



## Basic Course Information

Semester:	<b>Fall 2025</b>	Instructor Name:	<b>Ryan Brothers</b>
Course Title & #:	<b>Introduction to Film, FILM 130</b>	Email:	<b>ryan.brothers@imperial.edu</b>
CRN #:	<b>10251</b>	Webpage (optional):	<b>n/a</b>
Classroom:	<b>Room 301 Tuesdays; RT ONLINE Thursdays</b>	Office #:	<b>Online</b>
Class Dates:	<b>08/11-10/04</b>	Office Hours:	<b>Online by appointment</b>
Class Days:	<b>Tuesdays and Thursdays</b>	Office Phone #:	<b>619-987-7835</b>
Class Times:	<b>6:00-9:10 pm</b>	Emergency Contact:	<b>Carol Hegarty (760) 355-6198</b>
Units:	<b>3</b>	Class Format/Modality:	<b>In Person Tuesdays, RT ONLINE Thursdays</b>

## Course Description

This course will introduce the art, technology, language, and appreciation of film. Students will examine form and content, aesthetics and meaning, and history and culture. Students also will learn about basic cinematic techniques and structures as well as the roles of producer, director, actor, and cinematography. (CSU/UC)

## Course Prerequisite(s) and/or Corequisite(s)

None

## Student Learning Outcomes

Upon course completion, the successful student will have acquired new skills, knowledge, and or attitudes as demonstrated by being able to:

1. Identify iconographic elements pertaining to western film, horror film, and musical film genres.
2. Write short essays offering a reasoned critique of selected films.
3. Recognize and analyze contribution(s) of key members of the film production company.

## Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Critically analyze film as a technology, business, cultural production/artifact, entertainment medium, and art form.
2. Demonstrate the ability to critically analyze, interpret, and write about film using film-specific language.
3. Demonstrate visual literacy through the application of analytical tools of categories, theories, and ideologies of cinematic arts.
4. Recognize and analyze formal elements of cinematic arts (i.e., cinematography, editing, mise-en-scene, sound, lighting, etc.).
5. Write analytical essays regarding technical aspects of filmmaking.

## Textbooks & Other Resources or Links

**Bordwell, David, Kristin Thompson, and Jeff Smith.** Film Art: An Introduction. 13th ed., New York: McGraw Hill LLC, 2024. Includes bibliographical references and index. ISBN 978-1264296095 (hardcover), also available in e-book and loose-leaf formats.

Other readings will be available on Canvas, our collective annotation platform.

Our main “texts” for the semester will be our films. Most films will be made available digitally either through course reserves, which you can access via the left-hand menu on our Canvas course page, or through YouTube.

## Course Requirements and Instructional Methods

**All assignments are due Sunday night.**

### 1. Screenings & Viewings

- **Assigned viewings:** Weekly film screenings (in-class, or watch on your own), ranging from narrative and documentary to experimental cinema.
- **Clips for analysis:** Daily short clips tied to topics like mise-en-scène or editing.

### 2. Short Writings & Reflection

- **Movie Reviews:** 500-word movie reviews that go beyond plot description—used for participation.
- **Social Media Critique:** Focus on a specific element from this week’s class, like mise-en-scene, editing, lighting, etc. and discuss how it’s being used in a social media video of your choosing. You must link the video URL with your response.

### 3. Quizzes & Exams

- **Pop quizzes:** Quick check-ins on readings/viewings to encourage preparation.
- **Formal exams:** Midterms and finals featuring definitions, identifications, short answers, possibly take-home essay components or in-class.

### 4. Essays & Analytical Writing

- **Shot or scene analysis papers:** Close readings of a scene’s visual/formal strategies.
- **Film criticism papers:** Critical essays relating a film to course readings/theory.
- **Revisions/reflections:** Optionally allow one of the major papers to be revised based on feedback.

### 5. Creative Projects

- **Creative assignments:** These projects will provide you with hands on experience in a particular field, e.g. editing, cinematography, etc.

### 6. Participation & Homework

- **Participation grading:** Based on class discussion, in-class writing, group work, sometimes short reading/viewing quizzes.

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- **Blog posts or online reflections:** Weekly blog posts (~200–300 words) and peer comments (~100–200 words).

## 7. Additional Components

- **Extra credit assignments:** Optional projects to boost grades (e.g., 1,000-word essay for up to 5 points).
- **Critical/theoretical focus:** Modules or papers on topics like gender, ideology, auteur theory, genre, and global cinema.

## Course Grading Based on Course Objectives (subject to change)

Component	Approx. %
Participation / Reflections	10–15%
Quizzes / Small Writings	10–15%
Essays / Analytical Papers	30–40%
Exams (midterm + final)	20–30%
Creative Projects	10–15%
Optional Extra Credit	up to 5%

## Academic Honesty (Artificial Intelligence -AI)

IVC values critical thinking and communication skills and considers academic integrity essential to learning. Using AI tools as a replacement for your own thinking, writing, or quantitative reasoning goes against both our mission and academic honesty policy and will be considered academic dishonesty, or plagiarism unless you have been instructed to do so by your instructor. In case of any uncertainty regarding the ethical use of AI tools, students are encouraged to reach out to their instructors for clarification.

