



Master Course Syllabus

For additional course information, including prerequisites, corequisites, and course fees, please refer to the Catalog: <https://catalog.uvu.edu/>

Semester: Spring

Year: 2025

Course Prefix: THEA

Course and Section #: 2311 001

Course Title: Film History I

Credits: 3

Course Description

Explores the development of the feature film, both in America and abroad from 1895 to 1945. Covers the evolution of motion pictures from conception as an entertainment novelty (c. 1895) to the mass-audience, commercial art form of the 1940's. Examines film as a serious historical study of a form of mass communication, which has had ethical, social, and political consequences on society. Includes lecture, screenings, and demonstrations with critical discussions of assigned readings and films.

Course Attributes

This course has the following attributes:

- General Education Requirements
- Global/Intercultural Graduation Requirements
- Writing Enriched Graduation Requirements
- Discipline Core Requirements in Program
- Elective Core Requirements in Program
- Open Elective

Other: *Click here to enter text.*

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: John Cheney

Student Learning Outcomes

1	Outline the evolution of American film industry practices from Edison through the Studio System of the 1930s.
2	Explain the connection between this evolution and the advancement of current motion picture practices.
3	Compare the characteristics of motion picture industries in the United States with those of emerging world cinemas.
4	Articulate the creation and evolution of various genres, movements, and stars.
5	Argue the ethical, social, and political consequences of industry practices on society.

Course Materials and Texts

Film History: An Introduction by Thompson and Bordwell, McGraw Hill Publisher, **eBook only (connect through Canvas)**

Course Requirements

Course Assignments, Assessments, and Grading Policy

INTRODUCTION VIDEO: To begin the course, you will be making a short 1- to 2-minute introduction video. Why make a video if we meet in class? 1) to get to know everyone in class, not just a few students, and 2) if we have masks or other measures, this gives your peers a chance to actually see your face. Here you will briefly introduce yourself (tell anything interesting e.g. where you are from, major/hobbies/interests, what you want to learn in this class, etc.).

FILM SCREENINGS: Each week of the semester, you will be watching a film for class which illustrates the element being discussed that week. You will be watching the films on your own time, so you are welcome to access the film via whatever avenue you prefer (DVD, NETFLIX, AMAZON, VUDU, etc.), and a FREE method which will be covered below. It is important you watch the films in a quiet, undistracted environment so you can closely observe the material we are discussing. **You should NOT have your cell phone or other electronic devices on while watching the film, and refrain from discussions while watching the film.** In essence, think of your movie watching experience in this class like attending a theater, so you can have the maximum impact.

ACCESSING THE FILMS ON CANVAS:

All of the films are available to watch via Canvas links to YouTube, Swank, Kanopy, and other links via your **COURSE FILMS** module.

If you have **ANY** problems accessing the films on Swank or Kanopy via Canvas contact Alan Stephens @ ext.7367 or at STEPHEAL@uvu.edu, then also contact the instructor.

CONTENT ADVISORY: The films and clips presented in this class for educational purposes are significant for their artistic content and historical and cultural value. *If you have any concerns with any film content, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.*

FILM RESPONSES: After you watch each week's film, you will be expected to watch a related video on Canvas. You will then submit a short video response to a prompt on the film, including information from the additional reading or video, as well as personal insights. These film responses will total 30% of your overall grade.

GROUP PRESENTATION: You will be required to form a group with two other students give a presentation on either 1) ONE FILM of your choice, made between 1895 and 1945, OR 2) track the development of ONE GENRE (e.g. horror) between 1895-1945. These presentations will focus on the story and background of the film, as well as formal and contextual analyses. Each student in the group will present for 3 minutes. These presentations should include multimedia, e.g. concise clips from the film or related documentary footage, still and publicity photos, and other relevant information. These presentations will be given at various points throughout the semester (see course outline and groups sign-up on Canvas).

For ease and flexibility, you will record your presentation, but we will discuss it in class. You will be expected to be prepared to answer questions from other students or the instructor.

This group presentation will amount to 10% of your final grade.

TEXTBOOK QUIZZES: You will read each assigned chapter of the textbook and complete a SmartBook assignment to help with your reading comprehension. At the end of the semester, there will also be an online (open book) final exam from this online textbook. These assignments will be worth 30% of your grade. You can access the textbook through Canvas, signing up for McGraw Hill Connect, which will give you access to the SmartBook and Final Exam.

EVALUATION METHOD:

Evaluation Method	Weight (Percentage)
Film Responses	30%
Attendance & Participation	30%
Textbook/SmartBook	30%
Group Presentation	10%
Total Available=	100

Percentage Grading Scale: 100 – 93 = A; 92.99 – 90 = A-; 89.99 – 87 = B+; 86.9 – 83 = B; 82.9 – 80 = B-; 79.9 – 77 = C+; 76.9 – 73 = C; 72.9 – 70 = C-; 69.9 – 67 = D+; 66.9 – 63 = D; 62.9 – 60 = D-; 59.9 – 0 = E

Required or Recommended Reading Assignments

Click here to enter text.

