

**Huron University College**  
**Department of History**  
**Fall 2021**  
**HISTORY 4810F**  
**History and Film: Theory and Practice**

Class Meets: Mondays 2:30 – 4:30PM ROOM: H227

Instructor: Mr. Chris Blow  
Email: [blowfysh@gmail.com](mailto:blowfysh@gmail.com)

Office: Remote  
Office Hours: Tues 9AM-11AM  
(by Zoom) Wed 9AM-10AM

**Course Description:**

This course explores the treatment of 'history' in film, both in theory and through practice. Historians have debated the contributions that film-makers make to our understanding of the past since the origin of motion pictures through to the digital age. In seminars, students will discuss key themes and theories on the nature of history in dramatic and documentary film. What happens to history when stories are turned into sight and sound? Can the power of film transcend discourse that is delivered in words? How does film and video communicate ideas and information that cannot be conveyed by the word? Can the primacy of written history be questioned?

Through workshops, the course will also foster the development of the fundamental tools employed by filmmakers. Workshops will explore the three fundamental creative stages in the making of a film: 1. research and writing, 2. shooting and recording, 3. editing and post-production and 4. broadcast and screening. Students will develop their primary course project, a short film or a short dramatic screenplay, throughout these constructive workshops.

Class meets weekly for seminar discussions of the readings and for workshops.

## **Course Objectives:**

By the end of the course students will have learned to or refined their ability to:

- Understand the role film and video production plays in our understanding of history
- Breakdown the narrative forms, ideology, messaging and storytelling techniques embedded in dramatic and documentary historical film
- Identify and explain key arguments and ideas in debates surrounding the theories of historical film
- Review the integrity and quality of documentary and dramatic historical films
- Write an effective pitch for a short film or screenplay.
- Produce and screen short documentary videos

*And/Or*

- Compose and deliver short dramatic scripts for the production of a historical film

**Method:**

History 4810 explores course material through class discussion and workshops.

**Required Texts:**

Thanouli, Eleftheria, *History and Film: A Tale of Two Disciplines*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2019.

Nichols, Bill. *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary*. Indiana UP, 1991.

Rosenstone, Robert A., *History on Film/Film and History*, Routledge, 2017.

Davis, Natalie Zemon, *Slaves on Screen: Film and Historical Vision*, Harvard University Press, 2002.

Murch, Walter, *In the Blink of an Eye: A Perspective on Film Editing*, Silman James Press, 2001.

**Assignments/Evaluation:**

Participation (Ongoing): 30%

Documentary Film Review: 10% (Oct. 1)

Proposal for Short Video or Short Screenplay: 5% (Oct. 8)

Script/Video Project Status Report: 5% (Oct. 29)

Dramatic Film Review: 10% (Dec. 3)

Short Video or Short Screenplay: 30% (Dec 10)

Reflection on Screenplay or Video Project: 10% (Dec 17)

### *Participation*

Discussion is a key component of this course, and students are expected to have an understanding of the weekly readings and actively contribute to class discussions.

### *Pitch for Short Video or Short Screenplay (one page)*

Students will write a proposal for a short video production or short screenplay. The imagined audience for this document will be a potential producer. A persuasive and creative style will be encouraged for this 'pitch document'

### *Script/Video Project Status Report (one page)*

Students will write a report on their progress on their production of a short video or screenplay. Students are encouraged to reflect on the challenges and obstacles they're facing and note achievements in their production process.

### *Short Documentary Historical Video (8 -10 minutes)*

Students will compose a short video on a historical topic. Suggested topics will be offered but with approval, independently conceived videos can be produced. The grade will be broken down into 3 equal parts – effort, depth of the content, quality of final production.

**OR**

### *Short Historical Screenplay – (20-25 pages)*

Students will write a short feature screenplay that dramatizes a story or topic drawn for history. Suggested topics will be offered but with instructor approval, independently conceived scripts can be pursued.

### *Documentary Film Review (500 words)*

Students will write a short review of the strengths and weaknesses of a documentary historical film viewed during the first half of the course.

### *Dramatic Film Review (500 words)*

Students will write a short review of the strengths and weaknesses of a dramatic historical film viewed during the second half of the course.

### *Reflection on Screenplay or Video Production: (500 words) 10%*

Students will write a personal reflection on the process of writing their screenplay or producing their video.

