

## 1. Course Basics

World Film History II: The Medium Since World War II.  
MEDIA 361 (3 credits)  
Wednesday: 3:30 – 6:00

**Attendance and participation impact your grade big time. It is your responsibility to remember to sign the attendance sheet. You have two excused absences — schedule personal appointments around class; missing a three-hour class is like missing a week.**

## 2. Instructor Information

Distinguished Professor, Wes D. Gehring, Ph.D.  
Film and Media Studies/Department of Media  
Ball State University, Muncie, IN  
[wesgehring@bsu.edu](mailto:wesgehring@bsu.edu)  
765-285-1495  
Office hours by appointment

## 3. Course Information

### Course Description

The course covers the history of world cinema since World War II. A key thrust of the course will be the ongoing influence of American cinema, but in a darker post-war mindset. Plus, while particular post-war national cinema movements will continue, special attention will be given the *ongoing importance* of the French New Wave. It drastically changed modern cinema's approach to hero/heroine, the narrative, and the nature of a story's conclusion. Other significant national cinema of note to be addressed include Italian Neo-Realism, and Australian New Wave. If a genre umbrella was used to embrace the most cutting edge of this new cinema, it would be dark comedy and/or film noir. Other topics to be investigated — collapse of the studio and censorship, the explosion of independent filmmaking, the last Hollywood Renaissance period (1970s), return of the epic as a franchise, the Marvel phenomenon vs. the small art house picture, and the development of new delivery systems accelerated by Covid. Ironically, with "The Return of the Myths," many of the story telling values of old-world Hollywood return.

### Prerequisites

Must be a Media Major

## Course Objectives

By the end of the semester students will:

1. Write two professional quality film history-based papers.
2. Be able to discuss a survey of world cinema since WWII, especially key national cinema movements (such as the French New Wave) and major auteurs.
3. Gain an understanding of the ever shifting position of cinema in an explosion of entertainment options.
4. Awareness of this background will enhance one's filmmaking and/or screenwriting/novelist skills. You will have a head start foundation in cinema history!

## Course Modality/Structure

If a change in modality with this course is necessary because of a change in your health status, please contact the instructor as soon as possible to work through possible solutions. Instructors will do their best to work within the situation. Class meets once a week on Wednesday from 3:30 – 6:00. The **final** will be taken on the last day of class.

### 4. Course Materials

TEXTS:

**Gerald Mast and Bruce Kawin, A Short History of the Movies (New York: Pearson/Longmen). Any edition is okay.**

**Wes D. Gehring, GEHRING BESIDE HIMSELF: Selected Essays (Orlando, Florida: BearManor Media, 2019).**

**(Any author royalties will be donated to charity. Office Hours by appointment).**

### 5. Course Assignments and Assessments

#### Course Overview

**Week 1:** Covering class basics/quick film review of how we reached this point.

**Week 2&3:** Post-War Darker World/Britain's International Noir and its Ealing Studio dark comedy /**Readings:** Gehring text: 45-53; Mast: Because of multiple revised printings, see Index.

- Week 4:** John Ford post-war Western — The genre as a reaction to the Cold War, and the subject of domestic racism/**Readings:** Gehring text: 96-106; Mast: Index.
- Week 5:** Italian Neo-Realism and close variations on the movement/**Reading:** Mast: “Neo-Realism” chapter.
- Week 6:** Hitchcock Re-evaluated/MacGuffin expanded/As important as *Psycho* was for horror, he was more an auteur of the romantic comic thriller/A different look at his influence/**Readings:** Gehring:191-203; Mast: Index.
- Week 7:** French New Wave — Arguably the most important of all the national cinema movements /**Reading:** Mast: “French movement” chapter.
- Week 8:** The American Film Renaissance of the 1970s, largely made possible by the French New Wave/**Readings:** Gehring: 17-23; Mast: Chapter on French Revolution (film).
- Week 9&10:** Ingmar Bergman and Concept of the Art House Film/**Reading:** Mast” Index.
- Week 11:** Australian New Wave/**Reading:** Mast: Index: Table of Content — “Down Under.”
- Week 12:** “Return of the Myths”: Big & Small/**Readings:** Gehring: 87-95; Mast: Chapter on it.
- Week 13:** Having it both ways — old Hollywood and post Renaissance Period/**Readings:** Gehring: 35-38.
- Week 14:** Summing Up and Ongoing New Directions/Always assume the publics state of *amnesia*/**Readings:** Gehring: 241-251; Mast: Continue on the “Return of the Myths.”

