

**Fall 2017**  
**FRENCH CINEMA: French film noir**

**FRT 3520 14GE ENG 4135 181G (4 credits)**

M W F 6 TUR 2322 13C, W. 9-11 ROLFS 0115 =screenings (4 CRE)

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Office hours : M+F 5<sup>th</sup> period, and upon apt.

Required Textbooks:

Robin Buss. *French Film Noir*. New York: Marion Boyars Publishers, Inc. 2001.

Barry Forshaw. *Euro noir: The Pocket Essential Guide to European Crime Fiction, Film and TV*. Oldcastle Books, 2014.

Recommended:

Georges Simenon, *Night at the crossroads*. London: Penguin, 2014.

Fred Vargas, any of her books (contemporary writer)

All other materials will be accessible on e-reserve and should be downloaded or saved for reading. You are responsible for saving and preparing these documents. You should familiarize yourself with off-campus library access (and use of VPN) for films and reserve list.

**Description of the course:**

The class is essentially about French film noir.

“In one sense the French invented film noir, and they did so because local conditions predisposed them to view Hollywood in a certain way” (James Naremore). The class will be entirely devoted to the study of a genre: French film noir, its sources in film history as well as in literature and its recent applications in French literature and television with neo-noir.

**Methods of Evaluation:**

- |       |   |     |
|-------|---|-----|
| 1.    | A series of quizzes   | 20% |
| 2.    | A midterm   | 25% |
| 3.    | Participation and engagement with the reading material and film | 20% |
| 4 +5. | Final project (no final exam 25%)+ oral pres. on project 10%    | 35% |

**\*For any graduate credit hours, the above method of evaluation will be changed to a weekly reaction paper, integrating an analysis of the week’s reading and film {60%}as well as a final 15 pp. max. research paper on a topic discussed with instructor (30%) and participation (10%).**

Note: A grade of C- is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen. Ed. or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF’s grading policy, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/academic-terminology.aspx>

+

<http://ww.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>

*Policy related to class attendance:*

Class attendance is compulsory. Excuses will be made for medical absences provided that a doctor’s note is submitted to the instructor. Class participation is evaluated on a daily basis and

has to be consistent over the duration of the term. It may include group work on specific questions, and discussion of assigned readings and films. Not excused are the following: a vacation cruise, leaving early for your week end, etc. (three absences are permitted throughout the term, however make sure you are up to date with the in-class discussions, analysis, presentations and reading).

**Screenings:** If you miss an in-class screening, you may be able to watch a copy of the film at the film reserve (Library west) under the name of our class, but keep in mind that you will not be alone in trying to secure the film of the week especially since about 5 of the films are used for the class screening of the week. Each film has to be viewed on the premises. Due to the short amount of time between Wed. and Friday (discussion time), you should plan for watching the missed film prior to Friday's class. Please note that not all films are available on line, if that is your plan B. You should allow for about 2 hours a week to screen films. Some of them are longer. (i.e. Melville's films)

NB: And Yes, we may be watching multiple films by the same director! [i.e. Melville, Clouzot]

**Classroom behavior:** Arrive in class with the reading material (books/chapters/essays) that is to be covered that day along with your notes. Please do not count on any of your classmates' documents to help you. We will discuss these texts in depth. Cell phones should be muted, and if laptops are open, they are not for Facebook or other online surfing. Arrive on time. If late, you should make sure that you are NOT marked absent, but late. After three late arrivals, your grade for participation will be reduced by -1/tardiness.

**Absences=** -1pt/absence after the accepted 3 absences.

**Honor code:** On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." For further ref. please consult:

<http://www.sg.ufl.edu/branches/judicial/HonorCode.aspx>

Students with disabilities: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students' office. <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>

**Exam:** The midterm exam will be a comprehensive exam that involves essay questions (short and medium length size. as well as identification of films/filmmakers and analysis of sequences demonstrating knowledge of proper filmic terminology.

**The final research project** (8-10 pp-paginated, including bibliography) involves researching your favorite film and topic and should not just 'rely' on films presented during the semester. It should focus on a specific aspect of French noir. Please familiarize yourselves with the class reserve and reading material. Come and visit me during office hours for advice on the project. Your final research project will be presented to class in a formal oral presentation, scheduled during the last final (3) weeks. The project has to be started after the midterm.