## **Class Schedule:**

13 September: Introduction: Theories of History in Film

20 September: Into the Workshop: The Historical Filmmaker's Craft – Pitching, Research, Visual Research and Writing

27 September: History and Documentary Film – Part I - The Evolution of Documentary Film

Reading: Part I - Nichols, Bill. *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary*. Indiana UP, 1991

Reading: Chapter 5, Rosenstone, Robert A., *History on Film/Film and History*, Routledge, 2017.

4 October: History and Documentary Film – Part II – Theories of Documentary Film

Reading Part II- Nichols, Bill. *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary*. Indiana UP, 1991

Thanksgiving Holiday

18 October: History and Documentary Film – Part III – Primary Sources: Archive and Interviews

Reading Part III- Nichols, Bill. *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary*. Indiana UP, 1991

25 October: 'Sight and Sound' – Filmmaker's Workshop: Production

Fall Reading Week

8 November: History in Dramatic Film – Part I

Reading: Part I - Davis, Natalie Zemon, *Slaves on Screen: Film and Historical Vision*, Harvard University Press, 2002

Chapters 1-4, Rosenstone, Robert A., *History on Film/Film and History*, Routledge, 2017.

15 November: History in Dramatic Film – Part II

Reading: Part II - Davis, Natalie Zemon, *Slaves on Screen: Film and Historical Vision*, Harvard University Press, 2002

22 November: 'In the Blink of an Eye' - Filmmaker's Workshop: Editing, Graphics and Post Production

Reading: Murch, Walter, *In the Blink of an Eye: A Perspective on Film Editing*, Silman James Press, 2001

29 November: Theories of History in Film – Part II

Reading: Thanouli, Eleftheria, *History and Film: A Tale of Two Disciplines*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2019

Chapters 7-9, Rosenstone, Robert A., *History on Film/Film and History*, Routledge, 2017.

## 6 December: Final Workshop – Screening and Broadcasting

### **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The History Department has specified that:

1. All written assignments are to be submitted electronically following your professor's instructions. Students are responsible for making sure they are familiar with each professor's policy on electronic submissions.
2. Footnotes, endnotes and bibliographies are to be prepared according to the Departmental Guide (which follows).
3. Late marks are calculated on the paper copy submitted to OWL Late penalties are calculated according to calendar day, including Saturdays.
4. In first and second year courses lateness will be penalized as follows:  
First day late -- 3 marks deduction. Each subsequent calendar day late -- 2 marks per day deduction.
5. Third and fourth year seminars will be penalized for lateness at the rate of half a grade (5%) per day.
6. No paper or seminar will be accepted if it is more than seven calendar days late.
7. Extensions will only be given for assignments **worth more than 10%** with medical documentation submitted through Academic Counseling.
8. Students must complete the written assignments worth more than 10% to pass essay courses. If the written assignments are not handed in, the default grade will be 48% or the cumulative average of the student, whichever is lower.

### **Guide to Footnotes and Bibliographies: Huron History Department**

Footnotes have several purposes in a history paper:

- 1- They acknowledge your use of other peoples' opinions and ideas.
- 2- They allow the reader to immediately find your reference.
- 3- They give authority for a fact which might be questioned.
- 4- They tell the reader when a source was written.

Footnotes can appear either at the bottom of the page or collected together at the end of the essay where they are referred to as endnotes. The numeral indicating the footnotes should come at the end of the quotation or the sentence, usually as a superscript.<sup>1</sup>

A footnote gives four main pieces of information which are set off by commas in the following order:

1. Author (surname *after* initials or first name),
2. Title
  - The title of a book is underlined or written in *italics*.
  - The title of an article is put within quotation marks, followed by the periodical in which it was published, underlined or in *italics*
- 3..Place and date of publication in parentheses ( ),
  - A fuller reference will include the publisher after the place of publication.
  - Article citations do not include the place of publication and publisher.
4. Page number (including volume number if necessary)

For example:

<sup>1</sup>J.M.S. Careless, *Canada, A Story of Challenge* (Toronto, Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1970), 207.

<sup>2</sup>Basil Davidson, "Questions about Nationalism", *African Affairs* 76 (1977), 42.

In subsequent references, a shorter reference can be used. It should include the author's last name, a meaningful short title, and page numbers. For example:

<sup>3</sup>Careless, *Canada*, 179-206.

Where the reference is *exactly* the same as the preceding one, the Latin abbreviation *ibid.* can be used; where it is the same, but the page number is different, use *ibid.*, followed by the relevant page number. However, the short title form is preferable for subsequent references and the use of other Latin abbreviations such as *op.cit.* is not recommended.

