So what is a ‘film auteur?’ As defined by French New Wave film critics like Francois Truffaut and American film theorist Andrew Sarris, a cinematic auteur is an artist-author working within the financial and bureaucratic restrictions of the film industry who stamps her/his filmography with identifying stylistic practices. Although they must collaborate with others, their visions of the world shine through in their films allowing us to identify films as particularly Kubrickian, Hitchcockian, Felliniesque, Fordian, etc. The politics of the film auteur are expressed visually in cinematic form, using specific stylized techniques to convey both the plot content and hidden meanings. Over time and enough films we can learn to recognize a movie distinctly as a product of directors like Martin Scorsese, the Coen brothers, and others. Understanding the biography of the auteur provides keys to understanding directors’ work. How the director artistically negotiates the profit oriented demands of the film industry over time provides a springboard for further discussion of technique in relation to message. CTA 4220 presents an annually changing investigation of historically significant and critically interesting film auteurs. Alfred Hitchcock (1899-1979) is the subject of this course.

By watching the primary films of Hitchcock, this class examines the life and work of one of the most significant artists in the history of cinema. Beloved by both audiences and critics worldwide (this is very rare), the word ‘auteur’ was first coined specifically to apply to Hitchcock and a handful of other directors working in Hollywood. Although he had his share of critical failures and popular flops, the sheer number of canonical Hitchcockian masterpieces in cinema is staggering. We will screen his major films chronologically and consider an aesthetic understanding of Hitch (as he liked to be called) as a key film auteur who may also may be the most influential film director in history, still quoted constantly by other filmmakers. His biography, filmmaking techniques, motifs, and aesthetic politics will be the subject of both classroom discussion and individual critical investigation. Students will read from a variety of material including essays, biographies, and academic critiques of his work.

Hitchcock was a film director of the highest order and his work is both fun to watch and fascinating to analyze. Romance, suspense, horror, sexual suggestions, death, mistaken identity, taboo obsessions, aberrant psychology, are just some of the topics we will discuss in relation to techniques like film editing, lighting, and cinematography.
Required Texts:

_Hitchcock’s Motifs_ (Michael Walker, 2005)

_Alfred Hitchcock: A Life in Darkness and Light_ (Patrick McGilligan, 2003)

_A Hitchcock Reader_ (Ed: Marshall Eutelbaum and Leland Poague, 1991)

_The Art of Alfred Hitchcock: Fifty Years of His Motion Pictures_ (Donald Spoto, 1992)

**Several .pdf articles will be added to WebCT for assigned readings.**

Assignments & Grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Discussion Questions (4 averaged)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film Review</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shot-By-Shot Scene Analysis Paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auteur signature paper workshop (bring rough draft)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auteur Signature Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take Home Essay Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writing Intensive Pathway

In accordance with CSS requirements, students enrolling in this course for writing intensive credit shall:

- “Identify personal strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for improvement as a responsible and effective communicator.”
- “Offer and solicit feedback to enhance the ability to communicate in a variety of contexts.” Students are expected to process instructor feedback and aim to improve the quality of their work.
- “Construct and revise a message in an appropriate form for an intended audience.” Film reviews, discussion questions, and a final research paper all must be appropriately aimed in form and content toward specific audiences.
- “Communicate interpersonally, publicly, in oral, written, and other ways.” Students must actively participate in classroom discussion and contribute through questions and informed opinions.
- “Demonstrate respect and understanding of differing points of view.” See classroom climate stipulations below.

80% of student assessment in this course will be based on formal writing. Most of these assignments, including a final take home essay exam must be formal in style, edited, and fully proofed. Over 4000 words of writing assignments will be required. Students will receive instructor feedback on written assignments as well as peer reviews and are expected to work on improving their writing skills throughout the semester. Students are further expected to seek conference with the instructor regarding any problems with feedback or any other questions regarding course performance that may arise.
**Grading Scale**

**Please refer to the final page of this syllabus for the grading rubric for term papers.**

**Policies:**

**Late papers will not be accepted unless approved beforehand.** (48 hours in advance)

**Screening Etiquette:** Cell phones must be turned off prior to entering the classroom. Do not talk, do not text, do not sleep, do not disrupt film screenings. If you are going to sleep in class or during films, then do not come.