## FINAL EXAM

### GRADING STARTS WITH 2 PAPERS- (One film focus)

1. The French New Wave made us more focused on antiheroes, slice of life tales, and sobering conclusions. We started demanding more thought-provoking, realistic films. Since *Citizen Kane* was a precursor to all of that. Write a tight essay as your candidate for *the post-1945 Citizen Kane*.**First Paper Topic.**
2. The 1970s’ “Return of Myths,” and post-2000 Marvel heaven, have backtracked us to a “mind candy” land that was so prevalent in the golden age of Hollywood. Since there seems no escape, write an essay that mixes both mind candy with a

message. We need both kinds, but too often we simply seem awash with the sweet stuff./**Second Paper Topic**

**DUE DATES:**       **First paper: February 17<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday**  
                               **Second paper: March 24<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday**

**Email to Gehring by 6PM** [wesgehring@bsu.edu](mailto:wesgehring@bsu.edu)

Papers are 5-6 pages, and a bibliography with at least two hard copy sources. Texts can be counted. *Late Papers lose a grade* a day. Each paper keys on critiquing one film. References to lectures and assigned readings are expected. Ultimately, it's your perspective, but it's important to consider many views. (Even if VERY late – you will receive some points.)

**FINAL GRADE** is based on two papers, and one in class **Blue Book Essay Exam**. It will be taken on the last day of class. (Attendance and Discussion are important)

Each assignment is worth 100 points.

What follows is as close to a BSU universal grade criteria that exists: 94–100 (A+), 90-93 (A), 87-89 (B+), 84-86 (B), 80-83 (B-), 77-79 (C+), 74-76 (C), 70-73 (C-), 67-69 (D+), 64-66 (D), 60-63 (D-).

If you are on academic probation and/or have a pressing grade need — talk to me early. If you are willing to work with me, I will do everything I can to help.

**(During class all electronic devices are to be turned off.)**

## 6.       **University Policies and Statements**

### **UNIVERSITY STATEMENT**

We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's *Disability Services* office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office

before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or [dsd@bsu.edu](mailto:dsd@bsu.edu)

**University policies regarding student absences.** Absences will be excused for the following: funeral and bereavement leave, jury duty, late course addition, military absences, observance of religious holidays, pregnancy leave, student-athletes participating in University- or department-approved activities, and university advisories.

Students may encounter other circumstances (e.g. car accidents, job interviews) that result in course absences.

## **ABSENCES FOR UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES**

The University expects its departments and programs that take students away from class meetings to schedule such events in a way that will minimize hindrance of orderly completion of course requirements. Such units must provide a written statement to the students describing the activity and stating as precisely as possible the dates of the required absence. The involved students must deliver this documentation to the instructor, preferably before the absence but no event later than one week after the absence.

## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS**

As you work on and submit assignments this semester, know that using generative AI tools to complete your assignments is a violation of Ball State's [Academic Ethics Policy](#) *unless* the AI use is explicitly approved by the faculty member. In general, students may not submit any work generated by an AI program as their own. Doing so is plagiarism. In courses and assignments where AI use is permitted, faculty will have guidelines for that use. Work created outside of those guidelines will be considered an Academic Ethics Policy violation. If a student's grade is affected by an academic ethics violation, faculty are required to [report](#) the violation to the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs who oversees the Student Academic Ethics policy and maintains records.

