ENGL/FLM F495-F91
MAYmester 2013
M-F 10:30-1:00, 2:00-5:10
Location: 409 Gruening
E-mail: kgrosswe@alaska.edu
Office phone: 474-5012

DR. KAREN A. GROSSWEINER
Office hours: by appointment

Special Topics: The Films of Fritz Lang (3 credits) (2+2)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
ENGL/FLM F495 is intended as an in-depth study of a specific topic in film studies including intensive readings and research in contemporary film theory and criticism. The topic this Maymester will be “The Films of Fritz Lang.” Lang is an ideal figure to focus on, as he not only directed two of the world’s most critically acclaimed films (Metropolis and M), but because after directing numerous Expressionist films during Weimar Germany he emigrated to the United States and became a major influential figure in Film Noir. Focusing on his films allows us to explore these very important cinematic movements as well as the stylistic, thematic and ideological connections between them. As much recent scholarship has focused on Lang, studying his oeuvre will also allow us to explore modern film theory—especially Gender, Psychoanalytic, and Marxist—and the strengths and limitations of the normally woefully oversimplified Auteur Theory. Additionally, Lang worked in a variety of classic and hybrid genres, so we will analyze how modern Genre Theory provides insights.

We will normally screen one film in the morning’s session and then discuss it the remainder of the day. The first week will be devoted to Lang’s German films and the second week to his American ones. Students should plan on spending several hours per evening reading for the next day’s session and preparing their oral presentation and written essays.

COURSE GOALS: The goals are

- Familiarizing students with the important cinematic movements German Expressionism and Film Noir
- Familiarizing students with the work of the important film director Fritz Lang and the large body of recent scholarship on his films
- Familiarizing students with important modern theoretical approaches including Gender, Psychoanalytic, Marxist, Auteur and Genre theories.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: By the end of the course students should be able to

- Identify and discuss specific stylistic, narrative, thematic, and ideological aspects of Lang’s films and trace them from his German period to his American one as demonstrated via class discussion, oral presentation, short essay and research essay
- Incorporate modern critical theory in their discussion, presentation and research essay
• Identify and discuss specifics (formal, thematic, and ideological) of the German Expressionist period and Film Noir
• Write a complex research essay focused on one or two Lang films

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS: Class will consist of a combination of screening films, lecture, discussion and oral presentation.

PREREQUISITES: ENGL F217 or FLM F217; ENGL F211X or ENGL F213X; or permission of instructor. Note: As this is a 400 level class, readings and discussion will involve complex textual and theoretical issues as appropriate for an upper division undergraduate class and a lengthy research essay will be required.
REQUIRED TEXTS


Also, many articles found on e-reserve. Password is “lang” All reading listed on the course calendar is required.

Required texts are available at the UAF bookstore.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Completing all assigned readings
- Writing a 3-4 page essay. Essay topics will be provided the first day of class; no research required.
- Writing a 12-15 page research essay based on one or two films. At least one of these films must have been directed by Fritz Lang. Students can either focus on films screened in class or additional films Lang directed. Students will generate their own research topics subject to instructor approval. Students may develop the subject of their 3-4 page essay as long as they add a minimum of 12 pages. A minimum of 8 scholarly sources will be required: articles or books, no websites or film reviews (students will be allowed to use the assigned readings to meet this requirement). Note: the research essay should be submitted electronically through Track Changes, so I can send you electronic comments.
- Participating in a 30-minute long group (2 people) oral presentation.
- Vigorously participating in class discussions. Note: student participation must demonstrate completion of the assigned readings.

All work must be completed to receive credit for the course.

IMPORTANT MATTERS

ATTENDANCE & TARDINESS POLICY:

As this is a compressed course, students must attend every class to receive credit. I will take attendance at the beginning of both morning and afternoon sessions (twice per day). Tardiness of more than 30 minutes will count as an absence and will prohibit you from receiving credit for this course. Please allow extra time for road delays and/or parking problems.
**LUNCH BREAK**

We will take a daily 1 hour break for lunch, which is noted above as beginning at 1:00 p.m. The beginning of our lunch break may sometimes be adjusted, depending on the length of the film being screened that day.

**CLASS RULES**

Students should not leave class except in the case of an emergency; we will take short breaks periodically, so everyone may attend to personal matters.

Computers should only be used for taking notes. Anyone found using a computer for any other purpose will be prohibited from using their computer for the remainder of the semester.

Any student engaging in disruptive behavior (such as whispering, texting, or passing notes during class) will be warned once and then dropped from the class.

Also, cell phones and I-pods should be turned off and put away before class begins.

