

Columbia

COLLEGE CHICAGO

Columbia College Chicago Main Address	600 S Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60605 (312) 369-1000
SiLA Address & Phone	Raleigh Studios 650 No. Bronson Avenue #B104 Hollywood CA 90004 (323) 960-8020
Current Term	SPRING 2019
Department	Cinema and Television Arts (CTVA)
Course number, title, section, & credits	Advanced Topics in Media Studies: Mapping LA in Cinema and TV, MEDI 382-01, 3 credit hours.
Class day and time, room / location	Topic 3: 1/23/19 6:00pm; Raleigh Studios / B104
Add/Drop and Withdraw dates	Start Date: January 22, 2019 Add deadline: 1/27/19 Drop deadline: 2/4/19 Withdraw: 3/22/19 (A "W" will appear on your transcript) End of semester: 5/4/19
Course description & prerequisites	<p>Prerequisite: Acceptance into the Semester in LA Program.</p> <p>This repeatable course consists of rotating topics of interest. This semester of Advanced Topics in Media Studies will examine the representation of Los Angeles in cinema, television, and other related media. Over the course of the semester we will utilize geographical and historical information, inquiries into film and television history, critical theory, the study of racial representation, the study of film genre and style, and narrative analysis to examine the role Los Angeles as both a real and imagined place influences media and its creators and consumers. These tools will enable us to develop a nuanced understanding of the ways that Los Angeles as a city has impacted the development of the film and television industries, and the ways that these industries have in turn impacted the growth of Los Angeles.</p>

Example

Instructor's Information

Instructor's name	Jake Bohrod
Office phone and location	Raleigh Studios. Leave messages with: (323) 960-8020
Office hours	Please email for an appointment.
E-mail address	[REDACTED]
SiLA Coordinator – Associate Dean	[REDACTED]
Department phone and location	Cinema and Television Arts: 1104 S. Wabash Chicago IL 60605 (312) 369-6700
Instructional Resource Fees	[REDACTED]
Required texts	None required; readings will be supplied by the teacher.
Supplies/materials	Students must have access to the internet and a computer to download on-line material.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- analyze media texts through written, oral, and visual/creative work

- employ a variety of critical perspectives and academic research methods including close reading (formal and ideological critique), narrative and historical analysis, race and gender studies, and genre studies
- demonstrate a nuanced and sophisticated understanding of the ways in which Los Angeles has been portrayed – physically and culturally – in various media representations
- debate and question the ways in which the history and geography of Los Angeles has figured in the history and development of film, television, and other media industries
- design a visual argument synthesizing an aspect of the city of Los Angeles, its depiction in popular culture, and its importance to the medium of moving images

Grading Policy & Evaluation Procedures:

- ◆ Attendance is mandatory. Class participation is essential. No phones allowed in class. Assignments turned in late will be lowered by 2/3 of a grade (for instance, an “A-” assignment turned in late will receive a “B” grade) only if work is received within 24 hours after due. Thereafter, assignment will receive an “F” grade.
- ◆ Grading Scale:
 - 93-100 = A
 - 90-92 = A-
 - 87-89 = B+
 - 83-86 = B
 - 80-82 = B-
 - 77-79 = C+
 - 73-76 = C
 - 70-72 = C-
 - 67-69 = D+
 - 63-66 = D
 - below 60 = F
- ◆ Students will be graded on the following assignments and work (percentage of total grade). See details of assignments in course outline:

Example

Assignments:

Assignment	Description	% of Final Grade
Class Participation	Come to class prepared and participate!	10%
Discussion Board Participation	Post 5 unique paragraph-length responses (300+ words) to readings/screenings.	15%
Midterm	Take home 3-4 page essay exam distributed in Week 8 and due in Week 9. This exam will ask students to synthesize ideas from the first half of the semester.	20%
Visual Essay	Utilizing simple tools (ie. basic video production/editing, online comics software, powerpoint, slideshare, etc.) students will construct a visual analysis of Los Angeles in popular culture (3-5 minutes).	20%
Final Paper	3000-3500 word research/position paper on Los Angeles and the film and/or media industries.	35%

- **Discussion Board posts are due by Monday at 5pm.** Students will be expected to check the discussion board weekly and read any new posts or comments before class. Discussion board posts must be relevant to

class material, commenting on or questioning some aspect of class for that week. Posts will be graded Credit/No Credit.

