

Dr. John Bruns  
Cinema: History and Criticism  
ENGL 212.01, TR 10:50 – 12:05  
Room: RSS 251  
Fall 2020

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### COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course aims to provide a **general introduction to the study of film** with a focus on **developing critical skills** and **investigating diverse approaches to analysis**. Through readings and screenings of a broad range of narrative films, the class will further serve as a brief survey of film history and an overview of classic and contemporary modes of film theory & criticism. You will be exposed to a variety of films produced in the U.S. and other countries from the very beginnings of the medium in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, through the “silent era” of the 1910s-20s and the “golden age” of Hollywood in the 1930s-50s, up to the present. This course is designed to help you acquire a firm grounding in the methods and core material of film history and criticism and to help you become familiar with **some of the most significant topics in film studies**. Each film corresponds to a specific topic: pre-narrative cinema; techniques of storytelling in narrative film; German Expressionism and Soviet montage cinema; *mise-en-scène*; major movements in post-WWII European cinema; feminist film theory; the New Hollywood; and the rise of digital filmmaking. By the end of this course, you will become a more critical and creative viewer of the artistic medium of cinema, knowledgeable in the history of the most popular art form of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, and you will possess the analytical skills to understand and interpret visual forms of expression. You will also be well equipped for future courses should you choose to declare a **Film Studies minor**.

### REQUIRED FILMS

**Way Down East** (dir. Griffith, 1920); **Our Hospitality** (dir. Blystone/Keaton, 1923); **The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari** (dir. Wiene, 1920); **Battleship Potemkin** (dir. Eisenstein, 1925); **A Man Escaped** (dir. Bresson, 1956); **Citizen Kane** (dir. Welles, 1941); **Bicycle Thieves** (dir. De Sica, 1948); **Shoot the Piano Player** (dir. Truffaut, 1960); **Vertigo** (dir. Hitchcock, 1956); **Once Upon a Time...in Hollywood** (dir. Tarantino, 2019); **Inception** (dir. Nolan, 2010)