Course Outline

**FILM 1002: Contemporary World Cinema**

Semester 2, 2008

**Course Co-ordinator & Design:** Dr Hamish Ford  
**Room:** GP.2.25, General Purpose Building, Callaghan  
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**Fax:** 02 49216933  
**Email:** hamish.ford@newcastle.edu.au  
**Consultation hours:** Mondays, Tuesdays & Wednesdays, by appointment

**Brief Course Description**

Through the in-depth study of a number of recent films, this course explores issues arising from the various developments in technology, aesthetics and culture in the last ten years. The course uses a range of theoretical, analytical and historical perspectives to highlight the complex changes in production, delivery and consumption that are occurring worldwide, and address the aesthetic, conceptual and cultural diversity across this global artform.

**Contact Hours**

Laboratory (screening) for 2 Hours per Week for 14 Weeks  
Lecture for 2 Hours per Week for 14 Weeks  
Tutorial for 1 Hour per Week for 14 Weeks

~ **NB: All of the above start in week 1 ~**
Learning Materials/Texts
Course Reader – available from Uprint, located ground level of the Student Union Building

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Content</th>
<th>This course deals with:</th>
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<td>* recent films from a variety of different regions, nations &amp; cultures such as Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and North America;</td>
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<td>* the rich contemporary history of global filmmaking outside of familiar Hollywood models;</td>
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<td>* such films as suggesting complex technological, industrial, aesthetic and cultural representational systems;</td>
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<td>* theoretical, analytical and historical approaches appropriate to the study of contemporary cinema;</td>
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<td>* the changing cultural, aesthetic and economic interface between national, regional and global cinemas and experience; and</td>
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<td>* the dialectical relationship between: new and old, innovation and tradition, ‘us’ and ‘them’, ‘the West and the rest’, self and other.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Course Objectives</th>
<th>Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate:</th>
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<td>(1) critical engagement with recent technological, aesthetic and cultural shifts within the global film industry, medium or art-form;</td>
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<td>(2) appreciation of the specific ways contemporary films are positioned both as emerging from within specific cultural contexts and as products for consumers within world media markets;</td>
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<td>(3) awareness of the complex and diverse nature of contemporary cinema as a representational system, with challenging aesthetic, conceptual, philosophical and political implications;</td>
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<td>(4) developed ability to apply appropriate theoretical and historical methodologies to film texts; and</td>
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<td>(5) well-developed skills in analysing films in the context of the above approaches.</td>
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| Assumed Knowledge | 20 units of FILM courses at the 1000 level |

| Course Evaluation | The Student Evaluation of Course (SEC) will be conducted at the end of this course |

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<tr>
<th>Assessment Items</th>
<th>Essays / Written Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- A Journal covering weekly screenings &amp; readings: 30%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- A Film Analysis of 1,000 words: 20%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Major Research Essay, 2,000 words: 40%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Other - Class participation &amp; discussion leading: 10%</td>
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Callaghan Campus Timetable
FILM1002
THE CONTEMPORARY CINEMA AND ITS CONTEXT
Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science
Semester 2 - 2008

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<tr>
<th>Film Screen</th>
<th>Monday 9.00 AM - 11.00 AM [HB15]</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>Monday 1.00 PM - 3.00 PM [V02]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– NB. The lecture and screening will be reversed in week 1 –</td>
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<tr>
<th>Tutorials (these times are not final)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 9.00 AM - 10.00 AM [GP3-18]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 10.00 AM - 11.00 AM [GP3-18]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 12.00 noon - 1.00 PM [GP1-30]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 2.00 PM - 3.00 PM [V104]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 3.00 PM - 4.00 PM [GP3-24]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 3.00 PM - 4.00 PM [MC110]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 4.00 PM - 5.00 PM [MC110]</td>
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Online Tutorial Registration:
Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system. Refer - http://studinfo1.newcastle.edu.au/rego/stud_choose_login.cfm

NB: Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: Refer - www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/
This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Important Additional Information
Details about the following topics are available on your course Blackboard site. Refer - www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/

- Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
- Online copy submission to Turnitin
- Penalties for Late Assignments
- Special Circumstances
- No Assignment Re-submission
- Re-marks & Moderations
- Return of Assignments
- Preferred Referencing Style
- Student Representatives
- Student Communication

Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

Hard copy submission:

- **Type your assignments:** All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 or double spacing, and include page numbers.
- **Word length:** The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
- **Proof read your work** because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
- **Staple the pages** of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
- **University Assessment Item Coversheet:** All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet available at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/
- **By arrangement with the relevant lecturer, assignments may be submitted at any Student Hub located at:**
  - Level 3, Shortland Union, Callaghan
  - Level 2, Student Services Centre, Callaghan
  - Ground Floor, University House, City
  - Opposite Café Central, Ourimbah
- **Date-stamping assignments:** All students must date-stamp their own assignments using the machine provided at each Student Hub. If mailing an assignment, this should be address to the relevant School. Mailed assignments are accepted from the date posted, confirmed by a Post Office date-stamp; they are also date-stamped upon receipt by Schools.

NB: Not all of these services may apply to the Port Macquarie Campus.
• **Do not fax or email assignments:** Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse.

• **Keep a copy of all assignments:** It is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in electronic and hard copy formats.

**Online copy submission to Turnitin**

In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of the following assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website available @ www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/

Prior to final submission, all students have the opportunity to submit one draft of their assignment to Turnitin to self-check their referencing. Assignments will not be marked until both hard copy and online versions have been submitted. Marks may be deducted for late submission of either version.

