

Catherine Jurca  
cjurca@hss.caltech.edu  
Dabney 311, office hours tbd

En/F 160a  
Introduction to Classical Hollywood Cinema: the 1930s

Description: This course introduces students to Hollywood films and filmmaking, from the advent of sound film in the late 1920s through the beginning of World War II. It covers basic techniques and vocabulary of film analysis, as we learn to think of films as texts with distinctive formal properties, while attending to the special features of Hollywood filmmaking in particular. Topics covered include: the economic history of the film corporations, the phenomenon of stardom, genre (the musical, melodrama), technical achievements (sound, color), the Production Code, and the impact of the Depression on movies and audiences. At the end of the course students can expect to have acquired an understanding of how a significant body of films functioned as aesthetic, commercial, and cultural artifacts during the "Golden Age" of Hollywood.

Sept 30	Introduction: A Brief History of the American Film Industry
Oct 2	Basics of Film Analysis
Oct 7	The Coming of Sound and the Studio System THE JAZZ-SINGER (1927) 600-word paper due in class
Oct 9	APPLAUSE (1929)
Oct 14	Fallen Women POSSESSED (1931) 600-word paper due in class
Oct 16	RED-HEADED WOMAN (1932)
Oct 21	Warner Bros. and the Forgotten Man THE PUBLIC ENEMY (1931) 600-word paper due in class
Oct 23	42 <sup>ND</sup> STREET (1933)
Oct 28	Creating the Couple in the Era of the Production Code THE THIN MAN (1934) 600-word paper due in class
Oct 30	THE GAY DIVORCEE (1935)
Nov 4	Weepies THE LITTLEST REBEL (1935)
Nov 6	STELLA DALLAS (1937)

Nov 11	Hollywood Looks at Its Audience MAKE WAY FOR TOMORROW (1937)
Nov 13	THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD (1938)
Nov 18	FOUR DAUGHTERS (1938)
Nov 20	This American Life MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON (1939)
Nov 25	THE WIZARD OF OZ (1939)
Dec 2 and 4	class rescheduled for historic theater tour; in-class exam
Dec 15	1600-word paper due

PLEASE NOTE:

--Class attendance is mandatory. You will not pass this course if you miss more than three classes (this includes the theater tour). The course is conducted primarily as a discussion. Participation accounts for 15% of your grade. As a courtesy to the professor and your classmates, please arrive on time.

--You are responsible for watching movies before the class in which they are to be discussed. Two copies of every film are on reserve at Millikan. **THEY MUST BE RETURNED TO THE FRONT DESK OF MILLIKAN. DO NOT RETURN THEM TO SHERMAN-FAIRCHILD OR DABNEY. DO NOT DROP THEM IN THE RETURN BIN OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY.**

--Laptops, ipads, etc. are not permitted in class (waaaay too much emailing and websurfing...I'm on to you!!).

--You must complete and receive a passing grade on all written assignments to pass the course.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

Participation: 15%

Four Short Papers: 30% (must be turned in on time)

One Long Paper: 25%

Final Exam: 30%

**A WORD ABOUT PLAGIARISM:** Plagiarism is the wrongful use of another person's ideas by representing them as one's own. Plagiarism occurs when the general thoughts of another person and/or specific sentences and passages from another writer's work are appropriated without proper attribution in the form of a footnote or endnote. Plagiarism applies to unattributed material that is lifted from unpublished as well as published work and material from the internet. Plagiarized work is handed over to the BOC immediately. No one who has committed plagiarism in one of my courses has passed it.