

FLME 2700: Film History (Fall 2020)

School of Film, Media & Theatre
Georgia State University

Physical Meetings

DATE: M/F 9:30-10:20AM.

LOCATION: Langdale Hall 229.

This class will be divided into four cohorts. Please do not come to class physically if your cohort is not listed on the schedule.

Virtual Meetings

DATE: Wednesdays 10-11:15AM.

URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83989262328?pwd=c0p0dGVseXZEREFrem1NN0dRQlAvUT09>.

MEETING ID: 839 8926 2328.

PASSCODE: 531427.

Instructor

INSTRUCTOR: Alexandra Chace.

EMAIL: achace@gsu.edu.

OFFICE: 25 Park Place, #1021C.

HOURS: **By Appointment Only.**

Description

FLME 2700 explores the history of moving images through the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries from the earliest invention of the camera to the present day. This course is designed to give you a broad but brief overview of film history and basic film mechanics, prerequisite and inviting further study in advanced film courses.

Materials

Book

- David Bordwell & Kristin Thompson, *Film History*, GSU Edition (<https://www.bkstr.com/georgiastatestore/product/film-2700--custom-site-connect-for-film-history--an-introduction-180-days-access-entrp--custom-ga-state--704475-1>).

Book registration: <https://connect.mheducation.com/class/a-chace-film-2700-film-history-an-introduction---gsu-fall-2020>

Readings

Other readings will be available online or via link below. **Make sure you do the reading before coming to class.** You will not pass the course if you do not do your reading.

Films

You are expected to come to class having already watched the assigned film(s). You will not pass the class if you do not watch the films—It is your responsibility to find them. Many are available via Georgia State’s SWANK streaming service, but others are not. These are typically available via popular streaming and online rental services. For physical DVDs and Blu-Rays, please consider renting from Videodrome (617 North Highland Avenue).

Some films will be sexually explicit or may contain other sensitive material. It is up to you to decide what you are comfortable with—but you will be expected to have seen each film in its entirety.

Assignments

Midterm & Final Exams

There will be two exams in our class, each 25% of your grade: a midterm and a final (dates listed below). Due to the nature of our blended class, these will be available online via iCollege for a set number of days—they are thus open note and open book.

Film Reflections

Your cohort (A, B, C, or D) will be assigned a single film (either *Nosferatu* or *The Big Combo*) and prepare a 2 page (12pt Serif font, double spaced) reflection on the assigned film. You will then meet me with on your assigned day (see below) **in person** for discussion.

Discussion Posts

Once per week, students will be required to prepare a short discussion post to be posted on iCollege. You can simply choose to summarize one (or more) of the readings, but you may also want to contextualize each piece in other reading you've done, or to give your own response (or rebuttal) to a reading's arguments. **You *must* mention that week's film in your post and link it to the reading.** These posts should be **minimum 200 words**. You will be allowed to miss up to three responses without penalty. Discussion posts are due the night **before** class at 11:59PM (on Tuesdays). **Late discussion posts will not be accepted whatsoever, under any circumstances, do not ask.**

Grading Summary

30% — Discussion Posts.

20% — Film Reflection.

25% — Midterm Exam.

25% — Final Exam.

Class Policies & Campus Information

Absences

Regular class attendance and participation are expected and are directly correlated to your success in the course. Given the state of the world, attendance will not factor directly into your final grade. However, please remember that if you do not make your best effort to come to class, virtual and physical, you are unlikely to pass the course. **Do ask me what you missed, it is on the syllabus.**

Missed Assignments

I do not accept late assignments under any circumstances unless credible documentation can be provided—this is also true for makeup exams. Please make arrangements with me **prior to** missing an assignment or exam.

Names & Pronouns

GSU recently implemented a preferred name system and faculty *should* receive a roster with students' correct names on it. The deadline to submit Preferred Name requests at the university level is no later than 5PM on the last day of the first week of classes each semester (see: <https://registrar.gsu.edu/academic-records/name-changes-and-corrections-of-records/preferred-name-change/>).

If you have not yet submitted a request or decide that you would prefer another name at any point during the semester, please contact me via email or come to office hours and let me know! This is also true for pronoun preferences: GSU faculty do not receive documentation of students' pronoun preferences. Unfortunately, this means that the onus falls on you if you feel that you might have to make your preference explicit. Please don't feel afraid to tell me about it (or better yet: come to office hours!)

Electronic Devices

You are free to use whichever electronic devices that you wish, with a few caveats:

- Pay attention in class. You will not pass the course if you do not listen and participate.
- Don't distract others. Keep devices on silent and avoid flashy or annoying websites/content on your screen.
- Know that it's usually pretty obvious when you're goofing off, and this will absolutely affect your attendance & participation grade.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism is frequent and easy to spot with tools like TurnItIn. Please refer to the university's policy on Academic Honesty: <https://deanofstudents.gsu.edu/files/2019/07/Academic-Honesty-Policy.pdf>. In case of plagiarism or other forms of dishonesty, you will receive a grade of zero and disciplinary action may be pursued.

Formatting & Citation

You may use any citation schema that you wish and are reasonably familiar with, provided it lists author, date, title, etc. and you cite your sources appropriately.

Assignments should be double spaced, Calibre/Times New Roman/Palatino 12pt fonts, 1-inch margins on all sides. Frontmatter should include your name, date, cohort, class time, and assignment name.

Email

Please write "FILM 2700", followed by the subject of your email, in the subject line of your email(s). I will respond to urgent emails as quickly as possible, however students should not expect instant messaging-like access over email. Students should also begin emails with appropriate formality, e.g., "Dear/Hi Professor Chace," and should conclude with a salutation and their name (at least for the first in a string of emails).

