湖北工業大學
HUBEI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Course Title	Western Film History I
Course Code	FILM 2121
Semester	Spring 2027
Course Length	4 Weeks, 60 Contact Hours
Credits	4
Instructor	TBA
Office	TBA
Email	TBA
Prerequisite	FILM 1121 Introduction to Film

Course Description:

This course examines the historical origins of cinema from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century (1890-1960). Students will explore the major aesthetic developments, technological innovations, and cultural contexts that shaped the evolution of film as an art form and a medium of communication. The course will emphasize the analysis of important individual films, movements, and filmmakers, with a focus on understanding the global impact of cinema during this transformative period. We will trace the changing styles, techniques, content, and methods of film-making as an art form, as a form of popular media, and as an industry.

Course Goals:

Students who successfully complete this course will demonstrate competency in the following general education core goals:

- **Critical thinking skills** – Students will engage in creative and/or innovative thinking, and/or inquiry, analysis, evaluation, synthesis of information, organizing concepts, and constructing solutions.
- **Communication skills** – Students will demonstrate effective written, oral, and visual communication.
- **Teamwork** – Students will demonstrate the ability to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal and consider different points of view.
- **Social responsibility** – Students will demonstrate intercultural competency and civic knowledge by engaging effectively in local, regional, national, and global communities.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- articulate and describe the defining attributes of various film genres as they were practiced during different historical moments;
- identify significant movements, innovations, and figures in film history;
- demonstrate a richer basic knowledge of cinema and be able to place a film in its historical context;
- write and speak critically about films using appropriate terminology and theoretical frameworks.

Textbooks/Supplies/Materials/Equipment/ Technology or Technical Requirements:
David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film History: An Introduction*, 3rd ed., McGraw Hill, 2010.

Course Requirements:

Participation and Attendance
Participation is a substantial part of your grade and is extremely important to your success. You are required to keep track of our progress and review the course material. Watch the film, read the assigned material, and submit the assignments in a timely fashion (reading and film responses).

Reading Responses
For each assigned reading, write a 1-2 page response that summarizes the main arguments, analyzes key points, and reflects on how the reading connects to the course themes. Focus on engaging critically with the material, connecting it to the historical context of cinema, and preparing for class discussions. Responses should be clear, well-organized, and submitted before the class session in which the reading will be discussed.

Film Responses
After viewing each assigned film, write a 1-2 page response analyzing its formal elements (e.g., cinematography, editing, sound) and thematic content. Discuss how the film reflects its historical and cultural context, and include a personal reflection on your reaction to the film. Connect the film to broader developments in cinema history and compare it to other films studied in the course. Responses should demonstrate depth of analysis, originality, and clarity, and are due one week after the film is screened.

Midterm Exam
Exam composed of True and False statements, short questions, film analysis and essay questions. The exam questions include the history of the cinematic movements and the films analyzed, as well as all the readings discussed during the first half of the class. It’s essential that you keep up with the readings and watch the films throughout the semester.

Final Paper
In this paper, you will work through an aspect of the course providing an original reading of one or two film discussed in class. We will provide prompts and specific

instructions regarding format and citations for the paper a few weeks in advance of due dates.

Assessments: Activity	**Percent Contribution**
Participation and Attendance	10%
Reading Responses	20%
Film Responses	30%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Paper	20%

Grading:

Final grades will be based on the sum of all possible course points as noted above.

Grade	**Percentage of available points**
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D	64-69
D-	60-63
F	0-59

Course Schedule:
The schedule of activities is subject to change at the reasonable discretion of the instructor. Minor changes will be announced in class, major ones provided in writing.

FILM 2121 Schedule		
Lecture	Topic	Readings & Screenings
L1	Course Introduction & Syllabus Overview The Invention and Early Years of the Cinema, 1880s-1904	Chapter 1
L2	Early Filmmaking and Exhibition	Chapter 1 short films by Edison, the Lumière brothers, Méliès, and Porter, etc.
L3	The International Expansion of the Cinema, 1905-1912 Film Production in Europe The Struggle for the Expanding American Film Industry	Chapter 2
L4	National Cinemas, Hollywood Classicism, and World War I, 1913-1919 The Rise of National Cinemas: Germany, Italy, Russia, France, Denmark, Sweden	Chapter 3 selections from *Intolerance* (Griffith, 1916) Film Response
L5	The Classical Hollywood Cinema The Major Studios Begin to Form The Elements of Mise-en-scene Filmmaking in Hollywood during the 1910s	Chapter 3

