

MCOM 3203: WOMEN AND FILM

Spring 2015: Wednesdays 6-9:50 and on-line (see partial schedule below)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: Focusing on Hollywood film productions of the 20th century this course is an adventure into cinematic representations of women in some of Hollywood's major film genres. Through the course readings and film screenings, we will trace key concepts and debates in feminist film theory, questions of representation and race, criticism, and history. We will also explore some of the ways that feminist film criticism has provoked a re-examination of American film history.

This course also applies towards your Gender and Women's Studies minor.

Prerequisites: This is a writing intensive course. You must have completed the following prerequisites prior to taking this class: ENGG 1111, ENGG 1222.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

The Women's College fully endorses the University of Denver's Honor Code and the procedures put forth by the Office of Citizenship and Community Standards. Academic dishonesty—including plagiarism, cheating, and falsification of data and research—is in violation of the code and will result in a failing grade for the assignment or for the course. As student members of a community committed to academic integrity and honesty, it is your responsibility to become familiar with the DU Honor Code and its procedures (www.du.edu/honorcode).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Class participation/attendance	90 points
2. Reading assignments/Reading Response Homework	90 points (approx.)
3. Film Viewing Responses	40 points
4. Final	<u>40 points</u>
	260 (approx.)

The Reading Response Homework will consist of a set of questions asking you to summarize and analyze the readings due for that week. They will take the place of examinations or reading quizzes and will help you to quickly apply the key concepts which you have read to the film we will be screening in class. 1-2 paragraphs per article at 10 points per article (9 articles altogether).

The Film Viewing Responses will be a series of short (2-3 page) essays written in response to the film viewed. These essays should include a brief synopsis or description of the film, readings from the previous session, women's history and your own reactions to the films.

The final will be written set of paragraphs which sum up your reading and viewing experience for the quarter.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- develop an aesthetic appreciation of Hollywood film in various historical and cultural contexts
- learn how to analyze, interpret, and evaluate film by improving critical visual, listening, reading, and writing skills through the use of feminist film theory
- understand the complexities and ambiguities of film and reflect upon its meanings

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Develop the ability to be more enlightened observers of cinematic texts

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2. Understand how gender, race, class, sexuality, and ethnicity intersect and influence visual representation
 3. Be able to explain and analyze the aesthetic, historical, cultural, and social relevance of these texts
 4. Enhance the ability to think, read, and write critically and analytically through written assignments; class discussions, and lectures
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COURSE POLICIES:

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY: Attendance is mandatory, extra points will be given for meaningful participation. In-class participation, discussion, viewing and analyzing is the engine of this course. Points will be lost for missing classes. If you miss class, it is your responsibility, not mine, to get caught up on lecture notes, assignments, etc. If you are planning on missing class, make friends with other students.

LATE WORK: Assignments are due on the class day assigned at the beginning of class. Late work will be penalized.—depending on the magnitude of the lateness.

INCOMPLETE POLICY: Incompletes are not granted in this class due to absenteeism or late work. A student must have a good attendance record and have completed 90% of the coursework to be granted an incomplete. Incompletes will be granted only under the rarest of special circumstances and will not be automatically granted for absenteeism.

Basic house rules: Any cell phone, computer, or personal communication device usage will result in your being asked to leave the class. Please turn off your cellphones during class. The use of cell phones during film screenings is especially rude and distracting. Anyone caught on personal-use websites or using a device during a film will be asked to leave for the class period.

Etiquette: As in all classes, please express your ideas respectfully during class discussions. A major goal of this course is to distinguish between opinion (what you like) and scholarly expertise (what strategies are at work and what are the debatable issues and the terms of debate.)

COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

1. **REQUIRED:** Sara Evans, *Born For Liberty: A History of Women in America*.
 2. Supplementary readings via handout, or on e-reserve at Penrose Library.
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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FIRST CLASS:

Reading: Evans pp 145-174.

PARTIAL COURSE SCHEDULE

Probable List of Topics---I'm revising the course significantly from the last time I taught it, so am still researching new title availability, texts, films, etc.

In May, the live/on-line meeting dates might need to be rearranged due to a conference in NYC I might be attending.

Week 1 –March 25 Silent Women LIVE

Zora Neale Hurston

Oscar Micheaux

Week 2 April 1 Victorian Melodrama LIVE

D.W. Griffith

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Week 3 April 8 Women and Sexuality in the 30s and 40s ON-LINE

Week Four April 15th LIVE

Visual Pleasure Revisited in the 1950's

Week 5 April 22nd LIVE

Blaxploitation and Pam Grier

Week 6 -- April 29th LIVE

Having it All—Women and Economics

Week 7 May 6th ONLINE

TBA

Week8 May 13th LIVE

TBA

Week 9 May 20th LIVE

Mas Macha

Week Ten May 27th ON-LINE

Take home final due