Instructor: Ryan Pierson  
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Web Page: http://D2L  
Office Hours: M 14:00 – 15:00, TH 14:30 – 15:30

Course Description
While Charles Chaplin has been almost universally regarded as a superlative artist of cinema, celebrations and studies of Chaplin’s work are usually limited to his performance style, or to the mythical appeal of his Tramp character. So what, exactly, is cinematic about his films? This course will attempt to provide some tentative answers to this question. In addition, we will examine how Chaplin’s style was forged in context with other major aesthetic developments of his time—namely, D.W. Griffith’s cinematic melodramas and Keystone’s slapstick comedies—as well as the ways that his style adapted to feature-length films and to the coming of sound.

Objectives of the Course
By the end of this course, students should have a firm grasp of the particularities of Chaplin’s filmmaking style, as well as an understanding of the varied cultural meanings that circulated around his work. In addition, this course will help students develop necessary skills for academic writing.

Textbooks and Readings
Our primary text for the course will be Charlie Chaplin, Director, by Donna Kornhaber (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2014), noted in the schedule as CCD. It is available at the campus bookstore. Supplementary readings will be available on D2L.

Internet and electronic communication device information
Laptops may be used only for taking notes and consulting the readings for discussion; they may not be out during screenings. (You will be given time to take notes on each short.) Handheld
devices (cell phones, etc.) may not be used at any time. First offense will result in a verbal warning; further violations will affect your grade.

**Assignments and Evaluation**

*Participation (ongoing): 10%*

Because participation is a necessary component of the course, students are expected to attend lectures and screenings, as well as participate in classroom discussion. Each day of discussion, you will be marked on the following scale:

- **10/10:** present, makes at least one substantial contribution to discussion, brings course readings
- **5/10:** present, does not contribute to discussion or does not bring course readings
- **2/10:** present, neither contributes to discussion nor brings course readings

Marks will be determined by the quality¹ and quantity of your participation, as well as whether or not you bring the course readings. Students who attend but do not participate can expect no more than a 5/10; students who do not regularly bring the course readings, even if they speak, can expect the same.

You are allowed up to three absences, for any reason. Absences accumulated thereafter will result in deductions from your final participation grade, one point for each missing day (e.g., if you miss one extra day and your participation average is 8/10, it will be dropped to 7/10).

*Discussion board posts (ongoing): 15%*

Every other week, you will post on the D2L discussion board your reflection on the week’s material. Your post must be at least 150 words long, speak about some aspect of the week’s film, and quote the reading (or paraphrase in detail some part of it). Each post will be graded on the following scale:

- Meets word count, discusses reading: 10/10
- Fails to meet word count and/or discuss reading and/or is (up to 72 hours) late: 4/10
- More than 72 hours late or missing: 0/10

Posts are due Friday at 9 a.m.

*Discussion aides (ongoing): 15%*

Each week, a small group will be responsible for sparking the week’s discussion. Discussion should aim at detailed analysis of the week’s topic. It should consist of an illuminating clip and a passage from the reading, with commentary and provocations; if possible, it should also include 1-2 broader questions for the class to consider.

These discussion aides are not presentations, and they need not be formal. They only need to guide the class through major concepts and concerns.

*Comparative source study (due Feb. 13): 15%*

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¹ “Quality” here simply means “a complete subject-predicate thought that is about the course material.” “Yes” or “no” responses do not count as “quality” participation. “I liked this” or “I found that confusing” do not yet count as quality participation (as they are statements about you and not the material); but they are excellent starting points for quality participation, since they imply specific points about the material that may be clarified.
For Week 5, you will be asked to find and analyze two primary sources on Chaplin, each from a different period (as broken down in the syllabus). Compare the approaches that these sources take to their subject. How is Chaplin represented consistently, or inconsistently, across these periods? What is considered important about him? What is assumed, what is spelled out? How does this fit or not fit with the historical studies covered so far in the course?

