“A film is never really any good unless the camera is an eye in the head of a poet.” —Orson Welles

WESTMINSTER COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION
This course is designed for students to develop a greater comprehension of the historical evolution of cinematic art. Though the course focuses primarily on cinema in the United States, some important and representative films from other countries will be studied. In addition, emphasis will be given to films that represent the development of film as an industry and how this corresponds to (and conflicts with) artistic endeavor. Students will write analyses of both films they watch for the course and films they choose to watch on their own. In keeping with the goals of the course, these analyses will require the students to fit the films into the context of cinema as a greater whole and to demonstrate an understanding of film as both art and industry. In addition, mid-term and final exams will require students to analyze certain films and their contributions to the development of cinema. Meets Humanity and Culture Intellectual Perspective requirement (HC).

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES
At the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. View, discuss, and write on a number of significant films having artistic distinction and/or popular impact on our world.
2. Track the creation and evolving technical development of film through the 20th-century.
3. Identify and explicate the major figures (artistic, industrial) in film history.
4. Acquaint themselves with the means of film production (studio system vs. independent.)
5. Appreciate the strengths and influences of various national cinemas.
6. Understand both the merits and drawbacks of the innovations of sound and color films.
7. Articulate particular elements of film study (e.g., ideology, composition, montage) in class discussions.

REQUIRED TEXT
❖ Some supplemental readings you will find on D2L or handed out in class. Print them and bring them with you daily.
❖ A journal dedicated to writing class notes and your film reflection/analyses.
REQUIRED FILMS/FILM EXCERPTS

These films (or short excerpts of the films) will be shown during class time, primarily on Wednesdays. If you miss class, you are responsible for finding a way to screen the film/clips on your own.

- Dir. Giovanni Pastrone. *Cabiria*. (Italy, 1913) 2 hrs. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gowic0wtHa8
- Dir. Charles Chaplin. *The Kid*. (U.S.A., 1921) 1 hr., 8 mins. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPZkgeMMFE0 and Amazon Prime
- Dir. F.W. Murnau. *Nasiratu*. (Germany, 1922) 1 hr., 21 mins. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FC6iFoYm3xs
- Dir. Albert Parker. *The Black Pirate*. (U.S.A., 1926) 1 hr., 35 mins. (First technicolor) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9WY4_6cmHz8
- Dir. James Whale. *Frankenstei*n. (U.S.A., 1931) 1 hr., 10 mins.
- Dir. Leontine Sagan. *Mädchen in Uniform*. (Germany, 1931) 1 hr., 27 mins.
- Dir. Leni Riefenstahl. *Triumph of the Will*. (Germany, 1936) 1 hr., 50 mins.
❖ Dir. Frank Capra. *It's a Wonderful Life.* (U.S.A., 1946) 2 hrs., 10 mins.
❖ Dir. Vittorio De Sica. *The Bicycle Thief.* (Italy, 1948) 1 hr., 29 mins.
❖ Dir. Don Siegal. *Invasion of the Body Snatchers.* (U.S.A., 1956) 1 hr., 20 mins.
❖ Dir. Francois Truffaut. *The 400 Blows.* (France, 1959) 1 hr., 39 mins.
❖ Dir. Pedro Almodovar. *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown.* (Spain, 1988) 1 hr., 28 min.
❖ Dir. Adam Shankman. *Hairspray.* (U.S.A., 2007) 1 hr., 53 mins.
❖ Dir. Guillermo Del Toro. *Pan's Labyrinth.* (Mexico, 2007) 1 hr., 58 mins.
COURSE CONTENT AND FORMAT

In this class, films will be viewed in the following ways:

❖ **Clips:** these are short segments from different films that I will use in my lectures to illustrate various styles, techniques, and other components of cinematic language.

❖ **Focus Films:** these will be truncated (shortened) versions of key films that represent certain moments and movements in film history.