## **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

*In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's [Statement on Freedom of Expression](#), the resources on Ball State's [Freedom of Expression webpage](#), and [Ball State's Beneficence Pledge](#).*

## TITLE IX

Ball State University is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment—including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, please know that you are not alone. The University offers support services and resources. For more information or to report an incident, please visit [bsu.edu/titleix](https://www.bsu.edu/titleix) or contact the Title IX Coordinator at 765-285-1545 or at [titleix@bsu.edu](mailto:titleix@bsu.edu).

*As your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter under the Title IX policy and required to report any information I receive about possible sexual harassment. This includes information shared in class discussions, assignments, or private conversations.*

**What happens after I report?** *The Title IX Coordinator will email the person who experienced sexual harassment (complainant) and invite them to schedule a meeting. If the complainant chooses to meet with the Title IX Coordinator,*

- Title IX Coordinator will offer supportive measures (e.g., counseling, extensions on deadlines, course-related adjustments, changes to work or class schedules, and/or referrals to campus offices), review the policy, and discuss options to move forward.
- If a complaint is filed by the complainant or the University, an investigation will begin following University policy.

## UNIVERSITY GRADE APPEAL POLICY

If you believe you received a final course grade that does not reflect your performance due to fairness or a procedural issue, you have the right to file an appeal within 5 school days after final grades are posted by the Office of the Registrar. Review the [University Grade Appeal Policy and Process](#).

## STUDENT ACADEMIC ETHICS POLICY

Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its credibility and reputation, and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic

and creative performance, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the VPAA's [academic integrity website](#) (Students tab) for resources on understanding academic integrity, citing sources properly, and avoiding inadvertent academic dishonesty. To learn about BSU's academic integrity expectations and students' rights, please read the University [Student Academic Ethics Policy](#).

Academic integrity violations include giving or receiving an unfair academic advantage (cheating), presenting someone else's ideas or work as your own (plagiarism), and falsifying academic records. Unless otherwise indicated, you must work independently by yourself. Check with me if you are unsure whether something constitutes academic dishonesty. Examples of academic integrity violations include but are not limited to:

- Using resources not authorized by the faculty member (including devices, AI tools, hidden notes, and open books)
- Using commercial study websites to find answers to graded assignments (Chegg, Course Hero, StudyPool, OneClass, etc.).
- Without the instructor's written permission, giving away, buying, or selling graded assignments class notes, exams, study guides, or other course materials to other students or to third-party vendors (Course Hero, Chegg, 24HourAnswers, etc.).
- Working with another person on any assignment other than authorized group projects.
- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not.
- Reusing your own work from another semester, course, or section.
- Sharing answers with others during exams (passing notes, texting, whispering, gesturing)
- Discussing exam questions and answers with students who have not taken the exam.
- Soliciting others to complete work for you.

University labs are updated with the current versions of software at the beginning of each academic year. That version remains in place throughout the academic year. This software version is the same across campus. This allows you to move from lab to lab and continue your work.

To maintain your ability to work on projects continually between your own computer and a lab computer, your version of the software must be the same as that in the labs. Do not update to a new version or you will be unable to move seamlessly between personal and university owned computers.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER/UNIVERSITY CLOSING STATEMENT**

If inclement weather forces the closing of the university, that information will be made available on the Ball State website. If the university closes because of weather and this class is cancelled, information on the rescheduling of any assignments, exams, presentations, etc. will be made available on the class Canvas site as soon as possible, or will be sent to you via email, or will be announced at the next regularly scheduled class period. Any makeup of a class day cancelled because of weather will be determined by the university administration and will be announced in class or via email.

## **COPYRIGHT STATEMENT**

All materials for this class have been created for the private, non-commercial use of students enrolled in this class through Ball State University in the current semester. Any material provided to students, including, but not limited to, syllabus, lectures, class notes, PowerPoint presentations, assignments, information, quizzes, exams, or class news, is the property of the course instructor and/or Ball State University and may not be reproduced, distributed, or publicly posted without written permission of the instructor. Selling or distributing course materials may violate the Code of Student Conduct and/or the Information Technology Users' Privileges and Responsibilities policy. Violations will be reported to Dr. Mike Gillilan, Director of Student Rights and Community Standards.

