos

3/14  **Mid-Semester Examination**

**Week 9**
3/16  Spring Break 3/19 & 3/21
Read for Next Class Meeting: *Flashback*, Chpt 9, 168-176+Chpt. 11

**Week 10**
3/26  Italian Neo-Realism
Read for Next Time: *Flashback*: Chpt 13, 245-256

3/28  French New Wave
Read for Next Time: *Flashback*, Chpt 12

**Week 11**
3/31  Influences of International Cinema
Read for Next Time: *Flashback*, Chpt 12; (again)

4/2  The Sixties
Read for Next Time: Flashback, Chpt 14

**Week 12**
4/7  Sixties and Seventies
Read for Next Time: TBA

4/9  Sixties and Seventies
Read for Next Time: *Flashback*: Chpt 14 (again)

**Week 13**
4/14  Film Research/Documentation
Read for Next Time: *Flashback*, Chpt 17

4/16  Discussion: More on Research (Amazon), Paraphrasing
Discussion: 60s and 70s

**Week 14**
4/23  New Directions
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<td>Read for Next Time: Flashback, Chpt. 19</td>
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