
Calumet College



of Saint Joseph

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SYLLABUS FOR ARTS 273/EWPC 273A--AMERICAN CINEMA

Term: Fall 2017 (20171), Sept. 5-Dec. 16

| Instructor Information: | |
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| Instructor Name | Walter Skiba |
| Office Number: | Room 524 |
| Phone Number: | 219-473-4270, (Illinois) 773-721-0202, ext. 270 |
| Email: | wskiba@ccsj.edu |
| Hours Available: | MR: 1-4 p.m. F--immediately before and after class |
| Instructor Background: Education: Bachelor of Arts in speech and theater, St. Joseph's College Calumet Campus; Master of Arts in Theater, University of Connecticut; Master of Music, Roosevelt University. Positions at CCSJ: Associate Professor of Arts and Humanities, Special Assistant to the President (researching and writing a history of CCSJ) Community activities: contributor to the NWI Times—feature articles on arts events. Activities: vegetable gardening, walking. | |

| Course Information: | |
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| Course Time: | Friday, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. |
| Classroom: | 315 |
| Prerequisites: | None |
| Required Books and Materials | <p>Belton, John. American Cinema/American Culture, Fourth Edition. McGraw-Hill, 2012 (on reserve in Specker Library, need not be purchased)</p> <p>Sikov, Ed. American Cinema Study Guide, Fourth Edition. McGraw-Hill, 2012</p> |
| Other Materials | <p>PBS 1994 VHS Video components (optional): 10 one-hour and 3 half-hour video programs, on reserve at Specker library.</p> <p>Handouts and additional readings will be posted in Blackboard; some will be distributed in class.</p> <p>To access the Blackboard site, go to www.ccsj.edu/blackboard and follow login procedures.</p> |
| <p>Learning Outcomes Students in this course will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acquire knowledge of major developments in American film history, including the origins of cinema, the studio system, the star system and technological innovations. 2. Learn the essential elements of the classical Hollywood style and analyze their use or non-use in films viewed for this class. 3. Increase their appreciation of diverse styles, genres and periods. 4. Recognize and use basic technical and critical vocabulary of motion pictures. 5. Make connections between film technology and artistry. 6. Learn the basic elements of the economic structure of the film industry. 7. Learn about the historical context, characteristics and conventions of genres such as the western, musical, romantic comedy, war film, film noir, and discuss their embodiment in specific films. 8. Develop a more sophisticated conception of “realism” as it relates to motion pictures. 9. Question their role as passive spectators and increase their ability to watch films actively and critically. | |

10. Speak and write effectively about films viewed for this class, making use of critical thinking skills such as interpretation, analysis, comparison and evaluation.
11. Apply these skills to an oral presentation on a chosen film not previously viewed for class.

Gen Ed Outcomes

- Students will write in a variety of forms using valid logic, persuasive rhetoric, and correct grammar, usage, and punctuation.
- Students will be able to orally deliver a presentation with a clear central idea that is logically developed, supported by convincing evidence and valid reasoning, and expressed using language and delivery choices thoughtfully adapted to the audience.
- Students will appreciate, create, and critique the persuasive power of art and media.

Course Description:

This class presents an overview of the history of American cinema and several representative genres. Topics covered include the Hollywood style, film techniques, the studio system, the star system, the viewing of films and their relationship to society as a medium. Students view and study specific films coordinated with Study Guide units.

Learning Strategies:

Brief lectures to introduce films and draw connections with reading assignments, viewing of films and clips with occasional instructor commentary, self-tests that address important concepts in text and study guide, In-class quizzes that reinforce and help clarify key elements of reading assignments and videos, large and small group discussions of films, small-group and individual written reports/reviews that address discussion topics in handouts

Experiential Learning Opportunities: viewing and reviewing a film seen at a local theater

| Assessments: | | |
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| Formative Assessments: | In-class quizzes on readings and videos, self-tests on Study Guide units, individual and small-group reports on films studied in class | 75% of grade |

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| Summative Assessments: | oral presentation on chosen film, final test | 25% of grade |
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Major assignments and point values:

--11 self-tests, questions 1-5, including one-paragraph essay for 5, which may be modified, units 1-8, 10-12-- 2 points each, 22 total

Self-tests assess your knowledge and understanding of important concepts in Study Guide units.