I will not answer questions via email that are explicitly answered on the syllabus. I will not answer emails about missed lectures—it is your responsibility to come to class or

make arrangements to share notes with another classmate. Substantial questions cannot be answered over email and students should come to my office hours instead. I cannot answer email queries about papers, such as: "I don't know what to write about for the paper, can you help me?" The answer is that I can help you, but you must come to office hours, and you also must do more than say "I don't know" and begin to formulate at least an attempt at a topic.

Disability

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so via the Access and Accommodations Center (AACE) at <https://access.gsu.edu/>. Students may only be accommodated upon issuance of a signed Accommodation Plan by the AACE Center (see: <https://access.gsu.edu/testing-services/>) and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to instructors of all classes in which accommodations are sought.

Sexual Misconduct & Harassment

In instances of sexual misconduct, the present instructor(s) and teaching assistants, are designated as Responsible Employees who are required to share with administrative officials all reports of sexual misconduct for university review. If you wish to disclose an incident of sexual misconduct confidentially, there are options on campus for you do so. For more information on this policy, please refer to the Sexual Misconduct Policy which is included in the Georgia State University Student Code of Conduct (<http://codeofconduct.gsu.edu/>).

We will be covering sensitive topics in this class, including gender and sexuality. Many of the readings and films will be sexually explicit or sexually charged. This is not an excuse for harassment in any form or fashion.

Student Evaluations of Instructor

Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State. Upon completing the course, please take time to fill out the online course evaluation.

Schedule

The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.

Days marked (P) will be conducted in person in our classroom on campus, days marked (V) will be conducted virtually.

Background, Aesthetics, & Early Cinema

August 24 — Introductions & Syllabus Q&A (P, **COHORT A ONLY**)

This is a mandatory, in-person class.

READ: Syllabus.

READ: Greg Smith, "It's Just a Movie: A Teaching Essay for Introductory Media Classes".

August 26— Introductions & Syllabus Q&A (P, **COHORT B ONLY**)

This is a mandatory, in-person class.

READ: Syllabus.

READ: Greg Smith, "It's Just a Movie: A Teaching Essay for Introductory Media Classes".

August 28 — Introductions & Syllabus Q&A (P, **COHORT C ONLY**)

This is a mandatory, in-person class.

READ: Syllabus.

READ: Greg Smith, "It's Just a Movie: A Teaching Essay for Introductory Media Classes".

August 31 — Introductions & Syllabus Q&A (P, **COHORT D ONLY**)

This is a mandatory, in-person class.

READ: Syllabus.

READ: Greg Smith, "It's Just a Movie: A Teaching Essay for Introductory Media Classes".

September 2 — Aesthetics 1 (V)

This is a virtual class via Zoom.

CLIP: Franklin J. Schaffner, "Patton" (1970).

CLIP: George Lucas, "THX 1138" (1971).

CLIP: Spike Lee, "Do The Right Thing" (1989).

READ: Notes on Mise-en-Scène & Cinematography.

September 9 — Aesthetics 2 (V)

READ: Notes on Editing.

September 16 — Early Cinema (V)

READ: Bordwell & Thompson, Ch. 1 *The Invention and Early Years of the Cinema* in *Film History*.

READ: Bordwell & Thompson, Ch. 2 *The International Expansion of the Cinema* in *Film History*.

WATCH: Melies, "A Trip To the Moon" (1902) — <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZNAHcMMOHE8>.

September 23 — National Cinema (V)

READ: Bordwell & Thompson, Ch. 3 *National Cinemas, Hollywood Classicism and World War I* in *Film History*.

WATCH: Keaton, "Sherlock Jr." (1924).

The Silent Era

September 30 — German Expressionism (V)

READ: Bordwell & Thompson, Ch. 5 *Germany in the 1920s* in *Film History*.

WATCH: Wiene, "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" (1921).

October 2 — Nosferatu (P, **COHORT A ONLY**)

WATCH: Murnau, "Nosferatu" (1929).

October 5 — Nosferatu (P, **COHORT B ONLY**)

WATCH: Murnau, "Nosferatu" (1929).

October 7 — Soviet Montage (V)

READ: Bordwell & Thompson, Ch. 6 *Soviet Cinema in the 1920s* in *Film History*.

WATCH: Eisenstein, "Battleship Potemkin" (1925).

October 14 — TBA (V)

October 16 — Midterm Exam (V)

Early Sound Cinema & Hollywood

October 21 — Sound & Censorship (V)

READ: Bordwell & Thompson, Ch. 9 *The Introduction of Sound in Film History*.

WATCH: Kelly & Donen, "Singin' In The Rain" (1952).

October 28 — Classical Hollywood (V)

READ: Bordwell & Thompson, Ch. 10 *The Hollywood Studio System in Film History*.

WATCH: Michael Curtiz, "Casablanca" (1942).

November 4 — Film Noir

READ: Bordwell & Thompson, Ch. 15 *American Cinema in the Postwar Era in Film History*.

WATCH: Robert Siodmak, "The Killers" (1946).

November 6 — The Big Combo (P, **COHORT C ONLY**)

WATCH: Lewis, "The Big Combo" (1955).

November 9 — The Big Combo (P, **COHORT D ONLY**)

WATCH: Lewis, "The Big Combo" (1955).

Post-Classical Cinema & the Present

November 11 — Italian Neorealism

READ: Bordwell & Thompson, Ch. 16 *Postwar European Cinema: Neorealism and Its Context in Film History*.

WATCH: Scorsese, "My Voyage to Italy" (1999).

November 18 — French New Wave

READ: Bordwell & Thompson, Ch. 20 *New Waves and Young Cinemas in Film History*.

WATCH: Breathless (Godard, 1960).

November 25 — THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO CLASS)

December 2 — TBA