❖ **Feature Films:** these are films that we will watch in their entirety. They will be viewed on Wednesdays from 3:10-5:30. You should make sure to put away your phones and take notes during the films. You should not passively watch the films as simply a means of entertainment. You should actively engage with or “read” them as a form of art, as a visual and aural kind of “literature.” This engagement is accomplished by developing fluency in cinematic language such as frame composition, camera positioning, audio and editing techniques, and other conventions. It’s important to note that, in this class, it’s inconsequential to note whether you personally “like” or “dislike” a film since we aren’t simply watching the film for its entertainment value. Try to be open to experiencing different types of films!

GRADING SYSTEM AND COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Grade Breakdown:

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10% (5% Attention and 5% Speaking)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal (Film Screening Notes &amp; Analyses)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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GRADING SCALE

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<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>100% - 93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>92% - 90%</td>
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<td>89% - 87%</td>
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<td>86% - 83%</td>
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<td>82% - 80%</td>
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<td>72% - 70%</td>
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<td>69% - 60%</td>
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PARTICIPATION

[10%] You are required to come to class prepared to talk (having done all the assigned reading) and to participate actively and responsibly throughout the semester. Failure to participate will adversely affect your grade. Your participation grade will be broken down into two parts: attention (5%) and speaking (5%).
❖ **Attention** – (5 %). Listening to the instructor and each other, without private chatter. In addition, you are not sleeping, texting, or using electronic devices. If you fall asleep during film screenings, you should not expect a strong grade.

❖ **Speaking** – (5 %). Contributing regularly, in small-groups and whole-class discussion. You should add your voice to discussions during every class, despite this being a larger class. (However, make sure that you aren’t dominating the conversations. Share the “stage” with others.)

**QUizzes**

[15%] The course quizzes will cover course readings, key terms, lecture material, films, and important discussion points. They will be very short and consist of multiple-choice questions or short answer questions. Quizzes cannot be made up if you miss class but one quiz grade will be dropped. Make-up quizzes will only be given for documented medical reasons, scheduled school-sponsored athletic events, or a documented family emergency (funeral/severe illness.) You must send the documentation via email 24 hours from the time the quiz is given. If you know you will miss a quiz due to a sporting event, please let me know about the event as soon as it is scheduled and we will schedule another testing time. You should expect a quiz most Fridays. You may use your journals on your quizzes, but not your textbook.

**Journal**

[25%] You will keep a handwritten journal that you will bring to class each day. The journal must be clearly organized by date, topic, and assignment. Don’t get behind on your journals! Your ability to keep up with your journal entries will likely define your success in the course. Your instructor has not assigned your journal entries as “busy work,” so you should take them seriously, regularly updating them in relation to the syllabus. Your journal entries should help you retain important information faster and better, as well as help you develop your film analysis skills. Your journal work will help you prepare for exams, quizzes, and essay writing, as essay writing skills will be necessary for exams. I’d be happy to take a look at your journals at any time throughout the semester for feedback. I highly suggest coming to see me after writing your first film summary/analysis to ensure that you’ve got it down! **Journals are due on April 15th in class.** I will need enough time to read them and get them back to you so that you can study for the final exam, using your notes.

In the journal, you will write:

1.) Daily In-Class Lecture Notes, clearly delineated with the date and topic covered.
2.) A list of 5-10 important things you gleaned from each chapter of Giannetti’s *Flashbacks* assigned for class. If you take care with these, they will serve as study guides for your exams/quizzes. (5%)
3.) General Notes on plot, scenes, or techniques and Key Quotes from the Wednesday Feature Films screened. These should be written during (permitting there’s enough light) and/or directly after the film screening. Try to take down quotes, if the film is a “talkie,” even if they are messy. I will give you some time after the screenings to finish your notes, if times allows. (5%)
4.) A Summary/Analysis of each Wednesday Feature Film screened. You should denote the film’s name, director, and year/place it was made at the top of the page and begin with a two to three sentence summary of the film. Then, write a paragraph analyzing the use of at least two important cinematic elements used and another short paragraph on how you believe (or don’t believe) the film contributes to the development of cinema,
based on what came before. Organization, grammar, and punctuation will be graded in addition to the content. (10%) *The required films are highlighted on the syllabus schedule.

