



Department of Communication Studies
COM 4090-1 Great Directors, 2 units
Fall 2023
Section 1: Tuesday 4-5:55pm, Cabrillo 104
Final Exam: 4:30pm Tuesday, Dec. 12

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Course Description:

Special Studies in Communication - Great Directors: Agnès Varda, Chloe Zhao, & Hayao Miyazaki

An advanced study of representative works of cinema. Class inquiry focuses on auteur theory, film narrative, and art. Includes a variety of eras and genres, placing the works within their cultural contexts.

Students are required to complete all assignments and participate in class discussion.

Required Texts

1. Bordwell, David, and Kristin Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 12th ed.
2. Additional reading assignments TBD + *Various handouts distributed by the professor*
3. Required films (see course schedule) – pay for streaming fees if/as necessary

Course Learning Outcomes

As a result of this course, students will display an understanding of, and/or be able to do the following:

1. Identify formative moments in the history and evolution of film technology in narrative & documentary films;
2. Identify the history of filmmaking eras (star and studio systems, etc.), the emergence of genres, the evolution of film content, marketing, and distribution, and an understanding of where the filmmaking industry is headed;
3. Identify aesthetic techniques of film, including: writing, cinematography, directing, production design, acting, sound, and editing;
4. Identify how particular fictional and non-fictional films have displayed the conventions, have advanced the techniques, and exhibited trends in the motion picture industry;
5. Identify prominent filmmakers' (producers, directors, actors, etc.) styles and their particular contribution to the art and business of filmmaking;
6. Display an appreciation for--and understanding of--the relevance of film as both an art form and social phenomenon; and
7. Begin to demonstrate an ability to formulate a critical Christian response to film as both art and social phenomenon--based on biblical principles.

PLNU Mission: To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send: Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

State Authorization: State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program

and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on State Authorization to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

Course Policies and Requirements

Attendance: *Attendance is required. Missing class for other than medical emergencies or excused absences will affect your grade, as per the University Catalog.*

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy: Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive an "F" grade.

Class Preparation: All assignments must be completed prior to the assigned due date and time. Some assignments will be discussed in class while others will be completed individually but not discussed.

Class Participation: *Regular* contributions to class discussion are expected, including but not restricted to discussions of weekly readings, related experiential exercises, and open dialogue. Despite the size of the class, I want everyone to feel compelled to share their thoughts on assigned readings. Enthusiastic and responsible participation in assigned group projects (in-class and outside of class) is expected of all.

E-Mail: Please use e-mail (not Canvas email) for simple, logistical questions or clarifications. Write: "COM4090" in the subject line. Allow 24 hours/ 1 business day for a reply.

Canvas Messages: Please use Canvas messages (not Canvas email) for all information regarding assignments submitted to Canvas.

Smart phones and laptops: may be used for classroom related activities only.

Public Discourse: Much of the work we will do in this class is cooperative, by nature of the class discussions and general feedback given to written work and/projects; so please think of all your writing and speaking for and in class as public, not private, discourse. By continuing in this class, students acknowledge that their work will be viewed by others in the class.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy: Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See Academic Policies for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy: You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g. ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski, etc.) in this course. Any work that utilizes AI-based tools must be clearly identified as such, including the specific tool(s) used. For example, if you use ChatGPT, you must cite ChatGPT including the version number, year, month and day of the query and the statement "Generated

using OpenAI. <https://chat.openai.com/>

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy: PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC.

Language and Belonging: Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

You may report an incident(s) using the [Bias Incident Reporting Form](#).

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination: In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/title-ix.

Final Examination: *The published time for the final examination is one of the considerations when enrolling for a course. Students are expected to arrange their personal affairs to fit the examination schedule.* Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

PLNU Copyright Policy: Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

Grading Scale

94-100	A	78-79	C+
90-93	A-	74-77	C
88-89	B+	70-73	C-
84-87	B	60-69	D
80-83	B-	0-59	F

Grading

- 20% class participation: arrive to class on time; use smart phones and laptops for classroom use (or receive a '0' for 10% of class participation); complete unannounced assignments; work with peers in small groups; ask and respond to questions in class; pay attention to presentations, lectures, and films; take notes; attend the entire class.
- 30% Film Notes
- 20% Discussion Notes
- 10% Contextual Summaries and Director Biographies
- 10% Quiz
- 10% Final Exam

Assignment Descriptions

Important Notice: All assignments "Due before class" and during a "Class session" on a given week in the syllabus require attendance for the entire duration of the class that given week in order to be eligible for a score. For example, in order to be eligible for a score on 9/5 all assignments due before 9/5 and during class on 9/5 require full attendance on 9/5.

