

MRTS 3470: International Film History to 1945

HYBRID INSTRUCTION

3 Credit Hours

Instructor: Mr. Travis Sutton

Office Location: RTFP 237

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30 - 2:00pm

Email: Travis.Sutton@unt.edu

Course Prerequisites and Other Restrictions

A student must have completed MRTS 1330, MRTS 2010, and be registered as an MRTS/CBCM major, with the major's GPA requirement, to enroll in this course.

Course Description

The history of film from its invention to 1945 encompasses many issues, not only in the structure and technology of film but also in the social activity around the production and consumption of movies: political changes, new philosophies, and cultural differences and influences. This course provides an overview of some of the important developments in cinema pre-1945 and, therefore, covers a wide range of cultures, film styles, and film movements. The intention is to concentrate on the aesthetics of the films, with special attention to the cultural, historical, and cinematic contexts that helped to shape them.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, every student should be able to

- Identify movies, filmmakers, and movements in different eras and countries
- Describe the invention of motion picture technology and the expansion of movie industries across the globe
- Discuss some of the aesthetic differences and similarities between movies produced before 1945 and movies produced today
- Explain some of the ways cinema reflects the time and place of its production

This course fulfills the CLASS requirement for Diversity and Global Issues. At the end of this course, students should be able to do at least three of the following:

1. Identify the origins, influences, and limits of one's own cultural heritage.
2. Demonstrate the ability to learn from and empathize with perspectives and experiences different from one's own.
3. Show an understanding of the interrelationships of the self, local society, and global environments.
4. Describe the impacts of complex, worldwide systems.
5. Explain the reasoning for one's ethical responsibilities within worldwide systems.

NOTE: This course includes films from different time periods and places, and these texts consist of culturally dominant ideas and practices that reflect their time of production and release. These cultural ideas may include messaging, stereotyping, and representational distortion in regards to race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability. All form and content in these texts will be open for discussion, analysis, and criticism in the classroom. Students who do not wish to participate in such a critical project, which includes viewing these texts, should consider taking another class.

Course Materials

Film History: An Introduction, 2025 Release (or Evergreen Release) by Kristin Thompson, David Bordwell, and Jeff Smith. McGraw-Hill, 2025.

The textbook is required for the course. All of the information necessary for this course can be found on Canvas and in the course textbook. A copy of the textbook will also be available on reserve at the university library.

This course contains some copyrighted material, (short segments of film clips from films available in the UNT library and identified as such) the use of which has not been specifically authorized by the copyright owner(s). I have determined this to be "fair use" of the copyrighted material as referenced and provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law. If you wish to use any copyrighted material from this course for purposes of your own that go beyond fair use, you must obtain express permission from the copyright owner(s).

Communicating with Your Instructor

Email or messaging through Canvas are the primary ways to contact your instructor. The instructor will make every effort to respond to student emails and discussion questions in a timely manner (within 24 hours). Students should also keep in mind that instructors are not required to respond to emails during evenings, weekends, or holidays.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Examination 1	25%
Examination 2	25%
Examination 3	25%
Nine writing activities, OR nine screening quizzes	25%

Hybrid Instruction

Students are required to complete the course content online between each in-class screening. The course will be released in three separate units (one unit per exam). Each lesson will include notes, reading assignments, clips and activities, including an assignment option. Students **MUST** stay up-to-date on the course content in order to fully understand the screenings.

Students expecting to do well in this class should read the assigned materials, attend and take notes on all components of the class, including discussions and screenings. You do not need to notify me if you miss class, but it is up to you to view the assigned films, all of which will be available on reserve at the Willis Library within a day or so after the in-class meeting.

NOTE: Online instruction is not the best choice for everyone. It requires time management, self-motivation, and the acceptance of personal responsibility. This course involves not only textbook readings, writing assignments, and online assessments but also feature-length films. All of these require time, so do not delay with committing your time and attention to the course during the semester.

Attendance

Because this is a hybrid course with online instruction, in-class attendance is not mandatory: there is no penalty for non-attendance. If you want to watch films outside of the classroom, then you are free to do so. All of the movies that will be screened in the course will be available on reserve on DVD in the media library. Movies that are available for streaming through the university's media library will be linked to the course on Canvas.

Extra credit is available for students who regularly attend the weekly screenings and discussions: I will give three bonus points on a final grade to anyone who attends class every week, with no more than three absences in the semester. Attendance sheets are available until 2:40pm (fifteen minutes after class has started). Please do not try and negotiate attendance after this time. Rosters without signatures will be recorded as absences.

The instructor will accept a signature on a weekly attendance roster as evidence of a student's

presence for the entirety of a class session. Any form of dishonesty with the attendance record, which includes signing and leaving or signing for another student, will be treated as academic dishonesty and result in a zero for the course.

Students who do not attend the first class session are subject to being dropped from the course, unless they notify the instructor ahead of time. Absences can be excused ahead of time for school-sponsored activities, religious holidays, illnesses, and other personal emergencies. Please provide documentation, such as a doctor's note or an authorized absence card, to one of the teaching assistants to excuse an absence.