**Attendance:** Students are allowed up to three personal absences except in rare circumstances. After three absences, final grades will be deducted by 1/3 letter grade for each subsequent absence. Thus, a final course grade of A will become a B- with four absences during the semester, and a B with five, B- with six absences, etc.

**Academic Honesty:** Academic honesty directly concerns ethical behaviors which affect both the academic environment and the civic community. Plagiarism and other academic dishonesty, including falsification of data, will result, at a minimum, in failure of the assignment involved, and may result in failure of the course. These failures may lead to academic probation. Repeated or especially serious plagiarism or fraud is grounds for dismissal. All work turned in must be original; sources must be cited in full.

**Disabilities:** Students with disabilities, physical or learning, are entitled to appropriate accommodations. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the Disability Resource Center Access Center far enough in advance to allow a reasonable amount of time to approve of and provide the accommodation. Students who are taking courses on campus or in a distance format must contact Heather Angelle, the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities at Tower 2144, at 218-723-6645 to make such arrangements.
Assignment Descriptions:

Discussion Questions
For four film screenings, students will e-mail as attachments short writing assignments about the films. These assignments meet with Learning Outcomes: Intellectual and Foundational Skills outlined above and Fine Arts Pathway #2. These assignments take the form of discussion questions. Each invites critical reflection of the film/s screened and the reading that week. For discussion question assignments, one well thought-out discussion question will be graded for both insight and the specificity and clarity of examples used in forming your questions. These questions should be one paragraph each. You may ask questions about any aspect of the film and readings, from technical questions and factual clarifications to more theoretical interests. They will be assessed on the quality of writing, clarity, the detail of examples, and the critical insight displayed.

*DQ Hints:* I am looking for you to show me you have done the readings, seen the film, and are processing those in terms of ongoing class discussions. You should include cited references to the readings and descriptive examples from the films. Lay out your thoughts and then finish with a question posed for the class.

Film Review
Write an in-depth review of a film screened in class. Reviews should be at least three pages and double spaced. Reviews will be evaluated for compositional skill, writing style, depth of critical insight, balance, and how well they address the themes of the course.

Shot-by-shot scene analysis Paper
Write a shot-by-shot technical analysis of a particular scene of my choice by focusing on the descriptive components of the scene. Papers should be at least three pages in length and this assignment will be covered further in class. Detail precisely the amount of shots, the content of each shot, editing techniques to and from other shots, camera angles, production design components, lighting design, and any other aspects of mise-en-scene that help compose the scene. Be as clear and technical in your writing as possible using the correct terminology from film studies in your description. Last, evaluate the significance of the scene in relation to the rest of the film based on your technical description. Details announced in class.

Auteur Signature Paper
Identify a filmmaking technique that you would identify as particularly ‘Hitchcockian’ across at least three films. **Only two of the three films must be directed by Hitchcock. The third can be, but does not have to be directed by Hitch. They may simply be Hitchcockian in some specific way. But how and why?** Papers should be at least eight pages in length and MLA style bibliographies should include at least five print sources. Rough drafts will be workshopped by classmates. What makes it Hitchcock’s signature stamp? Why does Hitchcock use it repeatedly? What obvious and hidden meanings are produced through the repetition of this device? How does repeated application of this specific formal practice help spectators identify a movie as Hitchcockian? Be specific and descriptive. Using critical reflection, persuasive argumentation, and detailed evidence build a clear and strong case for your thesis.
**Course Outcomes:**
(1) By the end of the class, students should be able to identify the signature style of the auteur under examination.
(2) Students should be familiar with the significant films of the auteur.
(3) Students should be conversant about the biography of the auteur.
(4) Students should understand the artistic choices of the auteur.