5.) A Summary/Analysis of 6 significant films you watch on your own. The films must have artistic distinction and/or popular impact on our world. The films must be new to you. At least 3 of them must have been made before 1970 and one of them needs to be a foreign film. You should denote the film’s name, director, and year/place it was made at the top of the page and begin with a two to three sentence summary of the film. Then, write a paragraph analyzing the use of at least two important cinematic elements used and another short paragraph on how you believe or don’t believe the film contributes to the development of cinema, based on what came before. Organization, grammar, and punctuation will be graded in addition to the content. Please complete the first 3 before March 4th and the second 3 by April 15th. (5%)

MIDTERM & FINAL EXAM

[50%] The course exams will cover course readings, key terms, lecture material, films, and important discussion points. They will consist of objective multiple-choice questions, as well as expository analyses. The exams will test your knowledge of the evolution of technical developments in film, ask you to identify and explicate the major figures (artistic, industrial) and films in cinematic history, as well as identify and analyze the use of particular elements and techniques used in the production of film. Exams cannot be made up if you miss class, so please plan accordingly. Make-up exams will only be given for documented medical reasons, scheduled school-sponsored athletic events, or a documented family emergency (funeral/severe illness.) You must send the documentation via email 24 hours from the time the exam is given. If you know you will miss an exam due to a sporting event, please let me know about the event as soon as it is scheduled.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance Requirements
Students are expected to attend all class meetings. It matters that you come to class on time, every day. If you are repeatedly late, it will negatively influence your grade. Excessive tardiness, early departure, or lack of preparation will result in an absence.

❖ After you miss three classes, your final grade will be reduced 1/3 of a letter grade for each additional class missed. For example, if you miss 4 classes and you end the course with a B+, it will be converted to a B, and so forth. All absences count towards this total, with the exception of school-sanctioned activities that I am aware of in advance via email, illness that requires confinement to bed on a physician’s orders (documented), death/severe illness in the family (documented), or court appearances. “Self-reported sick in room” notices from the Student Health Center will not count as an excused absence.

❖ Students who arrive to class late will be counted as absent. Late arrivals disrupt our class; therefore, excessive lateness will affect your participation grade and, potentially, your final grade.

❖ Sleeping in class or during film screenings will count as an absence.

❖ If you are involved in Westminster athletics or other extracurricular activities and will miss class meetings because of games, performances, etc., please notify me in advance via email of any class sessions you will miss. All work is to be submitted prior to the excused absence. You cannot miss class to go to a sporting practice. If you are involved in an extracurricular or co-curricular activity at Westminster College, you must make it known to me before the end of add period of each semester via email. In the email, please include the dates you know you will miss.
❖ If you do miss class for any reason, you are still responsible for the missed material. Connect with a classmate to get the class notes and then come to office hours if you have questions about the notes. Please do not come up to me at the beginning of the next class to ask what happened and waste your classmates’ time!

❖ That said, if you experience a crisis that prevents you from completing your work speak to me about it privately during office hours, or ask an appropriate campus official to document your situation.

Office Hours
I encourage you to meet with me at least once during the semester to discuss papers, quizzes, films, lectures, readings, your journals, exams, etc. I want you to succeed in the course and, therefore, I am happy to discuss your progress at any time. Office hours will be held on Tuesdays 9:30-10:30am, Mondays and Wednesdays from 2-3, or by appointment. Lastly, because I have a toddler at home, please avoid coming to Office Hours if you are sick. Send me an email instead at cowentm@westminster.edu.

Plagiarism & Academic Integrity Code Specific to this Section
Students are responsible for the academic work they submit (including papers, examinations, reflections, PowerPoints, reports, etc.), and that work should be completed honestly and according to the requirements and restrictions for academic work based upon the Westminster College Academic Integrity Policy. Please see the current Undergraduate Catalog for official definitions of cheating, misconduct, plagiarism, and providing false information. The following is a list of some representative examples of academic misconduct specific to this section, though it is not comprehensive:

- **Plagiarism**: the representation of someone else’s words, ideas, or work as one’s own. This includes quoting, paraphrasing, or condensing another’s work within one’s own without giving proper attribution, or purchasing or receiving another’s work and submitting it as one’s own. When quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing, students must identify the extent to which a source has been used and must cite with precision. This applies not only to written work, but also designs, photography, video, art, and other media.

