

SAULT COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY



SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO

COURSE OUTLINE

'WESTERNS: A STUDY IN THE FILM GENRE'

SA-OEL845

WINTER 2009

Program: Distance Education – General Interest

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Date: January 9th, 2009

Approved:

Dean

Date

Total Credits: 3

Prerequisites: None

Total Hours/Weeks: 48/14

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(705) 759-2554, Ext.2612*

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This class will explore the film genre of Westerns. Major themes, theories and ideas will be examined via the work of selected actors, directors and films. Subjects to be studied via discussion and assignments include The History of the Western / Components of the Western / Landscape and Setting / Actors / Directors / Films / Indigenous Peoples. The course will conclude with an analysis of the place of the Western in a contemporary context - can it still 'sit tall in the saddle'?

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:

Upon successful completion of this course, you will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Situate a Western film within a specific context.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- Provision of arguments for a film to be classified as a 'Western'.
- Relation of a film to a defined historical and social context.
- Recognition of a director's 'body of work'.

2. Discuss the values – explicit or implied – of a given Western film.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- Evaluation of gender and race relations within a film.
- Identification of the role of the natural environment in a film.
- Analysis of political and economic arguments presented by a film.

3. Discuss the cultural impact of the Western.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- Evaluation of popular reception to key films.
- Analysis of cultural resonance of specific Western actors.
- Examination of the role of critical response to the Western.

III. TOPICS

Week 1 (January 9th to January 16th)

A History of the Western

Required Reading: The Rough Guide to Westerns, pp. 1-18

Week 2 (January 16th to 23rd)

A History of the Western – Part Two

Required Reading: The Rough Guide to Westerns, pp. 19-47 & pp. 193-218

Week 3 (January 23rd to 30th)

Landscape and Setting

Required Reading: The Rough Guide to Westerns, pp. 219-237

Week 4 (January 30th to February 6th)

Indigenous Peoples

Required Reading: The Rough Guide to Westerns, pp. 208-210

Week 5 (February 6th to 13th)

Selected Actors – Gary Cooper

Required Reading: The Rough Guide to Westerns, pp. 147-192

Week 6 (February 13th to 20th)

Selected Actors – Ben Johnson

Required Reading: The Rough Guide to Westerns, pp. 147-192

Week 7 (February 20th to 27th)

Selected Directors – Budd Boetticher

Required Reading: The Rough Guide to Westerns, pp. 147-192

Week 8 (February 27th to March 6th)

Selected Directors – Clint Eastwood

Required Reading: The Rough Guide to Westerns, pp. 147-192

Week 9 (March 6th to 13th)

Selected Films – *The Wild Bunch*

Required Reading: The Rough Guide to Westerns, pp. 48-146

Week 10 (March 13th to 20th)

Selected Films – *Lonely Are the Brave*

Required Reading: The Rough Guide to Westerns, pp. 48-146

Week 11 (March 20th to 27th)

Selected Films – *Hud*

Required Reading: The Rough Guide to Westerns, pp. 48-146

Week 12 (March 27th to April 3rd)

Review Week

Weeks 13 & 14 (April 3rd to 10th) & (April 10th to 17th)

Final exam period

IV. Required Text:

- Simpson, Paul. *The Rough Guide to Westerns*. First Edition. New York: Rough Guides Ltd., 2006.

V. EVALUATION PROCESS / GRADING SYSTEM

Participation – 10 %:

Participation questions – Beginning at the end of Week 1, students will complete **10** online participation questions worth **1%** each. Questions related to a given

week's subject will be posted on the discussion forum at the end of each respective week. Students are required to post a 1 to 2 paragraph response to the initial question and are then encouraged to respond to ideas presented within that specific topic 'thread'. Students will have one week to post a response to each question.

Film Review #1 – 30% - Due date: February 20th - Week 6:

Students will review a selected Western film and provide a 3 page (approximately 750 words) review that incorporates ideas studied within the course. The review will provide a plot synopsis and analyze specific themes & issues contained within that film. A selection of relevant films and assignment guidelines will be provided.

Film Review #2 – 30% - Due date: April 3rd - Week 12:

Students will review a selected Western film and provide a 3 page (approximately 750 words) review that incorporates ideas studied within the course. The review will provide a plot synopsis and analyze specific themes & issues contained within that film. A selection of relevant films and assignment guidelines will be provided.

Final Exam – 30% - Date: April 3rd to April 17th

The final hard-copy exam will provide a selection of questions for students to discuss ideas, themes and issues contained with the course. A review template will be provided.

Plagiarism and Submission of Assignments

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence which students must be aware of in preparing essays and other assignments. We will review the definition of plagiarism as well as the penalties for "appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts of passages of his or her writing, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the products of one's own mind." (Black's Law Dictionary) Examples of proper citation procedures will be provided.

Late assignments will be penalized 1 assignment mark per working day (i.e. weekends and statutory holidays are not counted). Assignments will not be accepted after the official end of the Winter term exam period (**April 17th**).

VI. SPECIAL NOTES:

1. If you are a student with a disability please identify your needs to the tutor and/or the Centre for Students with Disabilities at your registering college.
2. Students, it is your responsibility to retain course outlines for possible future use to support applications for transfer of credit to other educational institutions.
3. Course outline amendments: The Professor reserves the right to change the information contained in this course outline depending on the needs of the learner and the availability of resources.