**Learning Outcomes for the 21st Century: Intellectual and Foundational Skills**
St. Scholastica students need intellectual and foundational skills that prepare them for responsible living and meaningful work.

**Selected Learning Outcome Indicators:**
Students at St. Scholastica will:
1. Think critically and analytically
2. Write and speak clearly and effectively

**How this Course Connects to the Intellectual and Foundational Skills Outcome**

Film is a unique art form and field of study. When providing an informed critical reflection on a film, it is not enough to examine personal taste. Rather, it is essential to identify and understand the constituent artistic choices that combine to create an end product. Critical analysis of a film necessarily involves learning how a film is made and how it could have been made differently. This course educates students about how to create critically informed arguments about films. It shows students how to be active rather than passive spectators. Film Auteurs argues that one important way to know a film involves understanding the motivations of its primary artistic creator, the stylistic vision of the film's director. This course puts the artist back into the art urging students to consider film as part of larger individual biographies and aesthetic trends. While films undoubtedly can have merit apart from such a way of knowing, education in this critical method significantly improves the quality of informed reflection as well as improves the arsenal of critical tools that can be applied to film studies. Film Auteurs aims to enhance students' lives by allowing them to see cinema in a different light. This course moves students beyond film as spectacular entertainment toward an informed appreciation of film as art—as the product of artistry, authors, and artists.

Students will view the most significant films in a director's oeuvre. Through qualitative analysis they will take account of financial considerations, industry trends, biographical facts, historical data, and form individual judgments about stylistic choices over a range of films. When does a choice become a stamp? What politics are implied by aesthetic decisions? How can we gauge the importance of single director given associative collaboration? How do we account for artistic failure? What value does consideration of a director add to the work of art? These are just a few of the questions students will critically engage based on data received from screenings and related texts. In this context, Film Auteurs aims to fulfill criteria established by the Intellectual and Foundational Skills Outcome, focusing specifically on elements #1 and #2 (see above).
General Education Area Distribution – **Fine Arts**

**Fine Arts Pathway Description**

“Art is created in all human cultures as a response to life. All forms of art can enable us to express depths of spirituality and emotion, rationally explore that which gives us pleasure, shape social values, reach out to others across time and culture, and create something more lasting than we are. Through the creation and study of art, students consider its definition, interpretation, and impact on humanity. Art merits both technical and reflective study as part of a liberal education.”

Selected Course Indicators

A fine arts course

1. Addresses historical, cultural, critical, or theoretical dimensions of an artistic field.
2. Requires both critical reflection and practice of methodologies or skills in the fine arts.

How this Course Connects to the **Fine Arts Pathway**

As a fine arts course, Film Auteurs considers the relationship between style and substance in film. This course reflects on the critically accepted proposition in film studies that an industrial collaborative art form with mass entertainment potential such as film can nevertheless occasionally produce directors with unique artistic vision – directors who manage to successfully negotiate the demands of both industry and art. In the face of industry requirements that most often aim to forsake individual vision for financial gain, how is it that an artistic signature survives, producing bodies of cinematic work that stand the test of time? This course examines this question relative to particular historically significant film directors, the cultures in which they artistically developed, the biographical motivations for certain artistic choices, and the evolution of an auteur stamp across a variety of genres and industry considerations that are indicative of a cinematic author and artist. In this, Film Auteurs aims to locate the spirit of artists in the body of their work. Thus, this academic investigation requires critical reflection on life, film history, and the evolution of artistic technique.

