

University of Calgary  
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Film Studies (FILM) 405-01: *Film Noir*

Block Week 2019: August 26-30<sup>th</sup>

Lecture + Screenings: MTWRF 9:30AM-5:30PM

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Lee Carruthers
<b>Office:</b>	SS232
<b>Office Phone:</b>	403-210-8858
<b>Email:</b>	lee.carruthers@ucalgary.ca
<b>Web Page:</b>	D2L
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Because this is a Block Week course, I will be available by appointment only. Please send me an email to arrange a meeting time. After the course ends, you can set a meeting with me during my regular office hours— just send me an email.

### Course Description

This course engages the enduring appeal of film noir, taken as a complex filmic phenomenon that opens up questions of film aesthetics, theory, history, and culture. Beginning with noir's iconic private eyes and femme fatales, we examine the noir cycle produced in Hollywood during the 1940s and 1950s, working to discern its distinctive formal and thematic features. Next, we situate the films historically, analyzing the cycle's critical reception, literary materials, and cinematic antecedents, before turning to contemporary iterations of 'neo-noir' via directors such as Scorsese, Soderbergh, the Coen Brothers, and Nicholas Refn. Finally, a special emphasis of this Block Week course concerns the political dimensions of noir, reading the films as rich and ambivalent articulations of cultural anxieties— and thus as meaningful narratives for the present context.

### Additional Information

As you realize, this is a block week course. We will be in class from 9AM-5PM Monday through Friday, and **your attendance is required each day for the full session**, including the daily screenings. We will take attendance every morning and afternoon: please bring your student I.D. card for this purpose. Because the course is an intensive learning format, it will require your full attention. There will be assigned readings each night, so please do not plan any additional activities (work shifts, volunteer activities, etc.). Students should expect to spend approximately two hours each night during the week in preparation for the next day's class. The daily schedule of topics and readings can be found at the end of this outline and via D2L. Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline.

### Objectives of the Course

This course has three main objectives:

- To develop a nuanced understanding of *film noir* that considers its historical significance and cultural relevance for the present
- To deploy nuanced film-analytical skills that allow us to approach these films as complex, aesthetic objects
- To recognize the ways that *film noir* is a protean critical construct that has meant different things to different people over time.

## Textbooks and Readings

Required readings are as follows:

- For purchase at the University Bookstore, James Naremore's *More Than Night: Film Noir in its Contexts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, Second Edition, Revised, 2008). Designated as **MTN** on the course schedule.
- Additional required readings will be posted on **D2L** and are listed as such on the course schedule.

## Policy on the use of Electronic Communication Devices

Do not use your laptop for email or unauthorized browsing during class time or you will jeopardize your participation grade. Likewise, texting and cell phone use is not permitted: please turn off these devices when you arrive at the classroom to avoid irreversible grade penalties. No photographic, audio, or video recording is permitted without the instructor's permission.

## Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed Components	Due
40%	<p><b>Reading Quizzes</b> These straightforward daily quizzes are designed to confirm your familiarity with the assigned readings, and are usually written at the beginning of class. They will cover <b>required readings only</b>— so, <i>not</i> the readings indicated as 'In-class, for discussion,' or as 'Recommended.'</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> on the first day of class (Monday, August 26<sup>th</sup>), we will write an <b>open-book</b> reading quiz, to ease into the quiz format. The <b>remaining daily quizzes will be closed- book</b>, and therefore require advance preparation. Please consult the schedule of readings below to know which readings to complete each day. If you have concerns or questions about the quizzes, contact me ASAP.</p>	daily, in-class, 5 total
20%	<p><b>Film Notes</b> Your observations and ideas about the films screened in class, responding to a daily prompt. Guidelines for writing a good film note will be provided both in-class and on the course D2L page. Your notes will be drafted during class time and posted to D2L thereafter.</p> <p><b>In-class participation</b> Informed contributions to discussion will support this part of your grade.</p>	Daily, in-class, posted to D2L  Assessed daily
40 %	<p><b>Final Essay</b> (to be submitted after the course ends) A paper that deploys the course literature and performs some film-textual analysis, 2500 words in length, on one of the central films and/or issues of the course. A range of topics and detailed instructions for the successful completion of this essay will be provided on that last day of the course. Papers are due after the course ends: see the designated due date and submission instructions. Late papers will be subjected to a grade penalty.</p>	Due date: September 23 <sup>rd</sup> 2019

## Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO

**Note:** You must complete all assignments and exams or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. If you miss a required course component, contact your instructor as soon as possible.

### Submission of Assignments

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments and hand in your essays directly to your instructor. If you are unable to do so, please use the drop box 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. **Note:** It is your responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that you submit the proper version (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission).

Be prepared to provide photo ID to pick up assignments in SS 320. Private information related to individual students is treated with the utmost regard by University of Calgary faculty. Student assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty, and personal information is collected in accordance with the ***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act***. Please note that instructors may use audio or video recorded for lesson capture, assessment of student learning, and self-assessment of teaching practices.

### Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

### 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/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/). Students who require an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

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>. Also see FAQs for Students: <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>

## Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

In this course, final grades are reported as letter grades; quizzes and film notes will be scored numerically; the final essay will receive a letter grade. The following table outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. Final grades are reported as letter grades. For components graded using percentages or numerical scores, those values will be used directly in calculating the final course grade, while for components graded using letter grades, the letter grades will be converted to the midpoint values listed in the final column of the table below in calculating the final course grade.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations*
4.00	Outstanding performance	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent performance	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70	Approaching excellent performance	A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30	Exceeding good performance	B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good performance	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70	Approaching good performance	B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance	C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory performance	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	F	0 - 49.99%	0%

\* Column 4: If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades. Column 5: These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

## 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> 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, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](http://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, including surveys, interviews, or observations as part of your university studies, you are responsible for obtaining research ethics approval and for following university research ethics guidelines. In some cases, your instructors may apply for course-based research ethics approval for certain assignments, and in those cases, they must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, please 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](mailto:itsupport@ucalgary.ca) or by calling 403-220.5555.

**Schedule of Lectures, Readings, and Films  
available on the D2L course page**