Studies should be two pages long. Sources can be found on Lantern: http://lantern.mediahist.org/. Further details will be given later in the semester.

**Paper proposal (due Mar. 12) 15%**
A short document proposing a topic and approach for your final research paper. The proposal should include a brief description of your major research questions or arguments, and roughly how you plan on executing them. It should also have a formatted bibliography.

**Final Research Paper (due Apr. 21): 30%**
An 8-10 page research essay on an approved topic of the student’s choice and related to the course themes and materials. Further details will be given later in the semester.

**Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO**

**Submission of Assignments:** Please hand in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day’s date, and placed in the instructor’s mailbox.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at final exams in SS 320 after classes have ended. Personal information is collected in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act. For more information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy

**Note:** It is the student’s responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment. For courses in which assignments are submitted electronically, it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that the correct copy of the assignment is submitted. (Including the version date or version number in your file name may help you avoid submitting the wrong version of your written assignments.)

**Policy for Late Assignments**
For late assignments, one-third of a letter grade will be subtracted from the assignment for each 24-hour period.

**Student Accommodations**
Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS); SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should provide supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require that a medical note be presented. For the policy on supporting documentation the use of a statutory declaration, see Section M.1 of the University Calendar: [https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html](https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html). Also see FAQs for Students: [https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals/student-faq](https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals/student-faq).

**Expectations for Writing**
Department policy directs that all written assignments and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization and proper documentation of research sources. For further information, please refer to the *University of Calgary Calendar* section on writing across the curriculum: [http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html](http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html).

**Grading & Grade Scale of the Department of Communication, Media and Film**
Final grades are reported as letter grades. However, assignments, exams, and other work in this course will be graded using letter grades.

The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Department. If letter grades are used for an assignment or other course component, the percentage equivalent in the final column will be used for calculating the final grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Department grade scale equivalents</th>
<th>Letter grade % equivalent for calculations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>96 - 100%</td>
<td>98.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>Excellent—superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 - 95.99%</td>
<td>93.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.70</td>
<td></td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>85 - 89.99%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.30</td>
<td></td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>80 - 84.99%</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>Good—clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>75 - 79.99%</td>
<td>77.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.70</td>
<td></td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70 - 74.99%</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.30</td>
<td></td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>65 - 69.99%</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>Satisfactory—basic understanding of the subject matter.</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>60 - 64.99%</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Plagiarism
Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. **In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people’s words and ideas begin.** Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there.

For information on citation and documentation styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, IEEE, etc.), visit the Student Success Centre resource links at [https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support](https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support) or the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) Research and Citation Resources at [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html)

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, please consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, 3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to [https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success?utm_source=ssc&utm_medium=redirect&utm_campaign=redirect](https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success?utm_source=ssc&utm_medium=redirect&utm_campaign=redirect)

**Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation**
Course materials created by the instructor (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the same course section and term may be allowed under fair dealing. Check with the instructor if you have any questions about sharing materials with classmates.
All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf) and requirements of the copyright act (https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Academic Misconduct
For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html

Research Ethics
Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see https://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/arts-researchers/resources-researchers-and-instructors/ethics

Deferrals of Course Work and Requests for Reappraisal
For university regulations and procedures related to deferrals of exams and course work, requests for reappraisals, and other matters, please see the relevant sections in the University Calendar: https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html

Student Support Services and Resources
Please visit https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines for information about student support services and resources, including Wellness and Mental Health Resources, Student Success programs and services, the Student Ombuds Office, the Student Union, and Safewalk.

For resources on D2L, visit http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students. IT support is available at itsupport@ucalgary.ca or by calling 403-220.5555.