**Specific Course Outcomes:**

1. By the end of the class, students should be able to identify the stylistic signature of the auteur under investigation.  
   [Learning Outcomes #1, 2; Fine Arts #1]
2. Students should be familiar with the significant films of the auteur.  
   [Fine Arts #1]
3. Students should be conversant about the biography and artistic evolution of the auteur.  
   [Learning Outcomes #1, 2; Fine Arts #1]
4. Students should understand and critically reflect on the artistic choices of the auteur.  
   [Learning Outcomes #1, 2; Fine Arts #2]
**Hints to succeed in this course**

**Participation:** In this course, we will be watching and discussing a *lot* of Hitchcock’s films. I do expect you to regularly participate in class and be caught up on all the screened films. Most of them are easily available and I will also put some on reserve in the library. I love thoughtful impressions and questions. I often use discussion questions written by you or I as a way to push discussion in productive directions. I truly love movies and hope this will be a fun talkative class.

**Writing quality:** As a 4000 level writing intensive course, I put a lot of responsibility back on your shoulders. You need to plan ahead and organize accordingly. If you have known problems with writing skills, use the writing center. The best papers are always well edited, so avoid waiting to start assignments until the last second. If you need to hand something in late, see me as soon as possible so we can avoid it turning into a grade deduction. If you want me to look at a draft, then the earlier you can get it to me the better; otherwise it may not be possible. Remember that I take deadlines very seriously and so should you.

**Film Studies:** Some of you have quite extensive backgrounds in film studies (as a discipline with its own vocabulary) and most of you do not. However, I do not expect that background in order to succeed. What I do expect is that when you hear terms or need clarification on anything being discussed, please ask. There is a basic vocabulary you will need to learn that I will walk you through. You can also sign up on my office door or e-mail me to meet with me for further help. Please sign up a few days in advance though so I do not miss the appointment notice.

**The Material:** Hitchcock’s films have mature themes (taboo sex, murder, rape, etc.) so be aware. The difficulty of the reading material will vary from easy to difficult. The biography is a large book, but it is an important part of the class so please keep up on reading it and the other readings throughout the semester. It should add depth to class discussions and assignments. Experience tells me that once you fall behind in the readings, it becomes very tough to catch up. This in turn can damage your participation grade as well as your ability to write your good papers.

- Make sure to print all .pdf readings and bring your printed copy to class.

- For each film we screen, you need to use *The Art of Alfred Hitchcock* and *Hitchcock’s Motifs* to read about the film prior to discussing it in class. Specific readings for these texts are not assigned in the course schedule; however, each text has a table of contents and an index that will help you to locate the relevant material for the films we screen in class.

- In the course schedule below, AH refers to readings from *Alfred Hitchcock: A Life in Darkness and Light* and HR refers to readings from *A Hitchcock Reader*.

- *A Hitchcock Reader* has several articles on films we will screen in the course that are not assigned in the course schedule as required readings. You are encouraged to read these on your own as they will help with your understanding of other materials and in writing your papers and final exam.
## COURSE SCHEDULE

**Week 1:**
- **Wednesday, Sept. 3:** *The Lodger* (1927, 1h 23m): (hand out syllabus)

**Week 2:**
- **Monday, Sept. 8:** course intro: (in class screening) *The 39 Steps* (1935, 1h 26m)
- **Wednesday, Sept. 10:** *The Lady Vanishes* (1938, 1h 36m)

**Week 3:**
- **Monday, Sept. 15:** What is an *auteur*? Hitch’s early films: False Impressions
  - Cahiers & Sarris Auteur Articles (.pdf)
- **Wednesday, Sept. 17:** *Rebecca* (1940, 2h 10m)

**Week 4:**
- **Monday, Sept. 22:** Frustrated Auteurs: Hitch vs. Selznick: Adapting Gothic Desire
  - AH: Chapter 8: 1939-1941 (pp. 233-290)
  - 300-Pound Prophet Comes to Hollywood (.pdf)
- **Wednesday, Sept. 25:** *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943, 1h 48m)

**Week 5:**
- **Monday, Sept. 29:** Our Town?! / Wartime Hitch: *Bon Voyage* (1944, 26m)
  - Thomas Hemmeter, “Hitchcock the Feminist: Rereading *Shadow of a Doubt*” (.pdf)
  - AH: Chapter 9: 1941-1944 (pp. 291-349)
  - **Shot by Shot Analysis Due**
- **Wednesday, Oct. 1:** No class: Community Day