--11 2-page film reports/reviews—4 points each (5 points for very good submissions), some may be done as small group projects in class—44 points

11 films will be screened in class. Reports address discussion topics provided for each film and assess your ability to interpret, make connections and comparisons, analyze and evaluate films. Film reports should be written competently in complete sentences and paragraphs. Ideas should be stated clearly, developed in sufficient detail, and presented in a logical order.

--Oral presentation—10 points

You will deliver a speech presentation on a chosen film not previously viewed in class, covering such topics as historical context, structure, performances, cinematic elements, screening and discussion of a key scheme, and overall evaluation. Detailed directions will be given in class and posted in Blackboard.

--Take-home/in-class final test—15 points

The final assesses your ability to discuss a topic in some depth, chosen from a list of questions encompassing Study Guide units and films screened in class and to respond to interpretation, analysis and evaluation questions about a new film.

Note: All assignments will be posted weekly in Blackboard/Announcements.

Also assessed:

--Class participation—9 points

Includes arriving on time, staying for the entire period, following classroom decorum expectations, listening, taking notes, engaging in viewing activities, asking questions, joining in small and large group discussions, completing in-class activities including quizzes on specified text and video materials.

Deductions from class participation points: 1 point for arriving late or leaving early, 2 points for each class missed beyond 2, points deducted as determined by instructor for classroom decorum violations

Total points: 100 (additional points available)

Grading Scale:

| Grade | Points |
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| A | 100-92 |
| A- | 91-90 |
| B+ | 89-88 |
| B | 87-82 |
| B- | 81-80 |
| C+ | 79-78 |
| C | 77-72 |
| C- | 71-70 |
| D+ | 69-68 |
| D | 67-62 |
| D- | 61-60 |
| F | 59 and below |

Course Schedule

Sept. 8—introduction to course; The Story of Film: An Odyssey, episode 1-- 1895-1918: The World Discovers a New Art Form, discussion and in-class note-taking assignment (3 bonus pts.)

Sept 15--The Hollywood Style (foundation unit)

Reading: Sikov Study Guide (SG)—Unit 1: Belton Textbook (T)—Chapters 1, 2 and 3

Optional viewing: Tape 101

Focus films (may be chosen from the following list: Bella (2005), The Great Gatsby (2013), Fruitvale Station (2013), Spotlight (2015), Hidden Figures (2016)

Sept. 22—The Hollywood Style (cont.)

Sept. 29--The Studio System

SG—Unit 2; T—Chap. 4

Tape 102; Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939), The Adventures of Robin Hood (1938), Casablanca (1942), Meet Me in St. Louis (1944), Funny Face (1957)

Oct. 6--The Star System

SG—Unit 3; T—Chap. 5

Tape 103; The Kid (1921), The Gold Rush (1925), City Lights (1931), Modern Times (1936), Our Hospitality (1923), Safety Last (1923), Sherlock Jr. (1926), The General (1927), Speedy (1928)

Oct. 13--The Western

SG—Unit 4; T—Chap. 11

Tape 104; Under Western Stars (1938), Stagecoach (1939), Red River (1948), High Noon (1952), Shane (1953), River of No Return (1954), The Searchers (1956), The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance (1962), True Grit (1969), Silverado (1984), Unforgiven (1992), 3:10 to Yuma (2007), Appaloosa (2008)

Oct. 20—The Musical

SG—Unit 5; T—Chap. 7

No PBS video; 42nd Street (1933), Top Hat (1934), Swing Time (1936), Meet Me in St. Louis (1944), Singin' in the Rain (1952), The Band Wagon (1953), Funny Face (1957), Hairspray (2007), Les Miserables (2012), La La Land (2016)

Oct. 27--American Comedy

SG—Unit 6; T—Chap. 8

Tape 105; It Happened One Night (1934), A Night at the Opera (1935), Bringing up Baby (1938), His Girl Friday (1940), The Shop Around the Corner (1941), The Lady Eve (1941), Adam's Rib (1949), Some Like It Hot (1959)

Nov. 3—War and Cinema

SG—Unit 7; T—Chap. 9

Tape 106; They Were Expendable (1945), Paths of Glory (1957), Glory (1989), The Hurt Locker (2008), The Conspirator (2011), Lincoln (2012), Testament of Youth (2014), Eye in the Sky (2015), War Machine (2017)