- **Misconduct**: submitting the same work, including oral presentations, for different courses without the explicit consent of the teacher, sabotaging the work of others, unethically obtaining answers or other information about a quiz, test, or examination before it has been administered to all students, even if not a member of the class, etc.

- **Dishonesty in Examinations**: unauthorized use of notes, study aids, electronic or other equipment during an examination; unauthorized possession of examinations; copying or looking at another individual’s examination; taking or passing information to another student during an examination; taking an exam for another student; allowing another student to take one’s examination.

- **Fabrication of Data**: unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation during an academic exercise.

- **Cheating or Inappropriate Assistance**: unauthorized use of any study aids, equipment, tutoring, or another’s work during an academic exercise; unauthorized collaboration on projects, homework, take-home examinations, or other work. Students are responsible for clarifying with instructors what forms of collaboration or assistance are acceptable for each assignment.
Consequences for Breaking Academic Policy in this Section
If a student has violated Westminster’s Academic Integrity Policy, the student will be reported to the college and receive the appropriate sanctions determined by the VPAA. Please see the Undergraduate Handbook for further information about the respective consequences.

In regards to the course, if a student breaks the college’s Academic Integrity Policy or the policies listed above, the student will receive an F on the assignment that broke policy for a first offense. If the student violates the policy a second time, they will fail the course.

Disruptive Technology
Electronic devices are prohibited in the classroom unless specific permission is given. Electronic devices include: cell phones, digital media players, recording devices (video and audio), iPods, electronic readers, headphones, and laptops. However, if a student needs to use technology due to a disability, please let me know.

You will be asked to leave film screenings if you use electronic devices. The light emitted from cell phones or computers are distracting and degrade the projected picture.

Course Accessibility
Westminster College actively strives for the full inclusion of all our students. Students with disabilities who require access solutions for environmental or curricular barriers should contact Faith Craig, Director of Disability Resources at 724-946-7192 or via e-mail at craigfa@westminster.edu. Please do not hesitate to discuss your situation with me.

Honor Code
Lastly, as we frequently deal with sensitive topics and personal reflections in this class, professionalism and maturity will be expected from you during class discussion and in your written responses. Sensitivity is especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, ableness, gender identity, and nationalities. In addition, I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun than your legal paperwork if you wish. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.
**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

Below you will find the tentative schedule for our semester. Please be aware that these due dates may be subject to change if we move too slowly or quickly through a section, or due to inclement weather. Be sure to check the online module and/or your email before class each day for any modifications to the schedule, or class cancellations.

