

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

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

Block Week Fall 2021:
Aug 30 ~ Sept 3 2021

Lecture: MoTuWeThFr 10:00AM - 6:00PM (online)

All course components are synchronous

IMPORTANT NOTE ON COURSE DELIVERY

Asynchronous & Synchronous Course Components: Please read this outline carefully to see which course components will be offered synchronously (where you are expected to participate in person or online at the usual scheduled course time) and which components will be offered asynchronously (to be completed on your own time). Synchronous sessions hosted on Zoom can be accessed on D2L by clicking on the Communications tab and selecting Zoom.

Note: If you will not be able to participate in synchronous in-class or online class sessions owing to time differences or geographical location, then consult with the instructor to see if accommodation is possible or arrange to take this course in a future term.

Online Quizzes and Exams: You will be allowed a minimum window of 24 hours to access online quizzes and exams, but there may be a time limit for completing a quiz once you open it. Read the description carefully. The time specified for any timed online assessments includes 50% extra time.

Instructor:	Lee Carruthers
Email:	lee.carruthers@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	Email for an after-class zoom meeting.

Course Description

This course engages the enduring appeal of film noir, taken as a complex filmic phenomenon that illuminates 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 Martin Scorsese, Joel and Ethan Coen, Nicholas Refn and Steven Soderbergh. 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.

Important Course Information

This is an online block week course, taught **synchronously**. Lecture and discussion will not be recorded. Class time runs from 10AM~6PM Monday through Friday, and **attendance is required for the full session each day**, which blends lecture, discussion, and film screenings. Please turn your **video on** during class time to facilitate discussion with your peers. If technological or other difficulties prevent you from maintaining a reliable internet connection for the full week, please consider taking an in-person course option during the regular term. Attendance will be recorded every morning and afternoon: if you have a medical issue or other urgent situation during the course week, notify the instructor ASAP.

Because the course is an intensive learning format, it requires significant time and attention from you. Students should expect to spend approximately two hours each night preparing for the next day's class. There will be assigned readings to complete every evening after class, so please do not plan any additional activities (work shifts, volunteer activities, etc.) for the duration of the course. Consistently completing the readings will prepare you for the daily quizzes, written during class time, as well as the film screenings (accessible via the D2L course

page). Please note that all course tasks are to be completed at specified times during the day: they cannot be deferred until later in the day, submitted the next day, or after the course ends. The one exception is the final essay, which is due three weeks after the course concludes. (See Assignments and Evaluation, below.)

The daily schedule of topics and readings will be emailed to you before the course starts and a copy will be posted on the D2L course page. Students are responsible for reading and following all policies discussed in the document and should also keep up with any small changes to the schedule announced in class.

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.

Learning Technologies and Requirements

In order to complete online (or blended) courses, University of Calgary students are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security and malware updates, with current antivirus software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection, and a current and updated web browser;
- A webcam (built-in or external), and a microphone and speaker (built-in or external) or headset with microphone.

If you need access to other software programs to complete assignments, your instructor will provide relevant information and links. If you have technical difficulties, contact IT support services. See

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/student-campus-services-information-technologies-it.html>

Policy on the Use of Electronic Communication Devices

Do not use electronic devices for email, texting, or unauthorized browsing during class time or you will jeopardize your participation grade. No photographic, audio, or video recording is permitted without the instructor's permission. Please familiarize yourself with the University's policy on the recording of lectures, which is outlined at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html>, and carefully review the section on Instructor Copyright at the end of this outline.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed Components	Due
40%	<p>Daily Quizzes</p> <p>These short, in-class quizzes will be written at the start of each day (from 10:00-10:30am). Each quiz presents 3-5 straightforward short-answer questions about the assigned reading: if you have read this material carefully, you will find the quizzes simple to complete. The questions will cover the <i>required</i> readings only (not recommended ones). You will have thirty minutes to complete the quiz and submit your answers to the designated Dropbox folder. Please note that the time allowed includes 50% extra time to accommodate the online format. Questions will be accessible during the quiz time only; after this, the folder will be closed. It is your</p>	<p>Daily, completed in-class, 5 total (valued at 8% each)</p>

	responsibility to read the instructions carefully and to submit your completed quiz on time every morning. Late submissions will not be accepted. The course syllabus indicates which readings to complete each day. If you have concerns or questions about this task, please contact me.	
25%	<p>Film Notes 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>In-class participation Informed contributions to discussion will support this part of your grade. ('Informed' means, 'on the basis of the course readings and discussions.')</p>	<p>Daily, in-class, posted to D2L</p> <p>Assessed daily</p>
35%	<p>Final Essay 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.</p> <p>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>	<p>Due date: Sept. 21 2021</p>

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 submit to the designated D2L dropbox. **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).

Policy for Late Assignments

Quizzes will not be accepted for grading after the deadline. Course 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/. Students who require an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their instructor. For the full policy on Student Accommodations, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-accommodation-policy>. 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 a medical note. For information on the use of a statutory declaration, see the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>

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

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. 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

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support>

Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation

Course materials created by the instructor (including lectures, 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.

To ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes & electronic versions of textbooks), all students are required to read the *University of Calgary Policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright* at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy> and the requirements of the *Copyright Act* (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>). 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 deferral of term work, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

For information about deferrals of final examinations, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>

For information about requesting a reappraisal of course work or of a final grade, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

Student Support Services and Resources

Please see <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, Zoom, Yuja, etc., see <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students>. (Find the topic menu under the icon to the left of the ELEARN banner.)

A complete schedule of course lecture topics, readings, and films

will be made available closer to the course start date.