Classroom Behavior

Rude or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated in the classroom. Disruptive behavior can include anything that would interfere with an instructor's ability to conduct class or with a student's ability to benefit from the instruction. Please note that behaviors likely to distract the instructor and, thus, to interrupt the flow of the class include activities designed to signal student inattentiveness, such as texting, reading, sleeping, working on material for other classes, etc. Electronic devices, such as laptops and tablets, are permitted in the classroom, as long as they are used to assist with course-related learning.

Writing Activity and Screening Quiz Options

Students have the option to complete nine writing activities during the semester OR to complete nine online quizzes. Either option is 25% of the final grade. A student might choose to complete both options, but only ONE option can figure into a final grade. Options cannot be combined.

Writing Activity Option

The Writing Activity Option is an in-class writing activity. For each lesson with a scheduled writing activity, the instructor will provide a question related to the day's in-class screening. Students are to answer the question and support their answers with reasons and evidence. Each submission needs to be at least 200 words in length. Students will have twenty minutes to complete the activity. Electronic devices are not permitted for a writing activity, so clear penmanship is required. Complete details about this option are available through the link "Writing Activity Option" in the course navigation menu.

Screening Quiz Option

The optional weekly screening quizzes are available through the link "Screening Quiz Option." Each screening quiz will focus on three feature films (or a combination of short films) associated

with a lesson module: students completing this option are expected to watch all of the films in their entirety. Questions in the quizzes will focus on the form and content of each film, as well as information about each film found in the module and in the textbook.

To complete the screening quizzes, students will need to download and install Respondus Lockdown Browser (or use a campus computer available to students with Respondus Lockdown Browser installed). Respondus Lockdown Browser will also require a webcam to monitor the testing process.

Complete details about this option are available through the "Screening Quiz Option" in the course navigation menu.

Examinations

There will be three examinations during the semester, and examinations are to be completed in the classroom at the course's scheduled time. The final examination will not be cumulative. Each examination will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions, and the questions will be based on online content, assigned readings, and films screened in class. Each student is required to be prepared with a **Number 2 Pencil** for each examination.

Examinations are to be completed within two hours.

Since attending in-class screenings and discussions are not mandatory, it will be important for you to **remember examination dates**. Examinations are mandatory and will not be given outside of class, unless a student has a university-approved absence, which might include an illness or a school-sponsored activity. Such absences must be excused with documentation to make up an examination. Examinations will not be given to students who arrive fifteen minutes (or later) after the course is scheduled to begin on an examination day.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Students can expect a grade for writing assignments, exams, and quizzes to be posted on Canvas within one week of that assignment or exam's due date.

Late Work

Students are required to submit assignments on due dates listed in the syllabus and posted on Canvas. Late submissions of writing assignments and screening quizzes are not accepted.

Grading Criteria

- Because assignments for this course are submitted online, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that submissions are fully uploaded into Canvas and Turnitin. Additionally, it is a good idea to keep backup copies of all completed work in case these online systems encounter problems during the semester.
- Because of security concerns and your right to privacy, the instructor will not discuss grades over email. If you have a question about your grade, send your instructor a message indicating that you want to discuss your grade, and your instructor will make arrangements to visit with you.
- Your instructor's goal is to help you improve your writing and critical thinking skills, so it is important for you to ask questions.
- Aside from the bonus points offered for regular attendance, additional extra credit assignments or a final grade curve will not be offered in this class.
- Grades are not negotiable. Your final course grade will be based on your work in the course. If you are concerned about a grade, see your instructor during office hours.
- **Any form of academic dishonesty will result in an "F" for the course and possibly further sanctions at the university level.**

Numerical Grade Equivalents

Course grades are calculated on the standard scale:

A = 100-90

B = 89-80

C = 79-70

D = 69-60

F = 59-0

Every border creates situations where you may be “just below” the grade you want or require. This is frustrating for all concerned, but it is not a reason to change the grade.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS/ASSISTANCE

Every student enrolled in this course needs access to a computer with a webcam that is capable of connecting to the Internet and a technical capacity to run Canvas and Respondus Lockdown Browser.

Canvas technical requirements: [CLEAR supported technologies](https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements) ➡ [_ \(https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements\)](https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements)

Most of the videos in the course include English captions. Some of the videos in a language other than English, however, have embedded subtitles rather than captions. If you need transcripts of the

videos in the course that do not include captions, as part of an accommodation from the Office of Disability Access, then please notify the instructor.

The University of North Texas provides student technical support in the use of Canvas and supported resources. The student help desk may be reached at:

Help Desk Contact Information

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu (<mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu>)

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Help Desk Hours

Monday-Thursday, 8am-midnight

Friday, 8am-8pm

Saturday, 9am-5pm

Sunday, 8am-midnight

Minimum Technical Skills Needed

- Sending and receiving email
- Navigating Canvas

Netiquette

Netiquette, or online etiquette, refers to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors online. Please read through "Netiquette Guide for Online Courses," available on Canvas, and treat your instructor and fellow classmates with kindness and respect.

Outages

The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty that prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu

(<mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu>) or 940.565.2324. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.