General Description of the Subject Matter of Each Lecture or Discussion

COURSE OUTLINE

Date of Class Mtg	Topic(s) Covered #	Reading(s):	Assignment Due/ Test	Film to Watch this Week
1/6	• Course and Syllabus overview & Intro	SmartBook Chapter 1		<i>Edison Films</i>
1/8	• The Beginnings of Film			<i>Lumiere Bros. Films</i>
1/13	• The Beginnings of Film	• SmartBook Chapter 2		<i>A Trip to the Moon</i>
1/15	• The 1900s		Chapters 1 & 2 due Sun 1/19 at midnight	<i>The Great Train Robbery</i>
1/20	• NO CLASS – MLK Day	SmartBook Chapter 3		<i>Birth of a</i>

				Movement
1/22	• The 1910s		Chapter 3 due Sun 1/26 at midnight	
1/27	• The 1920s	SmartBook Chapter 4	Presentations 1 & 2	Battleship Potemkin
1/29	•		Chapter 4 due Sun 2/2 at midnight	
2/3	• The 1920s	SmartBook Chapter 5		The General
2/5	•		Presentations 3 & 4 Chapter 5 due Sun 2/9 at midnight	
2/10	• The 1920s	SmartBook Chapter 6	Presentations 5 & 6	Metropolis
2/12	•		Chapter 6 due Sun 2/16 at midnight	
2/17	• NO CLASS – President's Day			Sunrise
2/19	• The 1920s		Presentations 7 & 8	
2/24	• The 1930s	SmartBook Chapter 7		City Lights
2/26	•		Presentations 9 & 10 Chapter 7 due Sun 3/2 at midnight	
3/3	• 1930s Cinema			
3/5	•		Presentations 11 & 12	
3/10-3/15	• Spring Break			
3/17	• 1930s Cinema	SmartBook Chapter 8		It Happened One Night
3/19	•			

3/24	• 1930s Cinema			<i>The Bride of Frankenstein</i>
3/26	•			
3/31	• 1940s Cinema			<i>Citizen Kane</i>
4/2	•			
4/7	• 1940s Cinema			<i>Casablanca</i>
4/9	•		SmartBook Chapter 8 due 4/6 at midnight	
4/14	• 1940s Cinema	SmartBook Chapter 9		<i>The Third Man</i>
4/16	•		SmartBook Chapter 9 due 4/13 at midnight	<i>Rome: Open City</i>
4/21	• Last Day of Class			
4/28	• Final Exam Due at 3pm			
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Required Course Syllabus Statements

Generative AI

AI programs are not a replacement for your human creativity, originality, and critical thinking. Writing, thinking, and researching are crafts that you must develop over time to develop your own individual voice. At the same time, you should learn how to use AI and in what instances AI can be helpful to you.

The use of generative AI tools is **NOT** permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose film responses, discussion board prompts, or content that you put into a Teams/Canvas chat.
- Completing group work.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs or papers to complete class assignments.

The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Google Bard, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas;
- Fine tuning your research questions;
- Finding information on your topic;
- Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts; and
- Checking grammar and style.

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to stay within university policies on academic honesty.

Any student work submitted using AI tools should clearly indicate what work is the student's work and what part is generated by the AI. If any part of this is confusing or uncertain, please reach out to me for a conversation before submitting your work.

Using Remote Testing Software

This course does not use remote testing software.

This course uses remote testing software. Remote test-takers may choose their remote testing locations. Please note, however, that the testing software used for this may conduct a brief scan of remote test-takers' immediate surroundings, may require use of a webcam while taking an exam, may require the microphone be on while taking an exam, or may require other practices to confirm academic honesty. Test-takers therefore shall have no expectation of privacy in their test-taking location during, or immediately preceding, remote testing. If a student strongly objects to using test-taking software, the student should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to determine whether alternative testing arrangements are feasible. Alternatives are not guaranteed.

Required University Syllabus Statements

Accommodations/Students with Disabilities

Students needing accommodations due to a permanent or temporary disability, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions may contact UVU [Accessibility Services](#) at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu or 801-863-8747.

Accessibility Services is located on the Orem Campus in BA 110.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing students requesting ASL interpreters or transcribers can contact Accessibility Services to set up accommodations. Deaf/Hard of Hearing services can be contacted at DHHservices@uvu.edu

DHH is located on the Orem Campus in BA 112.

Academic Integrity

At Utah Valley University, faculty and students operate in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Maintaining an atmosphere of academic integrity allows for free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the

community to achieve their highest potential. Our goal is to foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces scholars of integrity and imaginative thought. In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged and UVU students are expected to produce their own original academic work.

Faculty and students share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at UVU. Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the university by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their [rights and responsibilities](#). In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, assessments, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Likewise, instructors are responsible to clearly state expectations and model best practices.

Further information on what constitutes academic dishonesty is detailed in [UVU Policy 541: Student Code of Conduct](#).

Equity and Title IX

Utah Valley University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age (40 and over), disability, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth, or pregnancy-related conditions, citizenship, genetic information, or other basis protected by applicable law, including Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Inquiries about nondiscrimination at UVU may be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights or UVU's Title IX Coordinator at 801-863-7999 – TitleIX@uvu.edu – 800 W University Pkwy, Orem, 84058, Suite BA 203.

Religious Accommodation

UVU values and acknowledges the array of worldviews, faiths, and religions represented in our student body, and as such provides supportive accommodations for students. Religious belief or conscience broadly includes religious, non-religious, theistic, or non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as well as participation in religious holidays, observances, or activities. Accommodations may include scheduling or due-date modifications or make-up assignments for missed class work.

To seek a religious accommodation, a student must provide written notice to the instructor and the Director of Accessibility Services at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu. If the accommodation relates to a scheduling conflict, the notice should include the date, time, and brief description of the difficulty posed by the conflict. Such requests should be made as soon as the student is aware of the prospective scheduling conflict.

While religious expression is welcome throughout campus, UVU also has a [specially dedicated space](#) for meditation, prayer, reflection, or other forms of religious expression.