## Accessibility Statement

Imperial Valley College is committed to providing an accessible learning experience for all students, regardless of course modality. Every effort has been made to ensure that this course complies with all state and federal accessibility regulations, including Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. However, if you encounter any content that is not accessible, please contact your instructor or the area dean for assistance. If you have specific accommodations through **DSPS**, contact them for additional assistance.

We are here to support you and ensure that you have equal access to all course materials.

## Course Policies

**Screenings** Viewing: entire films, as well as film clips, will be screened in class. Students are expected to attend these screenings. Outside screenings of these films/clips are encouraged only as supplements to class showings—not as substitutes!

**‘R’ Rating:** several films selected for this course contain ‘adult’ themes, including what may be considered objectionable violence, language, and/or sexual content. Some of these texts also carry an ‘R’ rating.

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**Online etiquette:** I expect cameras to be on during remote lecture. Please mute your microphone until speaking. Please raise your digital or physical hand if you have a comment. If your hand is up and I haven't noticed, please feel free to unmute your mic and interject.

**Attendance:** You are allowed two absences during the term for whatever reason, though it is strongly recommended that you strive for perfect attendance. Three absences without a documented excuse (such as a doctor's note) can be grounds for failure. Students in this situation may want to consider withdrawing from the course and taking it again under better circumstances.

**Promptness:** Since coming in late for class often disrupts discussion, it should be avoided at all cost. You are allowed no more than two instances of tardiness during the semester. If you come in late on more than two occasions, your grade will suffer accordingly.

**Class Participation and Etiquette:** You will be expected to arrive in class ready to take part in the conversation about the materials under study. Failure to participate in a vigorous manner will compromise your final grade. While in class you are not allowed to use laptops or cell phones. You are expected to be respectful of your peers and instructor and not partake in any activity unrelated to discussion while the class is in session.

**Submission:** All assignments (projects, essays, quizzes) must be completed in order to pass this course. The assignments should also be submitted on time. Late submissions will have a negative effect on your grade, and may be grounds for failure.

## Other Course Information

*As an introduction to film studies, this course teaches students how to analyze rather than merely summarize a film, engaging style and poetics. It is not a "film appreciation" course. Thus, you will be provided a working knowledge of film form and film vocabulary. FILM 130 introduces and develops these analytic tools in the context of film criticism and analysis, with a bit of film history and film theory. Upon completing this course, a student should have a sense of film form and some critical/theoretical perspectives for analyzing film. This course also teaches the basics of academic writing about film with a focus on analytical, argumentative composition.*

## Financial Aid

Your Grades Matter! In order to continue to receive financial aid, you must meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirement. Making SAP means that you are maintaining a 2.0 GPA, you have successfully completed 67% of your coursework, and you will graduate on time. If you do not maintain SAP, you may lose your financial aid. If you have questions, please contact financial aid at [finaid@imperial.edu](mailto:finaid@imperial.edu).

## IVC Student Resources

IVC wants you to be successful in all aspects of your education. For help, resources, services, and an explanation of policies, visit <http://www.imperial.edu/studentresources> or click the heart icon in Canvas.

## Anticipated Class Schedule/Calendar

Date	Activity, Assignment, and/or Topic	Pages/ Due Dates/Tests
<b>Class 1</b> Aug. 12	Introduction: Studying Film	<b>Watch at home:</b> <a href="#"><i>Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat Station</i></a>  <b>Read and annotate:</b> "Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat" by Karin Littau pgs. 43-62  <i>Film Art</i> , Introduction, pgs. 1-10
<b>Class 2</b> Aug. 14	A Brief History of Origins of Film & Cinema	No assignment for this class.
<b>Class 3</b> Aug. 19	<b>5 Stages of Filmmaking (pt. 1)</b>  Screening: <a href="#"><i>Empire of Dreams: The Story of the Star Wars Trilogy</i></a> (2004)	<b>Read:</b> <i>Film Art</i> , "Making the Movie: Film Production" pg. 17-48  <b>Suggested viewing:</b> <a href="#"><i>Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse</i></a>
<b>Class 4</b> Aug. 21	<b>5 Stages of Filmmaking (pt. 2)</b>	<b>Assignment:</b> You'll be assigned a production role on a film. Research that role and talk about what you would be doing.
<b>Class 5</b> Aug. 26	<b>Film Form &amp; Film Style</b> <b>Mise-en-Scene</b>  Screening: <i>Rashoman</i>	<b>Read:</b> <i>Film Art</i> , "Mise-en-Scene" pg. 112-158  <b>Assignment: Scene Breakdown</b> Pick a 2-minute scene. Break it down shot-by-shot. Describe how elements of mise-en-scene are shaping the film's form.
<b>Class 6</b> Aug. 28	<b>Cinematography</b>  Screening: <i>Amelie</i>	<b>Read:</b> <i>Film Art</i> , "Cinematography" pg. 159-215  <b>Assignment: Shot Replication</b> Recreate a shot from a movie using what tools you have available.
<b>Class 7</b> Sept. 2	<b>Editing &amp; Sound</b>  Screening: <i>Baby Driver</i>	<b>Re-Edit</b> Re-edit a sequence to change the mood (e.g., make a comedy into a thriller).  <b>OR</b>  <b>Sound Walk</b>