Nov. 10--Film Noir

SG—Unit 8; T—Chap. 10

Tape 107, SG—Supp. Unit 2; Tape 112; The Maltese Falcon (1941), Double Indemnity (1944), Laura (1944), Detour (1945), Out of the Past (1947), Boomerang! (1947), Strangers on a Train (1950), White Heat (1950), Kiss Me Deadly (1955), L.A. Confidential (1997)

Nov. 17--Hollywood in the Age of Television

SG—Unit 10; T—Chap. 14

Tape 108; The Day the Earth Stood Still (1951), Rebel Without a Cause (1955), The Night of the Hunter (1955), Dial M for Murder (1954), Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956), Written on the Wind (1956), Funny Face (1957), 12 Angry Men (1957), Vertigo (1958), Anatomy of a Murder (1959), The Manchurian Candidate (1962), Charade (1963)

Nov. 24—Thanksgiving break

Dec. 1--The Film School Generation

SG—Unit 11 T—Chap. 16

Tape 109; Back to the Future (1985), Raging Bull 1981), Peggy Sue Got Married (1986), Field of Dreams (1989), Goodfellas (1990), The Age of Innocence (1993), Up in the Air (2009), Shutter Island (2010), Hugo (2011), War Horse (2011)

—Into the 21st Century

SG—Unit 12; T—Chap. 17

Tape 110 (Independent Films)

Eight Men Out (1988), Do the Right Thing (1989), United 93 (2006), Sugar (2008), Freedom Writers (2007), Secretariat (2010), Win Win (2011), Take Shelter (2011), The Artist (2011), The Help (2011), Silver Linings Playbook (2012), Argo (2012), 42 (2013), Philomena (2013), The Imitation Game (2014), Selma (2014), Spotlight (2015), Brooklyn (2015)

Dec. 8—Speech presentations on chosen films not screened in class; take-home portion of final test distributed, due Dec. 15

Dec. 15--In-class component of final, will include screening and writing activity

Note: I reserve the right to change this schedule to meet the needs of the class. Reminders and adjustments will be announced in class and posted in Blackboard. Other films may be selected in place of titles listed.

Some movies studied in class will be on room-use reserve in the Specker Library. These and other films may be available through video rental outlets, online services, or public libraries. Call ahead or check online.

Study tips: Create a semester-long schedule with blocks of time set aside for reading, viewing and writing. Make weekly and daily adjustments for special events, obligations, priorities, etc. Take notes during class.

| Responsibilities | |
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| <p>Attending Class</p> | <p>You cannot succeed in this class if you do not attend. We believe that intellectual growth and success in higher education occur through interaction in the classroom and laboratories. However, we do not want to penalize students for participating in college-sponsored events. When you miss class because of a college event, you must give notice of your absence in advance, and you are responsible for all missed work. Being absent does not excuse you from doing class work; you have more responsibilities to keep up and meet the objectives of this course.</p> <p>2 absences are allowed for personal reasons (with instructor notification), required participation in college-sponsored events, such as athletics, or jury duty (provide official notification). All other absences incur a deduction of 2 points each in the class participation component of yours final grade.</p> |
| <p>Turning In Your Work</p> | <p>Self-tests are due at the beginning of class on assigned Study Guide unit. Film reports are due the class immediately following the screening. Late assignments may be accepted, with instructor approval, up to one week past the due date. Points will be lost for assignments not made up.</p> <p>Self-tests and movie reports/reviews must be typed and double-spaced, 12 or 14 pt. font preferred. The following items should appear in the upper right-hand corner of the first page:</p> <p>-- (for movie reports) student's name, title of film, Study Guide unit number, date</p> <p>-- (for self-tests) student's name, Study Guide unit number, date</p> |
| <p>CCSJ Student Honor Code</p> | <p>This course asks students to reaffirm the CCSJ Student Honor Code:</p> <p>I, as a student member of the Calumet College academic community, in accordance with the college's mission and in a spirit of mutual respect, pledge to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously embrace honesty and curiosity in the pursuit of my educational goals; • Avoid all behaviors that could impede or distract from the academic progress of myself or other members of my community; • Do my own work with integrity at all times, in accordance with syllabi, and without giving or receiving inappropriate aid; |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do my utmost to act with commitment, inside and outside of class, to the goals and mission of Calumet College of St. Joseph. |
| Using Electronic Devices | You may use electronic devices in class only for course-related purposes. If you text or access the Internet for other purposes, you may be asked to leave, in which case you will be marked absent. Exceptions for family emergencies, job requirements or special needs must be cleared with me in advance. Headphones are not allowed. |
| Participating in Class | You are expected to be on time, stay for the whole class and speak up in a way that shows you have done the assigned out-of-class work. |
| Doing Your Own Work | <p>If you turn in work that is not your own, you are subject to judicial review, and these procedures can be found in the College Catalog and the Student Planner. The maximum penalty for any form of academic dishonesty is dismissal from the College.</p> <p>Using standard citation guidelines, such as MLA or APA format, to document sources avoids plagiarism. The Library has reference copies of each of these manuals, and there are brief checklists in your Student Handbook and Planner.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: All papers may be electronically checked for plagiarism.</p> |
| Tracking Your Progress | Your midterm grade will be available on MyCCSJ between Weeks 6 and 8. Be sure to see how you are doing and follow up with your instructor. <Customize to reflect how you would like your students to follow up if you like.> |
| Sharing Your Class Experience | At the end of the term, you will have the opportunity to evaluate your classroom experience. These confidential surveys are essential to our ongoing efforts to ensure that you have a great experience that leaves you well prepared for your future. Take the time to complete your course evaluations – we value your feedback! |
| Withdrawing from Class | Required: After the last day established for class changes has passed (see the College calendar), you may withdraw from a course by following the policy outlined in the CCSJ Course Catalog. |