- This syllabus may be amended as the semester progresses. You will be notified of any changes.

Course Calendar and Outline:

Week 1 - January 22, 2019 – Introduction: Los Angeles Myths and Realities

This week will be an introduction to the iconography and mythology of Los Angeles including the creation of a collective class “mental map” of the ideas and qualities associated with Los Angeles, Hollywood, and surrounding areas.

In Class: screen *The Player* (Altman, 1992)

For Next Week: Read Bruce Cumings, Ch.10 “‘There it is. Take it.’: Water and Power” from *Dominion from Sea to Sea*; watch *Chinatown* (Polanski, 1974)

By WEEK 9: Finish watching *Los Angeles Plays Itself* (Thom Andersen, 2003)

Week 2 - January 29, 2019 - The Wild Wild West: Inventing LA

This week provides a brief introduction to both film history and the history of Los Angeles, with a focus on the range of factors that made Hollywood an ideal home for the burgeoning motion picture industry.

In Class: screen *The Life and Death of 9413: a Hollywood Extra* (Florey and Vorkapic, 1928), *Hollywood Extra Girl* (Moulton, 1935); *Bunker Hill, 1956* (Mackenzie, 1956); newsreel footage shot in Los Angeles

For Next Week: Read selections from Mike Davis, *City of Quartz*; Joan Didion, “Some Dreamers of the Golden Dream”

Week 3 - February 5, 2019 - Field Trip #1

Paramount Studios Tour – PLEASE ARRIVE AT RALEIGH BY 3PM.

Week 4 - February 12, 2019 - Los Angeles Noir

Perhaps more than any other film style, the city of Los Angeles is woven into the fabric of film noir. This week we will consider the legacy of L.A. noir in literature and media as it helped crystalize the notion of Los Angeles as a dark labyrinthine metropolis filled with hard boiled characters and moral ambiguity.

In Class: screen *Double Indemnity* (Wilder, 1944), clips

For next week: Read David James, Ch. 1 “Avant-Garde Cinemas in Los Angeles” from *A Most Typical Avant-garde*; selection from David L. Ulin, *Writing Los Angeles: A Literary Anthology*; watch *The Exiles* (Mackenzie, 1961)

Week 5 – February 19, 2019 – Exiles in Hollywood: Experimentalism in LA

This week we will discuss the way in which the Hollywood film industry in LA evolved alongside a tradition of experimentalism. We will explore the ways in which these two branches of the film culture in LA influenced each other and the effects this relationship had on practice, exhibition, and viewership.

In Class: screen *Meshes of the Afternoon* (Deren, 1943)

For Next Week: Read selections from William Alexander McClung, *Landscapes of Desire: Anglo Mythologies of Los Angeles*; William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of its Mexican Past*; watch *Mi Familia* (Nava, 1995)

Week 6 – February 26, 2019 - Field Trip #2 (tentative)

Olvera Street

Week 7 – March 5, 2019 – Race in Los Angeles Part I

This week provides a brief overview of California’s history prior to becoming part of the United States, and examines the influence of Hispanic culture on the wider culture of Los Angeles.

In Class: screen clips

For Next Week: Read selections from Eric Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles*; Ryan Reft, “Segregation in the City of Angels: A 1939 Map of Housing Inequality in L.A.”; watch *Killer of Sheep* (Burnett, 1978)

Week 8 - March 12, 2019 - Race in Los Angeles Part II

This week we look closer at race relations in Los Angeles, focusing on the ways that geography, city planning, social policy, and popular culture have converged to both reflect and contribute to racial tensions.