**Week 6:**
- **Monday, Oct. 6** (in class screening): *Notorious* (1946, 1h 42m)
- **Wednesday, Oct. 8:** *Rope* (1948, 1h 20m)

**Week 7:**
- **Monday, Oct. 13:** MacGuffins & Conspiracies: Guilty Until Proven Perverse
  - Barthes and Foucault Auteur Articles (.pdf)
  - HR: Richard Abel, “Notorious: Perversion par Excellence” (pp. 162-169)
- **Wednesday, Oct. 15:** *Strangers on a Train* (1951, 1h 41m)

**Week 8:**
- **Monday, Oct. 20:** The Im/Perfect Murder
  - AH: Chapter 12: 1950-1953 (pp. 439-472)
  - HR: Robin Wood, “*Strangers on a Train*” (pp. 170-181)
- **Wednesday, Oct. 22:** *Dial M for Murder* (1954, 1h 45m)

**Week 9:**
- **Monday, Oct 27:** No Class: Mid-semester break
Wednesday, Oct. 29: *Rear Window* (1954, 1h 52m)

**Week 10:**
Monday, Nov. 3: Frustrated Voyeurs

**Final Film Review Due**
- John A. Bertolini, “*Rear Window*, or the Reciprocated Glance” (.pdf)
- AH: Chapter 13: 1953-1955 (pp. 475-528)
- HR: Robert Stam and Roberta Pearson, “Hitchcock’s *Rear Window*: Reflexivity and the Critique of Voyeurism” (pp. 193-206)

Wednesday, Nov. 5: *Vertigo* (1958, 2h 9m)

**Week 11:**
Monday, Nov. 10: Identity Unraveled/ TV epi.: *Suspicion* (1957): “Four O’Clock”
- AH: Chapter 14: 1956-1958 (pp. 529-564)
- HR: Robin Wood, “Male Desire, Male Anxiety: Essential Hitchcock” (pp. 219-230)

Wednesday, Nov. 13: *North by Northwest* (1959, 2h 16m)

**Week 12:**
Monday, Nov. 17: The Right Man for the Wrong Job

**Peer Workshop on Final Papers: Bring 1 typed rough draft to class (5%)**
- HR: Stanley Cavell, “*North by Northwest*” (249-264)

Wednesday, Nov. 19: *Psycho* (1960, 1h 49m)

**Week 13:**
Monday, Nov. 24: Oh Mother!!/ *Hitchcock Hour*: “The Unlocked Window” (1965)
- Joan Hawkins, “‘See it from the Beginning’: Hitchcock’s Reconstruction of Film History” (.pdf)
- AH: Chapter 16: 1960-1964 (605-649)
- HR: Leland Poague, “Links in a Chain: *Psycho* and Film Classicism” (340-349)

Wednesday, November 26: **No class: Thanksgiving Break**

**Week 14:**
Monday, Dec. 1: (in class screening): *The Birds* (1963, 2h) [note 20m longer time]

Wednesday, Dec. 3: *Marnie* (1964, 130m)

**Final Paper Due at Start of Screening**

**Week 15:**
Monday, Dec. 8: A World Gone Mad: Hitchcock’s Morality
- Richard Allen, “Avian Metaphor in *The Birds*” (.pdf)
- HR: Ian Cameron and Richard Jeffery, “The Universal Hitchcock” (265-278)

Wednesday, Dec. 10: *Frenzy* (1972, 116m):