L6	The Late Silent Era, 1919-1929 France in the 1920s The French Film Industry after World War I The French Impressionist Movement	Chapter 4
L7	Germany in the 1920s The German Situation after World War I Genres and Styles of German Postwar Cinema	Chapter 5
L8	Soviet Cinema in the 1920s The Hardships of War Communism, 1918-1920 Recovery under the New Economic Policy, 1921-1924 Increased State Control and the Montage Movement, 1925-1930	Chapter 6 *Battleship Potemkin* (Eisenstein, 1925)
L9	The Late Silent Era in Hollywood, 1920-1928 Theater Chains and the Structure of the Industry The Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America	Chapter 7 *The Kid* (Chaplin, 1920) Film Response
L10	International Trends of the 1920s Film Experiments outside the Mainstreams Industry Commercial Filmmaking Internationally	Chapter 8
L11	The Development of Sound Cinema, 1926-1945 The Introduction of Sound The International Adoption of Sound	Chapter 9 *The Jazz Singer* (Crosland, 1927) Film Response
L12	The Hollywood Studio System, 1930-1945 The New Structure of the Film Industry Continued Innovation in Hollywood Major Directors	Chapter 10
L13	Genre Innovations and Transformation Other Studio Systems: China, Japan, India	Chapter 10-11 *Tokyo Story* (Ozu, 1953)
L14	**Midterm Exam**	/
L15	Cinema and The State, 1930-1945 The Soviet Union: Socialist Realism and World War II The German Cinema under the Nazis	Chapter 12
L16	France: Poetic Realism, the Popular Front, and the Occupation, 1930-1945 The Industry and Filmmaking during the 1930s Poetic Realism	Chapter 13
L17	Leftist, Documentary, and Experimental Cinemas, 1930-1945 The Spread of Political Cinema Government-and-Corporate-Sponsored Documentaries	Chapter 14 *The Wizard of Oz* (Fleming, 1939)
L18	Wartime Documentaries The International Experimental Cinema	Chapter 14
L19	The Postwar Era: 1945-1960s American Cinema in the Postwar Era The Decline of the Hollywood Studio System	Chapter 15 *Psycho* (Hitchcock, 1960) Film Response
L20	The New Power of the Individual Film and the Revival of the Roadshow The Rise of the Independents	Chapter 15
L21	Postwar European Cinema: Neorealism and Its Context, 1945-1959 Film Industries and Film Culture	Chapter 16-17 *Rome, Open City* (Rossellini, 1945)

	Italy: Neorealism and After France, Scandinavia, and Britain	
L22	Postwar Cinema in Asia, 1945-1959 General Tendencies Postwar Cinema in the Soviet Sphere of Influence China, Japan, India	Chapter 18 *Rashomon* (Kurosawa, 1950) Film Response
L23	Art Cinema and the Idea of Authorship The Rise and Spread of the Auteur Theory	Chapter 19 *The Seventh Seal* (Bergman, 1957)
L24	New Waves and Young Cinemas, 1958-1967 Formal and Stylistic Trends France: New Wave and New Cinema	Chapter 20 *Breathless* (Godard, 1960)
L25	Documentary and Experimental Cinema in the Postwar Era, 1945-Mid-1960s Toward the Personal Documentary Experimental and Avant-Garde Cinema **Final Paper Submission**	Chapter 21

Accommodation Statement

Academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor's attention. Students who may require assistance in emergency evacuations should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow.

Academic Integrity Statement

Each student is expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in academic and professional matters. The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, against any student who is found guilty of academic dishonesty or otherwise fails to meet the standards. Any student judged to have engaged in academic dishonesty in coursework may receive a reduced or failing grade for the work in question and/or for the course.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests, or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or without the University; and nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records.

Other Items:

Attendance and Expectations

All students are required to attend every class, except in cases of illness, serious family concerns, or other major problems. We expect that students will arrive on time, be prepared to listen and participate as appropriate, and stay for the duration of a meeting rather than drift in or out casually. In short, we anticipate that students will show professors and fellow students maximum consideration by minimizing the disturbances that cause interruptions in the learning process. This means that punctuality is a must, that cellular phones be turned off, and that courtesy is the

guiding principle in all exchanges among students and faculty. You will be responsible for the materials and ideas presented in the lecture.

Assignment Due Dates
All written assignments must be turned in at the time specified. Late assignments will not be accepted unless prior information has been obtained from the instructor. If you believe you have extenuating circumstances, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Make-Up Work
The instructor will not provide students with class information or make-up assignments/quizzes/exams missed due to an unexcused absence. Absences will be excused and assignments/quizzes/exams may be made up only with written documentation of an authorized absence. Every effort should be made to avoid scheduling appointments during class. An excused student is responsible for requesting any missed information from the instructor and setting up any necessary appointments outside of class.

Access, Special Needs and Disabilities
Please notify the instructor at the start of the semester if you have any documented disabilities, a medical issue, or any special circumstances that require attention, and the school will be happy to assist.