(Include the word "Copyright" or the © symbol and the year materials were created or the year of the current class.)

## **ADDENDUM FOR DISCUSSION FORUMS**

Any discussion forum content shared among students for use in the course remains the property of the individual student and will not be copied, distributed, or used in any manner without written permission of the instructor and the student.

## **COURSE WITHDRAWAL**

Thursday March 19, 2026

## **STUDENT COURSE EVALUATIONS**

Evaluations will be completed sometime during the final week of the semester. Once the date is announced, please bring your laptop to class to ensure completion.

## **HELPFUL RESOURCES:**

### **THE LEARNING CENTER:**

The Learning Center offers free Tutoring and Academic Coaching for many courses at Ball State. Students can make appointments for online (Zoom) or in-person (NQ 350) appointments. To make an appointment, visit [myballstate.bsu.edu](http://myballstate.bsu.edu) and click on “Navigate” in the Academic Tools section, or just go directly to [bsu.navigate.eab.com](http://bsu.navigate.eab.com).

Testing accommodations for students with disabilities are available for students who have received the appropriate documentation from Disability Services. Tests may be administered in the Learning Center. Supplemental Instruction is available in select courses. If you have an SI leader for your course, that person will provide students with information the first week of school regarding weekly study sessions. For more information about Learning Center programming, <http://bsu.edu/learningcenter> or call 765-2851006. Follow us on Instagram: BallStateLC.

### **THE WRITING CENTER:**

All writers improve with practice and feedback, so as a student in this course, you are encouraged to use the Writing Center (in Robert Bell 295 during weekdays, Bracken Library First Floor West in the evenings, or online during any of our regularly scheduled hours) to get additional feedback on your writing. The Writing Center offers free planning, feedback, and accountability sessions (in person and online) to all students composing essays, reports, reflections, research projects, web content, lesson plans, slideshows, poster presentations, resumes, and other digital or print texts. To schedule a free appointment to discuss your writing, go to [bsu.edu/writingcenter](http://bsu.edu/writingcenter). Online and in-person appointments are available; however, plan ahead because appointments book quickly!

### **THE BASIC NEEDS HUB:**

If you are having difficulty affording enough food, do not have a safe and reliable place to sleep, and/or experiencing an emergency or crisis, help is available through the Basic Needs Hub. The Basic Needs Hub has information, resources, and provides individualized support to students. To talk with a supportive staff member about your

experience, receive one on one assistance, or learn more about resources, you can submit a [Basic Needs Assistance Form](#).

### **THE COUNSELING CENTER:**

The Ball State University Counseling Center offers free and confidential services to all students. The Counseling Center is located in Lucina Hall, Room 320. To schedule an appointment, you can contact us at 765-285-1736. Ball State also offers a 24/7 Crisis Line, which can be reached at 765-285-HOPE (4673). The Crisis Line is a mental health resource for those who are struggling with any mental health concerns, including thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide.

At the Ball State Counseling Center, we see students for a variety of reasons, some of which include homesickness, relationship concerns, anxiety, and depression. At your first appointment, you will work with a therapist to create a plan that will connect you with resources that best fit your needs. We assist students with getting connected to therapy at our Center as well as connecting students to self-help resources, other on-campus resources, and community-based resources. All Ball State students also have access to several on-demand, self-help resources through a variety of different platforms. All of these resources, including a direct link to our website, can be found [here](#).

### **THE SPEAKING CENTER:**

[The Speaking Center](#) is a free resource available to all members of the BSU community wanting to improve their public speaking abilities. We offer personalized coaching designed to help you become a more confident and effective speaker. Our trained coaches provide constructive feedback and support throughout the entire speech preparation process, whether you are in the early stages of brainstorming ideas and organizing your thoughts, or you need to practice your delivery and refine your message. The Center is in the David Letterman Communication and Media Building, room 302. To schedule an appointment, please access us through your Navigate app or use this direct link to sign up for a time. Appointments are available both in person and on Zoom. Appointments are available in person, on Zoom, and in virtual reality (VR) for those interested in practicing in an immersive speaking environment.