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND READINGS
(all films dir. Charles Chaplin unless otherwise noted)

Week 1 (Jan. 14 & 16): Chaplin Style versus Classical Style
~Read:
   CCD, Introduction
~Screen:
   A Woman of Paris (1923)
   Way Down East (D.W. Griffith, 1920)

PART ONE: SHORT SUBJECTS (1914-1923)
Week 2 (Jan. 21 & 23): Attractions and the Keystone style
-Read:
  CCD, Chapter 1
  Donald Crafton, “Pie and Chase”
-Screen:
  Those Awful Hats (Griffith, 1909)
  A Corner in Wheat (Griffith, 1909)
  The Sealed Room (Griffith, 1909)
  Twenty Minutes of Love (1914)
  Dough and Dynamite (1914)

Week 3 (Jan. 28 & 30): Chaplin’s Performance: the Slapsticked Body
-Read:
  CCD, Chapter 2
  Rob King, “Charles Chaplin and the Comedy of Class”
-Screen:
  The Lonely Villa (Griffith, 1909)
  Help! Help! (Mack Sennett, 1912)
  Mabel’s Busy Day (Mabel Normand, 1914)
  The Fireman (1916)
  I A.M. (1916)
  The Rink (1916)

Week 4 (Feb. 4 & 6): Chaplin’s Pathos: the Innocent Subject
-Read:
  Charles Maland, “Early Films and Rise to Stardom” (excerpts)
  Peter Brooks, “The Melodramatic Imagination”
  Jean Epstein, “Amour de Charlot”
-Screen:
  The Tramp (1915)
  A Dog’s Life (1918)
  The Kid (1921)

Week 5 (Feb. 11 & 13): Chaplin’s Popularity: The Myth of the Tramp
Read:
  Viktor Shklovsky, “Chaplin”
  Rudolf Arnheim, “Motion”
  Sergei Eisenstein, “Charlie the Kid”
  Andre Bazin, “Charlie Chaplin”
Screen:
  Shoulder Arms (1918)
  The Pilgrim (1923)
Ballet Mecanique (Fernand Leger, 1924)

COMPARATIVE SOURCE STUDY DUE FEB. 13

Week 6 (Feb. 18 & 20): TERM BREAK, NO CLASSES

PART TWO: FEATURES, SILENT (1923-1931)

Week 7 (Feb. 25 & 27): Slapstick-classical: Lloyd and Keaton
Read:
   CCD, Chapter 3
Screen:
   Safety Last! (Hal Roach, 1923)
   Cops (Edward F. Cline & Buster Keaton, 1922)

Week 8 (Mar. 3 & 5): Chaplin's spaces
Read:
   CCD, Chapter 4
   Andre Bazin, “The Evolution of the Language of Cinema”
Screen:
   Easy Street (1917)
   The Vagabond (1916)
   The Gold Rush (1925)

Week 9 (Mar. 10 & 12): Chaplin's ambiguity
Read:
   CCD, Chapter 5
Screen:
   The Immigrant (1917)
   The Circus (1928)

PAPER PROPOSALS DUE MARCH 12

Week 10 (Mar. 17 & 19): The resistance to sound
Read:
   CCD, Chapter 6
Screen
   City Lights (1931)

PART THREE: FEATURES, SOUND (1936-1967)

Week 11 (Mar. 24 & 26): The Acousmatic Chaplin
Read:
  CCD, Chapter 7 (209-224 only)
  Michel Chion, “The Acousmetre”
Screen:
  Modern Times (1936)

Week 12 (Mar. 31 & Apr. 2): Monologues
Read:
  CCD, Chapter 7 (224-233 only)
  Rob King, “Retheorizing Comedic and Political Discourse”
Screen:
  The Great Dictator (1940)

Week 12 (Apr. 7 & 9): More voices
Read:
  CCD, Chapter 8
  James Agee, “Monsieur Verdoux”
Screen:
  Monsieur Verdoux (1947)

Week 13 (Apr. 14): Return to Form?
Read:
  CCD, Chapter 9
Screen:
  A Countess from Hong Kong (1967)

FINAL PAPER DUE APR. 21