Late Paper Policy: Be sure to hand in your assignment on time, or make a prior arrangement to submit the assignment before the assigned due date. Otherwise, the assignment will receive a "0."

Paper Format: Please submit in .doc, .docx, or .pdf format in Chicago Style. Use a non-decorative 12-pt. font, such as Times New Roman. Use the Chicago Manual of Style for style, grammar, format, and citation issues.

- <https://writingcenter.uagc.edu/chicago-manual-style>
- https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/cmos_formatting_and_style_guide/chicago_manual_of_style_17th_edition.html

Film Notes

Film Notes Objective: This assignment requires that students take notes while watching our class films -- our class requires being an active film audience rather than being a passive film audience.

In-class film notes: Length: ½ page

- Grading:
- 2: full ½ page of notes including specific examples and personal commentary
 - 1.8: full ½ page of notes with specific examples
 - 1.6: ½ full page of notes, key scenes and observations omitted
 - 1.4: nearly ½ full page of notes
 - 0-1.2: less than required length, lacks clear detail

Grading:

- 10: full page of notes including specific examples and personal commentary
- 9: full page of notes with specific examples
- 8: full page of notes, key scenes and observations omitted
- 7: nearly a full page of notes
- 6-0: less than one page, lacks clear detail
- 0: notes do not take into account the entire film

[illegible]

Discussion Notes Objective: create a one (1) page, single-spaced summary (cut and pasted from the Internet) of a discussion topic assigned to you in advance. Cite your sources in Chicago style (see [Purdue OWL website for examples](#)).

Contextual Summaries (Director Biographies focus on director information only)

Form: Length: 1 page single-spaced. See Canvas template.

Page 5 of 7

Evaluation of Assignments

The following questions will be considered when assignments are evaluated and graded. All questions may not be relevant to each assignment.

- Does the assignment fulfill the assignment objective?
- Does the assignment make an academic argument?
- If a claim is required, is it clear and plausible? Is it stated and contextualized effectively?
- Is there sufficient and relevant evidence to ground the claim?
- Does the assignment effectively select and use material from the course materials to support and validate the analysis? Does it summarize, paraphrase, and quote effectively?
- Does the assignment use all relevant details from course texts both to support the claim and to provide a context for the case being made? Does it ignore material that should be taken into account?
- Does the assignment demonstrate an awareness of how the argument being proposed fits into the larger set of claims made about the topic in our course readings?
- Does the assignment work through the complexities of the material (as opposed to oversimplifying or overgeneralizing)?
- Is the assignment well organized?
- Does it cite material from the sources using Chicago Style?
- Are there sentence structure problems or grammatical errors that interfere with the meaning?

Evaluation Standards

- An “A” assignment demonstrates excellent work. It has something to say and says it well. It develops its point of view clearly and consistently, demonstrating a complex understanding of the assignment, and does so using a variety of perspectives. It often rises above other assignments with particular instances of creative or analytical sophistication. There may be only minor and/or occasional structural errors.
- A “B” assignment demonstrates good work. It establishes a clear point of view and pursues it consistently, demonstrating a good understanding of the assignment. There may be some mechanical difficulties, but not so many as to impair the clear development of the main idea. While a “B” assignment is in many ways successful, it lacks the originality and/or sophistication of an “A” assignment.
- A “C” assignment demonstrates adequate work. It establishes an adequate grasp of the assignment and contains a point of view. In addition, the assignment may rely on unsupported generalizations or insufficiently developed ideas. It may also contain structural errors.
- Work that earns a grade of “D” or “F” is often characterized by the following problems: it fails to demonstrate an adequate understanding of the assignment; it fails to articulate an adequate point of view; and/or it contains significant structural problems.