Examples:

a) for a book by a single author: Author, title (place of publication: press, year), p#.

Elizabeth Wilson, *Shostakovich: A Life Remembered* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 324.

---

<sup>1</sup> They should be in Arabic, not Roman numerals or letters.

b) for an article in a book that has chapters by different people: Author, "title of chapter," in title of book, ed. editor's name (place of publication: press, year), total pages of article, page number you are referencing.

Elizabeth Heinemann, "The Hour of the Woman: Memories of Germany's 'Crisis Years' and West German National Identity," in *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968*, ed. Hanna Schissler (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 21-56, 34.

c) for an article in a journal, magazine, or newspaper: Author, "title of article," title of periodical, vol. # , issue # (year): total pages, the page you are referencing.

Gale Stokes, "The Social Origins of East European Politics," *Eastern European Politics and Societies* 1, 1 (1987): 30-74, 65.

d) for an old work that has been reissued: Try to find a way to include the original publication date somewhere. The easiest method is to use brackets.

Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Trans. and ed. James Strachey (New York: Avon Books, 1965 [1900]), 175.

## Bibliography

All the works you consulted, not just those cited in the footnotes, should be included in the bibliography. You may be required to prepare an annotated bibliography, in which you comment on the contents, utility, or worth of each source. If so, make sure you understand what the instructor expects, in particular the length as well as the nature of each annotation.

Generally, list the sources in alphabetical order, by author. The format for a bibliography is similar to that for footnotes, except that the author's surname *precedes* the other names and initials, periods instead of commas are used to divide the constituent parts, publication data is not put in brackets, and pages numbers are not included except in the case of articles where the full page reference is necessary. For example:

Careless, J.M.S. *The Union of the Canadas. The Growth of Canadian Institutions 1841-1857*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967.

Davidson, Basil. "Questions about Nationalism". *African Affairs* 76 (1977), 39-46.

Sources: University of Toronto Guide to Undergraduate Essays.

<http://www.history.utoronto.ca/undergraduate/essays.html#footnotes>. Accessed October 22, 2012.

Professor Julie Hessler's Guide to Footnotes: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~hessler/>. Accessed October 22, 2012.

## **Appendix to Course Outlines: Academic Policies & Regulations 2021 - 2022**

### **Prerequisite and Antirequisite Information**

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that they have not completed any course antirequisites. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

### **Pandemic Contingency**

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, typically using a combination of synchronous instruction (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) and asynchronous material (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online at the discretion of the course instructor. In the unlikely event that changes to the grading scheme are necessary, these changes will be clearly communicated as soon as possible.

### **Student Code of Conduct**

Membership in the community of Huron University College and Western University implies acceptance by every student of the principle of respect for the rights, responsibilities, dignity and well-being of others and a readiness to support an environment conducive to the intellectual and personal growth of all who study, work and live within it. Upon registration, students assume the responsibilities that such registration entails. While in the physical or online classroom, students are expected to behave in a manner that supports the learning environment of others. Please review the Student Code of Conduct at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/sites/default/files/Res%20Life/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20-%20Revised%20September%202019.pdf>.

### **Attendance Regulations for Examinations**

A student is entitled to be examined in courses in which registration is maintained, subject to the following limitations:

- 1) A student may be debarred from writing the final examination for failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year.
- 2) Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.

Review the policy on Attendance Regulations for Examinations here:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/exam/attendance.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/attendance.pdf).

### **Statement on Academic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf). The appeals process is also outlined in this policy as well as more generally at the following website: [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/appealsundergrad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/appealsundergrad.pdf).

### **Turnitin.com**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

### **Statement on Use of Electronic Devices**

It is not appropriate to use electronic devices (such as, but not limited to, laptops, cell phones) in the classroom for non-classroom activities. Such activity is disruptive and distracting to other students and to the instructor, and can inhibit learning. Students are expected to respect the classroom environment and to refrain from inappropriate use of technology and other electronic devices in class.

### **Statement on Use of Personal Response Systems (“Clickers”)**

Personal Response Systems (“clickers”) may be used in some classes. If clickers are to be used in a class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the device is activated and functional. Students must see their instructor if they have any concerns about whether the clicker is malfunctioning. Students must use only their own clicker. If clicker records are used to compute a portion of the course grade:

- the use of somebody else’s clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence
- the possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offence.