### **Week 1. 21-25 August**

M 21.-Introduction to class material

W. 23. Discussion of key terms.

SC. No screening

F. 25. Presentation on early noir cinema – Reading Vincendeau” “Noir is also a French Word” (article sent to class).

**Week 2. 28 Aug. 1<sup>st</sup> Sept.**

M. 28. Reading. Intro. Marcel Duhamel. “A Panorama of American Film Noir”( ARES)  
W. 30. Intro. to Renoir’s *La nuit du Carrefour/Night at the crossroads*  
SC. Renoir: *La Nuit du Carrefour/Night at the crossroads*. (1932) 70mn.  
F. 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Simenon, *Night at the Crossroad* (Chapt. 4) ARES. + Discussion of Film- Reading Barry Forshaw: France, pp. 49-54

**Week 3. Sept. 4-8**

M. No class, MLK day  
W. 6. French 1930s’ noir elements – Lecture.  
SC. Carné: *Quai des Brumes/Port of Shadows* (1938) 1h31.  
F. 8. Discussion of film-reading: Charles O’Brien: “Film Noir in France: Before the Liberation.” ARES. i.e. You may retrieve this item directly by visiting <https://ares.uflib.ufl.edu/ares.dll?Action=10&Form=50&Value=197645>.

**Week 4 Sept 11-15**

M. 11. Reading: JP Sartre.”Existentialism is a Humanism.” ARES.  
W. 13. Reading: James Naremore, “More than Noir,” ARES  
SC. Clouzot: *Le Corbeau/The Raven* (1943) 1h32’  
F. 15. Film discussion with integration of week’s readings

**Week 5. Sept. 18-22**

M. 18. Women in Film Noir // CONFERENCE ON DEAF CINEMA that day.  
W. 20. Reading: E. Ann Kaplan: “Dark Continent of Film Noir” (ARES)  
SC. Tourneur: *La Féline/Cat People* (1942) 1:12’ \*<sup>1</sup>  
F. 22. Expatriate filmmakers in Hollywood and film discussion.

**Week 6 Sept. 25-29**

M. 25. 1950s France. Introduction to Clouzot. Buss, Chap. 1.  
W. 27. Reading: Raphaëlle Moine (ARES)  
SC. Clouzot: *Les Diaboliques* (1955) 1h57’  
F. 29. Discussion of film, Reading: Forshaw, pp. 54-57.

**Week 7. Oct. 2-6**

M. 2. France and crime fiction writers, Forshaw, 57-72.  
W. 4. Intro to Dassin.  
SC. Dassin: *Rififi*. (1955) 1h58’  
F. 6. Homecoming – no class

**Week 8 Oct. 9-13**

M. 9. Discussion of Rififi . Reading Buss, Chapt. 2.  
W. 11. Intro to Becker. Language and film noir.  
SC. Becker: *Touchez pas au Grisbi/Hands of the Loot or Grisbi* (1954) 1h23.  
F. 13. Film discussion + analysis.

**Week 9 Oct. 16-20**

M. 16. Reading: Garrara. The roman noir in post-war French culture.

- W. 18. Introduction to Clément  
SC. Clément: *Plein Soleil/Purple Noon* (1960) 1h58'

**Week 10. Oct. 23-27**

- M. 23. Nouvelle Vague and noir- Reading: Vincendeau on European Film noir (ARES)  
W. 25. Louis Malle, Godard, Truffaut, Chabrol-HOMAGE to JEANNE MOREAU-+ The Music of film noir.  
SC. Malle: *Ascenseur pour l'échafaud/Elevator to the Gallows* (1958) 1h31'  
F. 27. Film Discussion-Reading Buss, Chap. 3.

**Week 11. Oct. 30-Nov. 3**

- M. 30. MIDTERM  
W. 1. Intro. to JP. Melville.  
SC. Melville: *Le deuxième souffle* (1966) 2h.30'  
F. 3. Film discussion. Buss, Chap. 5.

**Week 12 Nov. 6-10**

- M. 6. Reading: Vincendeau: "The Delon Trilogy". ARES.  
W. 8. Delon  
SC. Melville: *Le Samourai/Samurai* (1967) 1h.41'  
F. 10. Veterans' day: no class

**Week 13 Nov. 13-17**

- M. 13. Film discussion  
W. 15. Simenon's return. French television and Simenon  
SC. Molinaro: *La mort de Belle/the End of Belle* (1961) 1h.31'  
F. 17. Discussion

**Week 14 Nov. 20-24**

- M. 20. Truffaut and film noir. Presentation of final projects (I)  
W. 22. No class  
F. 24. No class Thanksgiving

**Week 15. Nov. 27-Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>**

- M. 27. Discussion of film and 1980s cinema. Presentation of final projects. (II)  
W. 28. Preparation to Corneau- Presentation of Final projects.  
SC. Corneau: *Série Noire* (1979) 1h51' opening sequence: <https://vimeo.com/115211540>  
F. 1<sup>st</sup>. Film discussion. Reading: Buss: "Serie noire"- French television and film noir intro.

**Week 16. Dec. 4-6**

- M. 4. Television and neo noir. Forshaw pp. 72-82. *Les Revenants*. Pres. Final projects (III)  
W. 6. Conclusion. Class ends. Evaluations should be done by that day. **Final projects-**  
due today in class.

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<sup>1</sup> Make sure you are not screening the sequel, *Curse of Cat People*.