Course Schedule
Subject to Change

Week	Schedule // Assignment Due
1 (8/29)	Class Session: Course Introduction; Lecture: Auteur Theory; Workshop: Film Aesthetics
2 (9/5)	Due before class: 1) Director Biography: Agnès Varda; 2) Watch and take Film Notes: <i>The Beaches of Agnès</i> ; 3) Contextual Summary: <i>Cléo from 5 to 7</i> Class Session: <i>Cléo from 5 to 7</i> ; Submit 1/2 page of film notes at the end of class
3 (9/12)	Due before class: 1) Reading ch. 2 & 3 (50-71,72-99); 2) Discussion Notes (as Assigned— <i>always bring a Discussion Notes hardcopy to class</i>) Class Session: Quiz; Lecture & Workshop: <i>Beaches & Cléo</i>
4 (9/19)	Due before class: 1) Contextual Summary: <i>Le Bonheur</i> ; 2) Watch and take Film Notes: <i>Le Bonheur</i> ; 3) Contextual Summary: <i>Vagabond</i> Class Session: <i>Vagabond</i> ; Submit 1/2 page of film notes at the end of class
5 (9/26)	Due before class: 1) Reading ch. 4; 2) Discussion Notes (as assigned) Class Session: Quiz; Lecture & Workshop: <i>Le Bonheur & Vagabond</i>
6 (10/3)	Due before class: 1) Contextual Summary: <i>Faces Places</i> ; 2) Watch and take Film Notes: <i>Faces Places</i> ; 3) Discussion Notes (as assigned) 4) Skim Read: ch. 10 (docs) Class Session: Lecture & Workshop: <i>Faces Places</i> and introduce Chloe Zhao
7 (10/10)	Due before class: 1) Director Bio: Chloe Zhao 2) Contextual Summary: <i>Songs My Brother Taught Me</i> ; Watch and take Film Notes: <i>Songs My Brother Taught Me</i> ; 3) Contextual Summary: <i>The Rider</i> Class Session: <i>The Rider</i> ; Submit 1/2 page of film notes at the end of class
8 (10/17)	Due before class: 1) Reading ch. 5; Discussion Notes (as assigned) Class Session: Quiz; Lecture and Workshop: <i>Songs & Rider</i>
9 (10/24)	Due before class: 1) Contextual Summary: <i>Eternals</i> ; 2) Watch and take Film notes: <i>Eternals</i> ; 3) Contextual Summary: <i>Nomadland</i> Class Session: <i>Nomadland</i> ; Submit 1/2 page of film notes at the end of class
10 (10/31)	Due before class: 1) Reading ch. 6; 2) Discussion Notes (as assigned) Class Session: Quiz; Lecture and Workshop: <i>Nomadland & Eternals</i> ; Introduce Hayao Miyazaki
11 (11/7)	Due before class: 1) Director Biography: Hayao Miyazaki; 2) Contextual Summary: <i>Totoro</i> ; 3) Watch and take Film Notes: <i>Totoro</i> ; 4) Contextual Summary: <i>Princess Mononoke</i> ; 5) Skim Read: ch. 10 (animation) Class Session: <i>Princess Mononoke</i> ; Submit 1/2 page of film notes at the end of class
12 (11/14)	Due before class: 1) Reading ch. 7; 2) Discussion Notes (as assigned) Class Session: Quiz; finish <i>Princess Mononoke</i> ; Lecture & Workshop: <i>Totoro</i> and <i>PM</i>
13 (11/21)	Due before class: 1) Contextual Summary: <i>Howl's Moving Castle</i> ; 2) Watch and take Film notes: <i>Howl's Moving Castle</i> ; 3) Contextual Summary: <i>Castle in the Sky</i> Class Session: <i>Castle in the Sky</i> ; Submit 1/2 page of film notes at the end of class
14 (11/28)	Due before class: 1) Reading ch. 8; 2) Discussion Notes (as assigned) Class Session: Quiz; Lecture and Workshop: <i>Howl's</i> and <i>Castle</i>
15 (12/5)	Due before class: 1) Contextual Summary: <i>The Wind Rises</i> ; 2) Watch and Take Film Notes: <i>The Wind Rises</i> ; 3) Contextual Summary: <i>The Kingdom of Dreams & Madness</i> Class Session: <i>The Kingdom of Dreams & Madness</i> ; Submit 1/2 page of film notes at the end of class
(12/12) Finals Week: Independent Study Presentations; Lecture & Workshop; Writing Assignment	