**Hand Out Take Home Final**

**Week 16:**
Exam week: Wednesday, Dec. 17

**Take Home Exam Due**
# Example of a Grading Rubric For a Term Paper in Any Discipline

*Modeled after rubric used in the UC Davis English Department Composition Program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas</th>
<th>The A paper</th>
<th>The B paper</th>
<th>The C paper</th>
<th>The D paper</th>
<th>The F paper</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excels in responding to assignment. Interesting, demonstrates sophistication of thought. Central idea/thesis is clearly communicated, worth developing; limited enough to be manageable. Paper recognizes some complexity of its thesis: may acknowledge its contradictions, qualifications, or limits and follow out their logical implications. Understands and critically evaluates its sources, appropriately limits and defines terms.</td>
<td>A solid paper, responding appropriately to assignment. Clearly states a thesis/central idea, but may have minor lapses in development. Begins to acknowledge the complexity of central idea and the possibility of other points of view. Shows careful reading of sources, but may not evaluate them critically. Attempts to define terms, not always successfully.</td>
<td>Adequate but weaker and less effective, possibly responding less well to assignment. Presents central idea in general terms, often depending on platitudes or cliches. Usually does not acknowledge other views. Shows basic comprehension of sources, perhaps with lapses in understanding. If it defines terms, often depends on dictionary definitions.</td>
<td>Does not have a clear central idea or does not respond appropriately to the assignment. Thesis may be too vague or obvious to be developed effectively. Paper may misunderstand sources.</td>
<td>Does not respond to the assignment, lacks a thesis or central idea, and may neglect to use sources where necessary.</td>
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</table>

| Organization & coherence | Uses a logical structure appropriate to paper's subject, purpose, audience, thesis, and disciplinary field. Sophisticated transitional sentences often develop one idea from the previous one or identify their logical relations. It guides the reader through the chain of reasoning or progression of ideas. | Shows a logical progression of ideas and uses fairly sophisticated transitional devices; e.g., may move from least to more important idea. Some logical links may be faulty, but each paragraph clearly relates to paper's central idea. | May list ideas or arrange them randomly rather than using any evident logical structure. May use transitions, but they are likely to be sequential (first, second, third) rather than logic-based. While each paragraph may relate to central idea, logic is not always clear. Paragraphs have topic sentences but may be overly general, and arrangement of sentences within paragraphs may lack coherence. | May have random organization, lacking internal paragraph coherence and using few or inappropriate transitions. Paragraphs may lack topic sentences or main ideas, or may be too general or too specific to be effective. Paragraphs may not all relate to paper's thesis. | No appreciable organization; lacks transitions and coherence. |

| Support | Uses evidence appropriately and effectively, providing sufficient evidence and explanation to convince. | Begins to offer reasons to support its points, perhaps using varied kinds of evidence. Begins to interpret the evidence and explain connections between evidence and main ideas. Its examples bear some relevance. | Often uses generalizations to support its points. May use examples, but they may be obvious or not relevant. Often depends on unsupported opinion or personal experience, or assumes that evidence speaks for itself and needs no application to the point being discussed. Often has lapses in logic. | Depends on cliches or overgeneralizations for support, or offers little evidence of any kind. May be personal narrative rather than essay, or summary rather than analysis. | Uses irrelevant details or lacks supporting evidence entirely. May be unduly brief. |

| Style | Chooses words for their precise meaning and uses an appropriate level of specificity. Sentence style fits paper's audience and purpose. Sentences are varied, yet clearly structured and carefully focused, not long and rambling. | Generally uses words accurately and effectively, but may sometimes be too general. Sentences generally clear, well structured, and focused, though some may be awkward or ineffective. | Uses relatively vague and general words, may use some inappropriate language. Sentence structure generally correct, but sentences may be wordy, unfocused, repetitive, or confusing. | May be too vague and abstract, or very personal and specific. Usually contains several awkward or ungrammatical sentences; sentence structure is simple or monotonous. | Usually contains many awkward sentences, misuses words, employs inappropriate language. |

| Mechanics | Almost entirely free of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors. | May contain a few errors, which may annoy the reader but not impede understanding. | Usually contains several mechanical errors, which may temporarily confuse the reader but not impede the overall understanding. | Usually contains either many mechanical errors or a few important errors that block the reader's understanding and ability to see connections between thoughts. | Usually contains so many mechanical errors that it is impossible for the reader to follow the thinking from sentence to sentence. |