### **Academic Consideration for Missed Work**

Students who are seeking academic consideration for missed work during the semester may submit a self-reported absence form online provided that the absence is **48 hours or less** and the other conditions specified in the Senate policy at

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_illness.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf) are met.

Students whose absences are expected to last **longer than 48 hours**, or where the other conditions detailed in the policy are not met (e.g., work is worth more than 30% of the final grade, the student has already used 2 self-reported absences, the absence is during the final exam period), may receive academic consideration by submitting a Student Medical Certificate (for illness) or other appropriate documentation (for compassionate grounds). The Student Medical Certificate is available online at [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. **Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work, and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.**

Students who have conditions for which academic accommodation is appropriate, such as disabilities or ongoing or chronic health conditions, should work with Accessible Education Services to determine appropriate forms of accommodation. Further details concerning policies and procedures may be found at: <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/>.

### **Policy on Academic Consideration for a Medical/ Non-Medical Absence**

#### **(a) Consideration on Medical Grounds for assignments worth *less than 10%* of final grade: Consult Instructor Directly and Contact Academic Advising**

When seeking consideration on **medical grounds** for assignments worth *less than 10%* of the final course grade, and if the student has exceeded the maximum number of permissible Self-Reported absences, the student should contact the instructor directly. The student need only share broad outlines of the medical situation. The instructor **may** require the student to submit documentation to the academic advisors, in which case she or he will advise the student and inform the academic advisors to expect documentation. If documentation is requested, the student will need to complete and submit the [Student Medical Certificate](#). The instructor may **not** collect medical documentation. The advisors will contact the instructor when the medical documentation is received, and will outline the severity and duration of the medical challenge as expressed on the Student Medical Certificate and in any other supporting documentation. The student will be informed that the instructor has been notified of the presence of medical documentation, and will be instructed to work as quickly as possible with the instructor on an agreement for accommodation.

#### **(b) Consideration on Non-Medical Grounds: Consult Huron Support Services/Academic Advising, or email [huronsss@uwo.ca](mailto:huronsss@uwo.ca).**

Students seeking academic consideration for a **non-medical** absence (e.g. varsity sports, religious, compassionate, or bereavement) will be required to provide appropriate documentation where the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence have not been met, including where the student has exceeded the maximum number of permissible Self-Reported. All consideration requests must include a completed [Consideration Request Form](#). Late penalties may apply at the discretion of the instructor.

Please review the full policy on Academic Consideration for medical and non-medical absence at: [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_illness.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf). Consult [Huron Academic Advising](#) at [huronsss@uwo.ca](mailto:huronsss@uwo.ca) for any further questions or information.

### **Support Services**

For advice on course selections, degree requirements, and for assistance with requests for medical accommodation, students should email an Academic Advisor in Huron's Student Support Services at [huronsss@uwo.ca](mailto:huronsss@uwo.ca). An outline of the range of services offered is found on the Huron website at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/>.

Department Chairs, Program Directors and Coordinators are also able to answer questions about individual programs. Contact information can be found on the Huron website at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/contact/faculty-staff-directory/>.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your workload is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor. If you are considering reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines. Please refer to the Advising website, <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/academic-advising/> or review the list of official Sessional Dates on the Academic Calendar, available here: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/SessionalDates.cfm>.

You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP and/or Scholarship/Bursary eligibility.

Huron Student Support Services: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/>

Office of the Registrar: <https://registrar.uwo.ca/>

Student Quick Reference Guide: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/#1>

Academic Support & Engagement: <http://academic-support.uwo.ca/>

Huron University College Student Council: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/beyond-classroom/hucsc/>

Western USC: <http://westernusc.ca/your-services/#studentservices>

### **Mental Health & Wellness Support at Huron and Western**

University students may encounter setbacks from time to time that can impact academic performance. Huron offers a variety of services that are here to support your success and wellbeing. Please visit <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life-campus/student-services/wellness-safety> for more information or contact staff directly:

Wellness Services: [huronwellness@huron.uwo.ca](mailto:huronwellness@huron.uwo.ca)

Community Safety Office: [safety@huron.uwo.ca](mailto:safety@huron.uwo.ca)

Chaplaincy: [gthorne@huron.uwo.ca](mailto:gthorne@huron.uwo.ca)

Additional supports for Health and Wellness may be found and accessed at Western through, <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>.