

Course Abstract

If you need accommodations due to a disability, contact Disability Services in Edison Hall Room 100, 732.906.2546.

To foster a productive learning environment, the College requires that all students adhere to the Code of Student Conduct which is published in the college catalog and website.

Course ID and Name: ENG 263 Survey of American Cinema

Department: English

Chairperson or Course Coordinator: Michael Nester

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Prerequisites: ENG 122 of permission of Department Chairperson **Co-requisites:**

Course Description:

This course surveys the masterpieces of major genres of American cinema, focusing on the elements and visual styles of Hollywood storytelling through genres, including but not limited to Western, film noir, war, romance, comedy, horror, musical and science fiction, which entertain audiences as well as mirror American attitudes and values. Students view various examples of classic American motion pictures and analyze them from a variety of cultural, historical, and intellectual perspectives, with an emphasis on key artistic principles and technical advancements, as well as complete reading, writing and research assignments.

General Education Status: GE HUM

Credits: 3 **Lecture Hours:** 3 **Lab Hours:** 0

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to

1. Distinguish and analyze characteristics of familiar Hollywood genres, including but not limited to comedy, Western, film noir, war, romance, horror, musical, science fiction.
2. Correlate the interrelationship between the popularity of Hollywood genres and events in American society during specific time periods.
3. Recognize and describe typical narrative and visual styles of Hollywood movies from specific time periods.
4. Articulate the unique, representative qualities of various American directors and their films, including aesthetic and technological methods, mise en scene, images, genres, stories, cast and crew.
5. Appraise classic American films, orally and in writing, analyzing and critiquing them from various perspectives: aesthetic, technological, historical, social, cultural and economic.

Course Content Areas:

Each week students will view examples of American cinema masterpieces (excerpts and complete films) in light of the following topics. Films will be selected from the American Film Institute's "100 Best" lists.

1. Film Fundamentals: mise en scene, camera and lighting, editing, sound
2. The Hollywood Movie Industry: studio system, narrative and visual styles
3. Cultural, Historical, and/or Cinematic Themes in American movies, such as: coming of age, the outsider, heroic quests, loss and regret, the American Dream, and others.
4. Film Genres (with suggested films)
 - Comedy: *Duck Soup, Some Like it Hot, Dr. Strangelove, Annie Hall*
 - Gangster, Film Noir and Crime: *Scarface: The Shame of a Nation, The Maltese Falcon, Gun Crazy, The Asphalt Jungle, Taxi Driver*
 - Romance: *Casablanca, A Place in the Sun*
 - Western: *High Noon, The Searchers*
 - War: *The Best Years of our Lives, Run Silent Run Deep*
 - Hero: *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington, To Kill a Mockingbird*
 - Musical: *Singin' in the Rain, West Side Story*
 - Science Fiction: *Frankenstein, The Thing from Another World, The Invasion of the Body Snatchers, 2001: A Space Odyssey, Bladerunner, Alien*
 - Horror: *Dracula, The Mummy, The Night of the Living Dead, Rosemary's Baby*
 - Thriller: *Psycho, Cat People, The Silence of the Lambs*
 - Animation: *Fantasia, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*