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<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments</th>
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| Week 1      | Course Introduction & Early Cinema | **Monday**: Syllabus Overview and Film Terminology.  
**Wednesday, 3:10-5:30**: Read Giannetti’s *Flashbacks*, Chapter 1: Beginnings (1-12.) Lecture on the Inventions and the Early Years of Cinema.  
**Screen**: *Horse Jumping* (1877), *The Arrival of the Train* (1895), *The Kiss* (1896), *A Trip to the Moon* (1902), *The Merry Frolics of Satan* (1906) and *The Great Train Robbery* (1903).  
**Friday**: Read Giannetti’s *Flashbacks*, Chapter 2: Griffith and his Contemporaries (13-29.) Complete journal entries. Lecture on Shorts to Epics and New Innovations.  
**Screen**: Clips from *Cabiria* (1913) and *Birth of the Nation* (1915). |
| Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> |                                                                                                           |                                                                                                           |
| Week 2      | 1920s Cinema                     | **Monday**: No Classes for Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
**Screen**: *The Kid* (1921), clips from *Gold Rush* (1925), and clips from *Sunrise* (1927).  
**Friday**: Read Giannetti’s *Flashbacks*, Chapter 4: European Cinema in the 1920s (56-74.) Lecture on Film Innovations in the 20s.  
**Screen**: Clips from *The Battleship Potemkin* (1925), *Nosferatu* (1922), *The Black Pirate* (1926), and *Ben-Hur* (1925), *Metropolis* (1926.) |
| Jan. 21<sup>st</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> |                                                                                                           |                                                                                                           |
| Week 3 | 1930s Cinema & War Propaganda | Monday: Read Giannetti’s *Flashbacks*, Chapter 6: American Cinema in the 1930s (75-94). Lecture on the Talkie Era. Read Bazin’s “What is Cinema” from D2L.  
Screen: Clips from *The Jazz Singer* (1927)  
Wednesday, 3:10-5:30: Read Giannetti’s *Flashbacks*, Chapter 7: European Cinema in the 1930s (117-134).  
Screen: *Madchen in Uniform* (1931) with a discussion to follow.  
Friday: Quiz #1. Lecture on War Propaganda.  
Screen: Clips from *Triumph of the Will* (1936) and clips from *The Great Dictator* (1940.) |
|---|---|---|
Screen: Clips from *Gone with the Wind*, clips from *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940) and films featuring the top stars.  
Wednesday, 3:10-5:30: Read Wood’s “Ideology” article from D2L.  
Screen: *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946.)  
Friday: Film discussion. Short Lecture on Horror Films.  
Screen: Clips from *Frankenstein* (1931) |
| Week 5 | 1940s Cinema | Monday: Read Giannetti’s *Flashbacks*, Chapter 8: American Cinema in the 1940s (135-156.) Lecture on Cinema in the 1940s.  
Screen: Clips from *Casablanca* (1944) and *Maltese Falcon* (1940.)  
Wednesday, 3:10-5:30: Work on your journals.  
Screen: *Citizen Kane* (1941.)  
Screen: Clips from *The Bicycle Thief* (1948.) |
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<tr>
<th>Week 6</th>
<th>1950s Cinema &amp; The Hollywood Musical</th>
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| Feb. 18th - Feb. 22nd | **Monday:** Read Giannetti’s *Flashbacks*, Chapter 10: American Cinema in the 1950s (177-189).
| | Screen: Clips from *Rebel without a Cause* (1955), clips from *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951), and clips from *The Bridge over the River Kwai* (1957).
| | **Wednesday, 3:10-5:30:** Work on your journals. Short Lecture on the Hollywood Musical.
| | Screen: *Singin’ in the Rain* (1952) with discussion.
| | **Friday:** Quiz #3. Skim Giannetti’s *Flashbacks*, Chapter 11: International Cinema in the 1950s (199-220).
| | Screen: Clips from *The Tokyo Story* (1953). |

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<th>Week 7</th>
<th>Genre Films</th>
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| Feb. 25th - March 1st | **Monday:** Lecture on The Hollywood Western and Genre.
| | Screen: Clips from *High Noon* (1952), clips from *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956), *The Sound of Music* (1965), and others.
| | **Wednesday, 3:10-5:30:** Screen: *The Searchers* (1956) with a discussion to follow.
| | **Friday:** MIDTERM EXAM |

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<th>Week 8</th>
<th>1960s Cinema</th>
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| March 4th – March 8th | **Monday:** Read Giannetti’s *Flashbacks*, Chapter 12: American Cinema in the 1960s (221-244).
| | **Wednesday, 3:10-5:30:** Read Mulvey’s “Visual Pleasure” from D2l.
| | Screen: *Psycho* (1960) with a discussion to follow.
<p>| | Screen: Clips from <em>A Hard Day’s Night</em> (1964) and clips from <em>Jules and Jim</em> (1962). |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Week 9</th>
<th>Spring Break</th>
<th>No Classes!</th>
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<td>Screen: Clips from <em>The Godfather</em> (1972)</td>
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<td>Wednesday, 3:10-5:30: Screen: <em>One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest</em> (1975).</td>
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<td>Friday: Quiz #5. Film Discussion</td>
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<td>Wednesday, 3:10-5:30: Screen: <em>Do the Right Thing</em> (1989) and discussion to follow.</td>
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<td>Wednesday, 3:10-5:30: Work on your journals.</td>
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<td>Friday: Film Discussion and read pages 398-403 from Giannetti’s <em>Flashbacks</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>April 22nd - April 26th</td>
<td>Film Analysis</td>
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<td>Week 16</td>
<td>April 29th - May 3rd</td>
<td>Cinema Since 2010</td>
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