In Class: screen clips, *OJ: Made in America* (ESPN mini-series), footage from the Watts (1965) and L.A. (1992) riots

For Next Week: Complete MIDTERM

Week 9 - March 19, 2019 - Field Trip #3 (tentative)

Downtown tour

MIDTERM DUE (via Canvas)

For next week: Read Anne Friedberg, “Urban Mobility and Cinematic Visuality”

Week 10 - March 26, 2019 – Mapping LA: Space and Ideology

Los Angeles is a uniquely sprawling metropolis whose infrastructural design has been determined by its car culture. This week examines how urban mobility and the limitations of geographic access are reflected in cinematic representation and its ideology of space.

In Class: screen *Nightcrawler* (Gilroy, 2014)

Visual Essay Group A presents

For Next Week: Read Mike Davis, “Fortress Los Angeles”

Week 11 - April 2, 2019 – Dystopian LA and the Los Anglapocalypse

This week builds on our existing understanding of factors like climate, architecture, history, and race relations in Los Angeles to determine why the city is frequently the site of apocalyptic and dystopian narratives. Why do we love to see Los Angeles destroyed?

In Class: screen *Fear the Walking Dead* (AMC television show), clip from *The Pervert’s Guide to Ideology* (Fiennes, 2013), other clips

Visual Essay Group B presents

For Next Week: Read selections from Kenneth Anger, *Hollywood Babylon*; watch *The Bling Ring* (Coppola, 2013)

Week 12 – April 9, 2019 - Field Trip #4 (tentative)

Star tour

Week 13 - April 16, 2019 - Los Angeles Celebrity and Consumption

Hollywood is synonymous with the pursuit of fame and fortune. This week’s session will examine the intersection of star studies, fandom studies, and consumer culture in order to evaluate the impact of a city home to “more stars than the heavens.”

In Class: screen *Entourage* (HBO show), *The Real Housewives of Orange County* (Bravo television show), *Beverly Hills 90210* (Fox television show), *Clueless* (Heckerling, 1995), fanvids

For Next Week: Finish Final Paper

Week 14 - April 23, 2019 – Cowabunga, Dude!: Exporting Los Angeles and SoCal

Probably more than any other cultural hub in the U.S., Los Angeles and Southern California in general determine popular attitudes and artistic taste nationwide. This week’s session will explore how LA exports its own creative cultural style, nationally and globally.

In Class: screen clips from *Gidget* (ABC television series), *Laguna Beach* (MTV television series), *The Hills* (MTV television series), *The O.C.* (Fox television series), *Rocket Power* (Nickelodeon television series), *Dogtown and Z-Boys* (Peralta, 2001), *California Crisis* (1986 anime series)

FINAL PAPER DUE (via hard-copy and Canvas)

Week 15 – April 30, 2019 – The End

We will synthesize the material we’ve discussed this term.

Columbia College Chicago Policy Statements:

Statement on academic integrity	See the undergraduate catalog for this policy: colum.edu/integrity
Students with Disabilities Statement	Columbia College Chicago seeks to maintain a supportive academic environment for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations for a disability must register with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office. Once registered, a Columbia College Chicago accommodation letter will be provided to the student each semester. Students are encouraged to present their current accommodation letters to each instructor at the beginning of the semester so that accommodations can be arranged in a timely manner by the College, the department, or the faculty member, as appropriate. Accommodations begin at the time the letter is presented. Students with disabilities who do not have accommodation letters should visit the SSD office, Room 311 of the 623 S. Wabash building, call 312-369-8296, email SSD@colum.edu or visit colum.edu/ssd .
Mandatory Attendance Policy Statement	Students are required to attend class regularly. Failure to attend class in the first two weeks of the term will negatively impact financial aid. If your professor reports that you failed to attend and participate in class during the add/drop period, a grade of NS (no-show) will be entered on your record for the course. Please note, you will still be charged tuition and fees for any course for which you receive a NS grade. For more information on non-attendance please visit the Student Financial Services website .