**GRADING:** (absolute grades—no curve)

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Essay</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<td>Oral presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Class participation</td>
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**Note:** If I suspect students are not completing the assigned reading, I will immediately institute daily quizzes which will be worth 15% of your final grade. In this case, your research essay will be worth 40% and your short essay will be worth 15%

**GRADING SCALE**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100-98</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>97-93</td>
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<td>92-90 A-</td>
<td>89-88 B+</td>
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<td>87-83 B</td>
<td>82-80 B-</td>
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<td>79-78 C+</td>
<td>77-73</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>72-70 C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>69-68 D+</td>
<td>67-63 D</td>
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<tr>
<td>62-60 D-</td>
<td>59 and lower F</td>
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**GRADING CRITERIA**

Grading for this class will follow UAF guidelines:

A = An honor grade, indicates originality and independent work, a thorough mastery of the subject, and the satisfactory completion of more work than is regularly required
B = Indicates outstanding ability above the average level of performance
C = Indicates a satisfactory or average level of performance
D = The lowest passing grade, indicates work of below average quality and performance
F = Indicates failure to meet lowest standards. All F grades are included in the GPA calculations

**PLAGIARISM**
Plagiarism means using someone else's words or ideas and attempting to pass them off as your own—this includes material taken from the Internet. Students should not utilize secondary sources in written assignments unless specifically instructed; moreover, not completely documenting secondary sources constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism is an extremely serious offense, and any student caught plagiarizing will automatically and irrevocably receive a failing grade in the course. Academic dishonesty is easily detected and easy to avoid. If you have any questions or doubts, see me before turning in the paper in question, as misunderstanding does not constitute a valid excuse.

**LATE PAPERS**

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date designated on the course schedule.

**STUDY GUIDES AND EXTRA-CREDIT**

I do not give study guides nor offer extra-credit assignments.

**DISABILITY SERVICES**

The Office of Disability Services implements the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and insures that UAF students have equal access to the campus and course materials. Students with a physical or learning disability who may need academic accommodations should contact Mary Matthews in the Office of Disabilities Services (203 WHIT, 474-5655, TTY 474-1827). You will need to provide documentation of your disability. I will work with the Office of Disability Services to make the appropriate accommodation.
COURSE SCHEDULE
(subject to revision as needed)

Note: Daily readings indicated are to be completed prior to that day’s class. Be sure to always bring appropriate text(s)/article(s) with you. Students are highly encouraged to begin reading for this course prior to our first class session on Monday, May 13.

WEEK ONE

Mon. May 13, 2013  Introduction to the course, Fritz Lang, Weimar Germany, and reading films formally, historically, and theoretically

Screen Der müde Tod (1921), screen selections from and Lang’s early films [Harakiri (1919), The Wandering Shadow (1920) and Four Around a Woman (1921)].

Tues. May 14  Screen Die Nibelungen (1924)
- Gunning, Films of Fritz Lang, Chapter 2, pp. 34-51

Wed. May 15  Screen Dr. Mabuse The Gambler (1922)
- Gunning, Films of Fritz Lang, Chapter 4, pp. 87-116.
- Davis, Blair. "Fritz Lang’s Dr. Mabuse Trilogy and the Horror (e-res)


3-4 Page Essay Due

Thursday, May 16  Screen *Metropolis* (1927)

• Gunning, *Films of Fritz Lang*, Chapter 3, pp. 52-83 (e-res)


Topic for research essay due

Friday, May 17  Screen *M* (1931)


• Dimendberg, Edward. "From Berlin to Bunker Hill: Urban Space, Late Modernity, and Film Noir in Fritz Lang's and Joseph Losey's M." *Wide Angle: A Film Quarterly of Theory, Criticism, and
WEEK TWO

Mon. May 20  Introduction to Lang’s American period and Film Noir

Screen Fury

- Rippey, Theodore F. "By a Thread: Civilization in Fritz Lang's Fury." Journal of Film and Video 60.3-4 (2008): 72-89. (e-res)
- Gunning, Films of Fritz Lang, Chapter 8, pp. 203-234. (e-res)

Tues. May 21  Screen The Woman in the Window (1945)

- Gunning, Films of Fritz Lang, Chapter 11, pp. 283-306.

Wed., May 22  Screen Scarlet Street (1945)


**Thurs., May 23**

Screen *The Big Heat* (1953)

**Fri. May 24**

Screen *Rancho Notorious* (1952)

**Tuesday, May 28**

RESEARCH ESSAY DUE at noon (Submitted through Track Changes)