

College of San Mateo
Official Course Outline

1. COURSE ID: FILM 120 **TITLE:** Film History I

Units: 4.0 units **Hours/Semester:** 64.0-72.0 Lecture hours; 128.0-144.0 Homework hours; 192.0-216.0 Total Student Learning hours

Method of Grading: Grade Option (Letter Grade or Pass/No Pass)

Recommended Preparation:

ENGL 100, or ENGL 105

2. COURSE DESIGNATION:

Degree Credit

Transfer credit: CSU; UC

AA/AS Degree Requirements:

CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E5c. Humanities

CSU GE:

CSU GE Area C: ARTS AND HUMANITIES: C1 - Arts (Arts, Cinema, Dance, Music, Theater)

IGETC:

IGETC Area 3: ARTS AND HUMANITIES: A: Arts

3. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:

Catalog Description:

Chronological survey of important American and international films, from 1895 to World War II.

Emphasis on the evolution of film as a distinct art form, and the intersection of film and society. Lectures, screenings, discussions, quizzes and writing of critical papers.

4. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) (SLO'S):

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:

1. identify the major phases of the historical development of film language and film art
2. identify major styles, movements and national schools of filmmaking
3. analyze the relationship between film art and social/historical context

5. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:

1. identify the major phases of the historical development of film language and film art
2. identify major styles, movements and national schools of filmmaking
3. analyze the relationship between film art and social/historical context

6. COURSE CONTENT:

Lecture Content:

1. examine the history of film, focusing on the chronological development of film language and film art prior to World War II
2. emphasize US Hollywood innovations, European responses and challenges, and alternative industrial models from other national cultures, such as Japan and Mexico, and beyond.
3. critically survey classical Hollywood, including the genre system, the studio production approach, and important stars and directors (Griffith and continuity editing; gangster, screwball and musical genres; the coming of sound; Hitchcock, Hawks and Welles, etc.)
4. discuss international film movements in terms of the art cinema tradition (German Expressionism, French poetic realism, Soviet montage, etc.).

Lab Content:

None.

7. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Typical methods of instruction may include:

- A. Lecture
- B. Critique
- C. Discussion
- D. Other (Specify): Screening, and in-class exercises. Film clips via video projection are used to illustrate concepts and elicit discussion. Students are asked to verbally apply film history concepts to film sequences.

Students are asked to write brief commentaries on specific film history concepts, as preparation for midterms and final paper.

8. REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Representative assignments in this course may include, but are not limited to the following:

Writing Assignments:

Students are asked to write brief commentaries on specific film history concepts, as preparation for midterms and final paper.

Students are assigned reflection journals periodically throughout the course, short essays on specific films and assigned readings, where the emphasis is on personal interpretation, but using specific film and reading scenes/citations (for example, what are the key ideas for you from each chapter of the book on the Fritz Lang film; etc.)

Students are given discussion questions, at home to prepare, or to do in class, on specific aspects of a given film and topic (for example, briefly explain the three dominant influences on French Poetic Realism as defined in the assigned chapter; etc.)

Students are sometimes given a prompt to briefly describe and explain their own creative idea for a short film, in the spirit of a given movement or genre we have studied (for example, a short film treatment for your own version of Mexican Melodrama, or Japanese Samurai, etc.). Emphasis on explaining the links between their creative idea and course topics and films

Reading Assignments:

Readings include appropriate chapters in film history textbook; and supplemental readings furnished by the instructor, or various supplemental film history textbooks.

9. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF EVALUATION

Representative methods of evaluation may include:

- A. Class Participation
- B. Class Performance
- C. Class Work
- D. Exams/Tests
- E. Quizzes
- F. Written examination
- G. One midterm, a final paper, short reading responses, participation. Midterms are comprised of multiple choice questions based on vocabulary and reading materials, and short essay answers regarding critical application of film history concepts. The final paper (6-8 pages) compares a historical film from class with a relevant contemporary film. Final paper assignment emphasizes relating historical analysis of themes and style to social and cultural context.

10. REPRESENTATIVE TEXT(S):

Possible textbooks include:

- A. Thompson & Bordwell. *Film History: An Introduction*, 5th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2021
- B. Fabe. *Closely Watched Films*, 2nd ed. UC Press, 2014
- C. Smith, Ian Haydn. *A Chronology of Film*, ed. Thames and Hudson, 2021

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Course Originator: David Laderman