

PHIL 360
PHILOSOPHY & FILM
Fall 2021
[DRAFT]

Mon/Thurs - 2:30-3:30
Location TBA

Dr. Nina Belmonte
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Off. Hours: Mon. 1:00-2:00

Course Description:

Ever walk out of a theatre wishing you could convince everyone to stay and talk about the film? In this course we will investigate the appearance of philosophy in/as film. Each week we will analyze one philosophically significant film (old and new, from diverse countries and directors), and read from corresponding texts in philosophy, aesthetics, film theory, and fiction. We will explore how ideas can be conveyed in light, color, sound and motion as well as in narrative.

Intended Learning Outcomes:

In this course you will learn how to ‘read’ a film - with regard to editing, sound, narrative, character and *mise en scene* – all critical viewing skills for life in our culture of the screen (large & small). You will encounter key topics in film theory and philosophy, and identify their interplay on the screen. You will be challenged to become more attentive viewers and readers, deeper thinkers and better writers, honing your skills at articulating your thoughts and writing more effectively – indispensable assets for all walks of life, from the living room to the boardroom.

Course Material:

All texts and recordings will be accessible via the UVic course website. Films will be available online or from UVic Library’s media, digital and streaming sources.

Assignments:

Class Participation and Weekly Homework Assignments:	20%
Philosophical Film Analysis 2 x 25% each	50%
Final Film Analysis	<u>30%</u>
	100%

Course “Rhythm”

Each week you will:

Watch the “focus film” of the week.

Read the accompanying two texts on film theory and philosophy.

Inquire further into the film and readings by attending and participating in class.

Review the week’s material and articulate your thoughts in written or recorded answers to homework questions.

Description of Assignments

Weekly Homework Assignments: 20%

Each week there will be short written answers to study questions due. These are designed to help you think about the films and gauge your understanding of the readings.

Philosophical Film Reviews (~1000 Words) (2 at 20% each)

There will be two philosophical film review essays required in this course, providing opportunities to improve your critical viewing and writing skills, and to prepare you for your final essay. For each essay, you will be assigned a working group with which to share ideas and reviews. Essays will be evaluated on the following: your understanding of and engagement with the course material; integration of ideas and visual details; the quality of your thought; and the clarity and presentation of your writing (including spelling, punctuation, and grammar).

I will post suggested paper topics at least one week before the due date, but you are free to choose a topic of your own, as long as you *speak with me before the due date*.

Final Film Analysis – (30%)

There will be a more substantial (2500 words) essay due at the end of the semester in which you will analyze a single film not covered in the course. I will provide a list of possible films/topics, but you are free to choose one of your own, as long as you *speak with me at least 48 hours in advance*. This final project should draw from the course readings and include at least three secondary sources (academic papers, books, or film reviews) that were not included in course readings. Final projects will be evaluated on the following: your understanding of and engagement with the course material and the chosen outside sources; integration of ideas and visual details; the quality of your thought; and the clarity and presentation of your writing (including spelling, punctuation, and grammar).

Evaluation/Grades:

Percentages will convert to a letter grade according to the following scheme:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 65-69	D = 50-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 60-64	F = 0-49
A- = 80-84	B- = 70-72		

Policy on Late Assignments

Limited, short-term extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis, *as long as the request is made before the day the assignment is due*. Appropriate accommodations will be made for those with an accommodation letter from the Center for Accessible Learning, but please note that such a letter is not “a blanket extension on all work, nor is it a license to submit work after the course has ended.”

A Note on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Actions such as plagiarism, multiple submissions, falsifying materials used in academic evaluations, cheating, aiding others to cheat, or unauthorized use of an editor violate University policies on academic integrity and are considered serious offences.

You must inform yourself about the university regulations (see [UVic Policy on Academic Integrity](#)).

Unauthorized Use of an Editor

An editor is an individual or service, other than the instructor or supervisory committee, who manipulates, revises, corrects or alters a student’s written or non-written work. The use of an editor, whether paid or unpaid, is prohibited unless the instructor grants explicit written authorization. If you have questions, please ask!

University Policy on Human Rights, Equity, and Fairness

According to the [Policy on Human Rights, Equity, and Fairness](#), the “University promotes a safe, respectful and supportive learning and working environment for all members of the university community. The University fosters an environment characterized by fairness, openness, equity, and respect for the dignity and diversity of its members. The University strives to be a place that is free of discrimination and harassment, injustice and violence. The strength and vibrancy of the University is found in the diverse life experiences, backgrounds and worldviews of all its members.”

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****Territory Acknowledgement****

We acknowledge with respect the Lkwungen-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Schedule of Classes [Tentative]

WEEK ONE: Introductions

Watch: Course Welcome video

Watch: UVic's "Territorial Acknowledgement" video

September 9 Inquire: Philosophy and/as/in Film?

WEEK TWO: "Kinema-to-graphy"

**Watch: "The Story of Film" (Cousins, 2011)
(Intro, and Ch. One)**

13 Inquire: How Does Film "Lie to Tell the Truth"?
Read: Bazin, "The Ontology of the Image"

16 Inquire: Does Digital Technology Change Film?
Read: Manovich, "Digital Cinema and the History of a
Moving Image"

WEEK THREE: Philosophy in Film: Can Film "Do" Philosophy?

Watch: "Waking Life" (Linklater, 2001)

20 Inquire: What is the Holy Moment?
Read: Grabiner, "The Holy Moment"

23 Inquire: Can Film "Do" Philosophy?
Read: Carroll, "Movie Made Philosophy"

WEEK FOUR: Philosophy as Film: Lights

Watch: "The Seventh Seal," (Bergman, 1957)

27 Inquire: How Does Bergman Show Us Inner Life?
Read: Bálazs, "Visible Man"

30 Inquire: What is the Truth of Our Existence?
Read: Kierkegaard, "Truth is Subjectivity"

WEEK ELEVEN: Philosophy of Film: *Affect*

Watch: "Rear Window," (Hitchcock, 1954)

15 Inquire: Why Do We Love to Watch?

Read: Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"

18 Inquire: How do Images Manipulate Us?

Read: Fawell, "Fashion Dreams"

WEEK TWELVE: Philosophy of Film: Representation & Identity

Watch: "To Sleep With Anger" (Burnett, 1990)

22 Inquire: How Does Burnett Show Us Identity as Myth?

Read: Naremore, *Charles Burnett*, Chp. 5

25 Inquire: Is Film Racially Biased?

Read: Mills, "Non-Cartesian Sums"

WEEK THIRTEEN: Philosophy of Film: Ethics of the Image

Watch: "Even the Rain," (Bollarain, 2010)

29 Inquire: How Does Film Show Us Ourselves?

Read: Cilanto, "Even the Rain: Confluence of Cinematic and Historic Temporalities"

December 2 Inquire: Can Film Be an Historical Conscience?

Read: Redzinski, "Making the Fiction Visible"

****Final Paper Due December 10th****