

CHCA Intercession 2025

January 6-17, 2025

Course Name: **Friday Night at the Drive In: American Film History**

Instructor(s): **Michelle Barron**

Course Type: **Local Day (Greater Cinti Area)**

Service Hours: **0**

Maximum enrollment: **24**

Minimum enrollment: **0**

Cost: free

Students will need to bring or buy lunch.

Overview:

From Hollywood to the drive-in theaters to the multiplex, movies have shaped our culture. We will examine the history of movies by focusing on distinct periods and genre. Students will understand how movies both reflect and shape social and political eras. They will also increase their cultural literacy of famous movies, directors, and actors.

Course Goals:

- to read film as “texts” considering such elements as: camera angles, editing, sound, narrative pacing, and genre
 - to recognize and distinguish between certain film genres including: silent films; comedy—including screwball comedies, social satire, and romantic comedy; drama—including Film Noir and Hitchcock’s suspense-filled classics—War Films, Westerns, and Musicals
 - to assess the role film plays in both reflecting and shaping our culture.
 - to trace and analyze certain themes throughout multiple movies.
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Reading Component: Learning how to “read” film; some critical essays

Writing Component: Daily group analysis
Writing a critical analysis of two movies at the end of the course

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Description:

From the early silent films of the 1920's through some classic films in the early 1980's, American films not only transformed our society but also became one of our major cultural exports to the rest of the world. As students gain an appreciation for the role film plays in both reflecting and shaping culture, they will increase their cultural literacy as they view films and actors that appear on the following lists from the American Film Institute: America's 100 Greatest Movies, America's 100 Funniest Movies, America's 100 Greatest Love Stories, America's 100 Greatest Heroes and Villains, America's 100 Most Heart-Pounding Movies, and America's 100 Great Film Legends. Our study will primarily follow a chronological order although we will occasionally deviate from that to pair films that share a genre. Our study will be enriched by seeing segments from the following videos/DVDs as they apply: *How to Read a Film*; *American Cinema*; *Movies of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s*; *The Role of Women in the Movies*; and *The Many Faces of Movie Comedy*. To increase cultural literacy and to expose students to as many films as possible, students will take a survey during one of our Winter Term meetings before the class begins. If a particular film has already been seen by most of the students in the class, a substitution will be made. The 21 films that will make up the base of the class are—in chronological order: *The Sheik*, *It Happened One Night*; *Gone with the Wind*, *Philadelphia Story*, *Casablanca*, *Double Indemnity*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *High Noon*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *Roman Holiday*, *On the Waterfront*, *Rear Window*, *Bridge on the River Kwai*, *Vertigo*, *North by Northwest*, *Some Like it Hot*, *The Apartment*, *The Graduate*, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, and *Tootsie*.

Daily Plan: We will be meeting in the Theater every morning to watch the movies, and we will adhere to the normal school hours. In between movies we will engage in discussion and the occasional group analysis assignment.

This course is well suited to:

- Students who love movies
- Students who possess the maturity needed to view films with psychologically challenging issues: i.e. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.
- Students who are interested in American History—especially political and social movements.

Cost: \$ 0.00

Additional costs:

Students may bring in snacks. We may eat lunch out a few times or order in.

Other Information:

There may be some days when we are bumped from the theater. Depending on the size of the class, this may mean a somewhat earlier dismissal if the class is too big to fit into a classroom.

Please be aware that, depending on the weather, we may occasionally walk to restaurants for lunch: either at Silver Spring House or at Harper's Point. We will NOT be traveling in vehicles.
