



English 697 – 01W || Auteur Film – Kurosawa and Hitchcock

Winter Mini 2025

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Office: Talbot Hall of Languages, 125

Department: Literature and Languages

Office Hours:

By appointment

Phone: 903.468.3260

Preferred Form of Communication: office hours and email

Communication Response Time: within 24 hours

Course Information:

Web based with scheduled attendance-optional meetings.

Course Description: This course explores the artistic developments and cinematic innovations of two figures of 20th-century cinema: Alfred Hitchcock (1899-1980) and Akira Kurosawa (1910-1998). Despite working in different cultural contexts, these directors revolutionized the grammar of film through their visual storytelling that created psychological tension and moral ambiguity. The course will focus on analyzing how Hitchcock's mastery of suspense and Kurosawa's dynamic action sequences offer new perspectives and elicit audience emotions. We will discuss their shared themes: the psychology of guilt, the role of the viewer, the blurred lines between justice and revenge, and the isolation of the individual in modern society. We will also focus on their innovative technical approaches. Through comparative analysis of their films, we will investigate how both directors transcended genre conventions while working within them. The course also considers their profound influence on consecutive generations of filmmakers.

Films

(Subject to change)

- *Rashomon* (1950, Kurosawa) – streaming on Prime
- *Seven Samurai* (1954, Kurosawa) – streaming on MAX, Prime, YouTube

- *Throne of Blood* (1957, Kurosawa) – streaming on Prime
- *Yojimbo* (1961, Kurosawa) – streaming on MAX
- *High and Low* (1963, Kurosawa) – streaming on Prime
- *Dreams* (1990, Kurosawa) – streaming on YouTube
- *Rope* (1948, Hitchcock) – streaming on Prime
- *Rear Window* (1954, Hitchcock) – streaming on Prime
- *Vertigo* (1958, Hitchcock) – streaming on Prime
- *North by Northwest* (1959, Hitchcock) – streaming on Prime, YouTube, Apple TV
- *Psycho* (1960, Hitchcock) – streaming on Prime and Netflix
- *The Birds* (1963, Hitchcock) – streaming on Netflix

Course Objectives

1. Conduct formal film analysis of Hitchcock's and Kurosawa's works.
2. Examine how cultural contexts shaped these directors' artistic visions while identifying shared themes across their films.
3. Apply film theory frameworks (auteur, psychoanalytic, spectator) to develop original interpretations of selected works.
4. Produce comparative analyses that synthesize close reading, historical research, and theoretical perspectives.
5. Evaluate these directors' lasting influence on global cinema's visual language and narrative conventions.

Crucial Course Objective

This course builds on collective cultural experiences and perspectives to create a richer learning environment. Course materials reflect a broad range of voices, viewpoints, and lived experiences that shape how we understand the world around us. Through readings, discussions, and activities that draw from varied cultural traditions, subcultures, and histories, we explore how different communities engage with and inform our course themes. In this course I will aim to create an atmosphere where multiple viewpoints strengthen our intellectual community and deepen our academic inquiry through dialogue and exchange.

Grading

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale, and you can look up your grades anytime on the virtual course space:

- A = 90%-100%
- B = 80%-89%
- C = 70%-79%
- D = 60%-69%
- F = 59% or Below

Weights of the assessments in the calculation of the final letter grade.

Weekly Responses	40%
Visual Essay and Critical Commentary	60%
TOTAL	100%

Assignments

- Weekly Reading Responses – These will be brief responses to the week's reading prompts on the online portal's discussion boards. The due date and time for each discussion is posted on D2L

ahead of time. Once the discussion post closes, it will not allow you to post your answer, so make sure you keep the deadlines as the system will not allow you any late submissions. I will read through and grade every post, responding individually when necessary. I will post a global response that will synthesize some of the major ideas emerging from your posts.

- Visual Essay and Critical Commentary – For this assignment, select one thematic connection between a Hitchcock and Kurosawa film pairing from our course. Create a visual essay using carefully chosen stills or brief sequence breakdowns from both films, accompanied by a critical commentary that theorizes your visual analysis. Detailed prompt in Content on D2L.

Interaction with Instructor Statement

I am available for zoom office hours by appointment, which you can set via email request.

If you send an email between 8 am-4 pm on weekdays, I will answer it that same day. If your email was sent after those specified times, I will reply the next morning or after the weekend.

Things to Keep in Mind

1. Because this is a film course, some of the visual elements may present content that may be disturbing, violent, graphic, or triggering to some students. A crowdsourced website that gives information on possible triggers on films is the following and I encourage you to filter the films through the site if you know that certain content may be sensitive or triggering:
<https://www.doesthedogdie.com/>
2. Content on D2L is organized by folders that are labeled by dates and topic. These folders can be found in the Content section of D2L. There you will also find the Syllabus, Calendar, and Assignment Prompts. Each folder will also contain links to readings, files of readings, and the discussion posts due.
3. All Writing Projects must be turned in on D2L (see next section for access) on the due date and time. Late work will be penalized 10% of the grade per day that it is late.
4. All work needs to adhere to MLA format with appropriate documentation.
5. Plagiarism, or turning in work that is not one's own, runs counter to the most basic purposes and presumptions of higher education. The minimum penalty for plagiarism will be failure of the assignment. In repeated cases, the penalty is failure of the course and filing paperwork with the department head (see section below on academic integrity).
6. Please do not use AI tools to generate your responses. If you are struggling with assignments, please get in touch with me and I'd be happy to support you.
7. Discussion posts close after the due date and time has passed. You will be able to see the discussion topic but won't be able to contribute to discussion. No exceptions will be made – please keep the course deadlines.

Technology Requirements

D2L will be our virtual classroom. It is your responsibility to make sure that you have all technology requirements met for a successful interaction with online learning spaces. For more on technology requirements see here: <https://inside.tamuc.edu/facultystaffservices/academictechnology/readiness-for-online-courses.aspx>

Access and Navigation

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

Communication

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact me via email: LameborshiEralda@tamuc.edu

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: <https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for me to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance and an updated copy will be posted online.

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail here:

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/campusservices/studentRights/Code%20of%20Conduct.aspx>

Student Grievance Procedure

Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in-person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with the Department Head or Assistant Department Head by completing a Student Grievance Form (available in the main office, HL 141). In the event that the instructor is the Department Head, the student should schedule a meeting with the Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Humanities after following the steps outlined above; if the instructor is the Assistant Department Head, students should schedule a meeting with the Department Head. Where applicable, students should also consult [University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05](#) (“Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation”).

Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the attendance webpage:

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalinformation/attendance.aspx>

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following: <https://www.tamuc.edu/college-of-business/integrity-policy/>

Use of AI

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

I will not accept AI generated content for our course. Students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu, <https://www.tamuc.edu/student-disability-services/>

Mental Health Services

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained. For more on this see here:

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/administrativeoffices/academicAffairs/handbook2016/section-iii.aspx>

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses.

Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

For more on campus carry policy see here:

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/CampusCarry/FAQs.aspx#:~:text=to%20carry%20guns%3F-.Any%20individual%20who%20holds%20a%20current%20and%20valid%20license%20to,where%20permitted%20on%20university%20property.>

Collection of Data for Measuring Institutional Effectiveness

To measure the level of compliance with the accreditation, throughout the semester I may collect some of the ungraded texts you produce solely for an assessment of program effectiveness that in no way affects students' course grades or GPAs.