Date	Activity, Assignment, and/or Topic	Pages/ Due Dates/Tests
		Walk around your neighborhood and record 30 seconds of sound. Describe how you would use this in a film.
<b>Class 8</b> Sept. 2	<b>Narrative Structure</b>  Screening: <i>Memento</i>	<p><i>Film Art</i>, "Narrative Form" pg. 72-112</p> <p><b>MIDTERM</b> Choose a film with a clear, linear narrative. Your task is to <b>reimagine and rewrite the film's plot using a different narrative structure</b>, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-linear or fragmented storytelling</li> <li>• In media res (starting in the middle of the action)</li> <li>• Multiple perspectives or unreliable narration</li> <li>• Reverse chronology</li> <li>• Circular or episodic structure</li> </ul> <p><b>Part 1: Creative Rewrite (700–1,000 words)</b> Write a detailed synopsis of your restructured version of the film. Focus on major plot events and how they are now ordered or told differently. You do not need to rewrite the script—just describe the new version clearly.</p> <p><b>Part 2: Critical Reflection (500–700 words)</b> Explain the rationale behind your restructuring choices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What narrative model inspired your version?</li> <li>• How does the new structure alter the themes, pacing, or character development?</li> <li>• How might the audience's experience change?</li> </ul>
<b>Class 9</b> Sept. 9	<b><u>Types of Films</u></b> <b>Genre &amp; Conventions</b>	<p><b>Genre Film</b> Make a one-minute video that uses conventions and elements of a specific genre.</p>
<b>Class 10</b> Sept. 11	<b>Documentary</b>  Screening: <i>The Battle of Algiers</i>	<p><b>Micro-Doc</b> Create a 2-minute documentary using your phone about a real person/place/object that matters to you.</p>
<b>Class 11</b> Sept. 16	<b>Auteur Theory</b>	<p><b>Prompt:</b> Choose a director widely considered an auteur (e.g., Alfred Hitchcock, Sofia Coppola,</p>

Date	Activity, Assignment, and/or Topic	Pages/ Due Dates/Tests
	Screening: TBD	<p>Wes Anderson, Bong Joon-ho). Analyze 2–3 of their films to identify recurring themes, stylistic choices, and narrative structures. Discuss how their personal vision and authorship manifest across their body of work.</p> <p><b>Alternative:</b> Compare two directors—one considered an auteur and one not—and assess the differences in style, control, and vision.</p>
<p><b>Class 12</b> Sept. 18</p>	<p><b>Film and Ideology</b></p> <p>Screening: TBD</p>	<p><b>Ideological Film Analysis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Prompt:</b> Choose a mainstream film and analyze its ideological messages. Consider how it portrays issues like gender roles, capitalism, nationalism, class, or heteronormativity. How does the film support or critique dominant ideologies?</li> <li>• <b>Optional Twist:</b> Write from a specific ideological lens (e.g., Marxist, feminist, postcolonial).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Class 13</b> Sept. 23</p>	<p><b>Race and Representation</b></p> <p>Screening: <i>Do the Right Thing</i></p>	<p><b>Representation Audit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Prompt:</b> Select a film (or a set of films in a franchise or genre) and conduct a detailed analysis of how race and ethnicity are represented. Examine casting, character development, narrative roles, and stereotypes. Compare your findings to broader industry patterns or movements (e.g., #OscarsSoWhite).</li> <li>• <b>Alternative:</b> Write a proposal for a reimagining of a classic film with more inclusive racial representation and explain your choices.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Class 14</b> Sept. 25</p>	<p><b>Global Cinema</b></p> <p>Screening: TBD</p>	<p><b>National Cinema Spotlight</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Prompt:</b> Choose a non-Hollywood film and explore how it reflects the culture, politics, or history of its country of origin. Discuss how it differs from mainstream Hollywood storytelling and production methods.</li> <li>• <b>Optional Add-On:</b> Compare how the film was received domestically versus internationally</li> </ul>

Date	Activity, Assignment, and/or Topic	Pages/ Due Dates/Tests
<b>Class 15</b> Sept. 30	Experimental, Avant-Garde, Animation  Screening: <i>Mad God</i>	<b>Creative Imitation + Reflection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Prompt:</b> Create a short experimental video or animation (2–5 minutes) inspired by avant-garde or experimental techniques (e.g., found footage, non-linear editing, abstraction). Write a short essay (500–700 words) explaining your creative choices and referencing artists or movements that influenced you.</li> <li><b>Alternative Essay Prompt:</b> Analyze an avant-garde film or animated short, focusing on form, technique, and audience effect. How does it challenge conventional cinematic language?</li> </ul>
<b>Class 16</b> Oct. 2	Final	<b>Short Film Project (3–5 min)</b> Create a short film on TBD using only a smartphone and free editing apps.  Final video + 1-page director’s statement.

\*\*\*Subject to change without prior notice\*\*\*