Classroom decorum and mutual respect: In our class: 1) everyone is allowed to feel they can work and learn in a safe and caring environment; 2) everyone learns about, understands, appreciates, and respects varied races, ethnicities, classes, genders, physical and mental abilities; 3) everyone matters; 4) all individuals are to be respected and treated with dignity and civility; and 5) everyone shares the responsibility for making our class, and CCSJ, a positive and better place to work and learn.

Comments and questions are encouraged or solicited during film introductions and follow-up discussions, but only one person talks at a time. You are expected to arrive in class on time, stay for the entire period, and engage in all activities. Leaving and re-entering the room during class is distracting, sometimes disruptive; it is not allowed except in unusual circumstances. Sidebar conversations, sleeping and unauthorized use of electronic devices are out of place. Food and beverages may be allowed with specified restrictions. A 10-15 minute break will be given midway through the class period. A second 5-minute break may be given as needed. You may use electronic devices during these times.

I will give a student who engages in any inappropriate or disruptive behavior a verbal warning. (Disruptive behavior interferes with the normal operation of the class.) If the offending behavior persists, I will ask the student to leave the class and will later notify the Dean of Students, athletic coach or academic advisor. To be allowed back into class, the student must first meet with me, acknowledge the inappropriateness of the behavior, and agree not to engage in it again. If any kind of unacceptable behavior continues, I will request that the student withdraw voluntarily or be withdrawn administratively from the class.

I make the final determination of what is considered unacceptable classroom behavior.

You are responsible for maintaining eligibility requirements for scholarships, financial aid or athletics.

| Resources | |
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| Student Success Center: | The Student Success Center provides faculty tutors at all levels to help you master specific subjects and develop effective learning skills. It is open to all students at no charge. You can contact the Student Success Center at 219 473-4287 or stop by the Library. |
| Disability Services: | Disability Services strives to meet the needs of all students by providing academic services in accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. If you believe that you need a |

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| | <p>“reasonable accommodation” because of a disability, contact the Disability Services Coordinator at 219-473-4349.</p> |
| Student Assistance Program | <p>: Through a partnership with Methodist Hospital, Calumet College of St. Joseph provides a free Student Assistance Program (SAP) to current students. The SAP is a confidential counseling service provided to students for personal and school concerns which may be interfering with academic performance and/or quality of life. The SAP counselor is available on campus once a week and off-site at their Employee Assistance Program (EAP) office in Merrillville or Gary. For more information, contact the SAP Counselor, at 219-736-4067.</p> |
| CCSJ Alerts: | <p>Calumet College of St. Joseph’s emergency communications system will tell you about emergencies, weather-related closings, or other incidents via text, email, or voice messages. Please sign up for this important service annually on the College’s website at: http://www.ccsj.edu/alerts/index.html.</p> |