

AI 159 Understanding the World's Great Cinema

**DePaul University
School for New Learning**

Fall 2009

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| Faculty: | Rebecca Schwan |
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| Quarter: | Fall |
| Day: | Wednesday |
| Dates: | September 09 - November 17 |
| Time: | 6.30 PM |
| Location: | Naperville Campus |
| Competences: | A-1-E, A-3-C, H-1-F, H-5 Other A and H competences can be negotiated |
| Credit Hours: | Four |

Course Description

Cinema is a communication mode that warrants our attention. Through examination of great international artists and their films, much can be learned about cultures with which we are not familiar. Since our experience of film is mediated by our own experience and by our own curiosity about its creator, during this course our attention will focus not only on film as an artistic expression, but on the experiences of the director, and the circumstances that caused her/his films to be created. Most class time will be spent on viewing and discussing a film; preparation for each class will necessitate background knowledge and film analysis by the learner. Throughout this course the learner will become familiar with internationally known film directors, their works, and the historical background that inspired them to produce their art.

General Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of the course the learner will demonstrate ability to:

- Use terminology appropriate to a discussion of film
- Describe, analyze, and evaluate specific film directors, their careers, and the special qualities of their films
- Utilize historical data to understand why specific films were created
- Document the history of censorship as it pertains to film within various geographic areas
- Express the value of film within its social and cultural context

Required by Learners

- (1) Consistent **attendance** (see attendance policy),
inc. *The Chicago International Film Festival* - required attendance !
- (2) A loose leaf **notebook** with dividers
- (3) A **vocabulary** list
- (4) **Bibliography, filmography**
- (5) Written **reviews** of film experiences
- (6) **Final paper/presentation** (satisfies competence/s)

Faculty Contributions

- (1) appropriate readings
- (2) lecture/discussions (supplemented by learner contributions)
- (3) films, audio, and audio visual materials
- (4) bibliography, filmography (supplemented by learner contributions)
- (5) schedule of appropriate events

Learning Strategies

A variety of learning strategies will be utilized throughout this course. Each learner will have opportunities to learn in an individual, small group, and larger group setting. Individual reflection on and summary of each class meeting will be an essential component of the learner's experience.

Teaching Strategies

In his address to incoming students at Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania, Professor Jacob Neusner states that one can learn more from an encyclopedia than one can from a professor. The memorable professors that are encountered will teach by helping students learn on their own. He goes on to say that professors are here to guide, to help, to goad, to irritate, to stimulate, and that students are here to explore, to inquire, to ask questions, to experiment, to negotiate knowledge. Professor Neusner concludes by with the reminder that great teachers don't teach; they help students learn. All teaching strategies in this course are meant to exemplify these thoughts! There is not a required text for this class.

Attendance Policy

Successful completion of this course necessitates **consistent attendance**. The material presented in class is a unique collection from the instructor's personal library; there is no way to duplicate these experiences. In addition, each learner's interaction with other learners is an essential component of the class. If an absence occurs and a film viewing experience and discussion is missed, individual contracts generated by the learner between faculty and individual learner denoting appropriate material would become necessary. It is the learner's responsibility to generate a short, meaningful presentation about some aspect of film which would add to the learning of all class members. This would be presented to the other class members upon the learner's return for the benefit of all. The learner's grade will be affected if this is not completed in a timely manner.

Ethics/Plagiarism Statement

Refer to DePaul University's student handbook.

It is each learner's responsibility to adhere to the university's statement on academic honesty and to be aware of the consequences to the learner if this honesty is compromised. In this class, the most important issue to be familiar with is plagiarism and its various forms. It is also the learner's responsibility, after having read the university's statement, to discuss this with faculty if the learner has questions. Plagiarized papers, in any form, are not accepted. Plagiarism is stealing !

I believe that we respond most and best to work in any art form if we are pluralistic, flexible, relative in our judgments, if we are eclectic.

-----Pauline Kael, I Lost It at the Movies

Tentative Schedule

- Week 1: Writing about film; introduction to Francois Truffaut
Film: "400 Blows"; introduction to Akira Kurosawa
- Week 2: **Due:** written reaction to "400 Blows"
Film: TBA (a film by Akira Kurosawa)
- Week 3: **Due:** written reaction to a film by Akira Kurosawa
Film: TBA
- Week 4: **Due:** written reaction to a film: TBA
Film: TBA (a film by Michael Radford)
- Week 5: **Due:** written reaction to a film by Michael Radford
Film: (a film by Francois Girard)
- Week 6: **Due:** written reaction to a film by Francois Girard
Film: TBA (a film by Satyajit Ray)
- Week 7: *The Chicago International Film Festival*
<http://www.chicagofilmfestival.org/>
[We will not meet as a class for 1 week: Week 7 or Week 6 - TBD]
- Week 8: **Due:** written reaction to a film by Satyajit Ray
Film: TBA
- Week 9: **Due:** written reaction to a film of your choice (to be discussed)
Film: TBA (a film by Majid Majidi)
- Week 10: **Due:** written reaction to a film by Majid Majidi
Final Project: TBA
- Week 11: **Due:** Final Project, written reaction to CIFF film

Rebecca Schwan holds a B.A. from Dominican University and an M.M. from Northern Illinois University where she is pursuing an Ed.D. She is a musicologist, and has taught and/or is teaching World/Culture courses at Saint Xavier University both in a traditional format and on-line, Aurora University, Northern Illinois University, and the Chicago Musical College of Roosevelt University. She has also taught All That Jazz, Great Classical Musics of Europe and India, Communicating in a Global Business Environment, and Critical Thinking at DePaul University in conjunction with the International Bank of Asia, Hong Kong.

Because of her interest in culture and communication, and her English as a Second Language teaching experience, in the spring of 2000 Ms. Schwan developed and implemented the LanguageLab (an in-house language enhancement program) for a multi-national software development company. Here she is the Organizer of the LanguageLab, and an individual language tutor and editor. At the university and in the corporate world, her interests are in developing curricula and serving as a learning facilitator in situations that promote life-long learning, a reverence for life, and pluralism.

Ars longa, vita brevis.