**Academic Integrity**

Integrity, honesty, and a respect for knowledge and truth are the bases of all academic endeavours in teaching, learning and research. To preserve the quality of learning, both for the individual and for others enrolled, the University imposes severe sanctions on activities that undermine academic integrity.

There are two major categories of academic dishonesty:

(a) **Academic Fraud**, in which a false representation is made to gain an unjust advantage by, for example,

- the falsification of data

- reusing one’s own work that has been submitted previously and counted towards another course (without permission)

- misconduct in Examinations

(b) **Plagiarism**, which is the presentation of the thoughts or works of another as one’s own. Plagiarism includes

- copying, paraphrasing, or using someone else’s ideas without appropriate acknowledgement

- failure to identify direct quotation through the use of quotation marks

- working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as though it were completed independently.

Please note that aiding another student to plagiarise (e.g. by lending assignments to other students) is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty.

For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on Student Academic Integrity at the following link - [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000608.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000608.html)

**Penalties for Late Assignments**

Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted more than ten days after the due date will be awarded zero marks.
Special Circumstances
Students wishing to apply for Special Circumstances or Extension of Time should apply online. Refer - ‘Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items - Procedure 000641’ available @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html

No Assignment Re-submission
Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.

Re-marks & Moderations
A student may only request a re-mark of an assessment item before the final result - in the course to which the assessment item contributes - has been posted. If a final result in the course has been posted, the student must apply under ‘Procedures for Appeal Against a Final Result’ (Refer - http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/).

Students concerned at the mark given for an assessment item should first discuss the matter with the Course Coordinator. If subsequently requesting a re-mark, students should be aware that as a result of a re-mark the original mark may be increased or reduced. The case for a re-mark should be outlined in writing and submitted to the Course Coordinator, who determines whether a re-mark should be granted, taking into consideration all of the following:

1. whether the student had discussed the matter with the Course Coordinator
2. the case put forward by the student for a re-mark
3. the weighting of the assessment item and its potential impact on the student’s final mark or grade
4. the time required to undertake the re-mark
5. the number of original markers, that is, a) whether there was a single marker, or b) if there was more than one marker whether there was agreement or disagreement on the marks awarded.

A re-mark may also be initiated at the request of the Course Coordinator, the Head of School, the School Assessment Committee, the Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee or the Pro Vice-Chancellor. Re-marks may be undertaken by:

1. the original marker; or
2. an alternate internal marker; or
3. an alternate external marker (usually as a consequence of a grievance procedure).

Moderation may be applied when there is a major discrepancy (or perceived discrepancy) between:

1. the content of the course as against the content or nature of the assessment item(s)
2. the content or nature of the assessment item(s) as against those set out in the Course Outline
3. the marks given by a particular examiner and those given by another in the same course
4. the results in a particular course and the results in other courses undertaken by the same students.

For further detail on this University policy refer - ‘Re-marks and Moderations - Procedure 000769’ available @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000769.html

Return of Assignments
Students can collect assignments from a nominated Student Hub during office hours. Students will be informed during class which Hub to go to and the earliest date that assignments will be available for collection. Students must present their student identification card to collect their assignment.
Preferred Referencing Style
In this course, it is recommended that you use the Harvard in-text referencing system (similar to the APA system) for referencing sources of information used in assignments. Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and result in reduced marks or failure.

An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. At the end of the paper, a list of references provides publication information about the source; the list is alphabetised by authors' last names (or by titles for works without authors). For further information on referencing and general study skills refer - ‘Infoskills’ available @ www.newcastle.edu.au/services/library/tutorials/infoskills/index.html

Student Representatives
Student Representatives are a major channel of communication between students and the School. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on School websites.

Refer - ‘Information for Student Representatives on Committees’ available @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/committees/student_reps/index.html

Student Communication
Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

Essential Online Information for Students
Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services is available @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/currentstudents/index.html

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading guide</th>
<th>Fail (FF)</th>
<th>Pass (P)</th>
<th>Credit (C)</th>
<th>Distinction (D)</th>
<th>High Distinction (HD)</th>
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<td>49% or less</td>
<td>An unacceptable effort, including non-completion. The student has not understood the basic principles of the subject matter and/or has been unable express their understanding in a comprehensible way. Deficient in terms of answering the question, research, referencing and correct presentation (spelling, grammar etc). May include extensive plagiarism.</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a reasonable attempt to answer the question, shows some grasp of the basic principles of the subject matter and a basic knowledge of the required readings, is comprehensible, accurate and adequately referenced.</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question, a capacity to integrate research into the discussion, and a critical appreciation of a range of different theoretical perspectives. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought. The work is coherent and accurate.</td>
<td>Evidence of substantial additional reading and/or research, and evidence of the ability to generalise from the theoretical content to develop an argument in an informed and original manner. The work is well organised, clearly expressed and shows a capacity for critical analysis.</td>
<td>All of the above, plus a thorough understanding of the subject matter based on substantial additional reading and/or research. The work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion of the topic, particularly the theoretical issues involved, and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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Welcome to Contemporary World Cinema and its Contexts, an adventure into the remarkable world/s of film as practiced around the globe. We will watch and discuss some of the most celebrated and debated films and filmmakers of the last ten or so years, with particular attention to those which challenge us with resonant contributions to ongoing debates around cultural specificity, diversity and context within a ‘globalised’ world. Increasingly, such cutting-edge world cinema is unfortunately difficult to access through the traditional commercial domains of cinematic releases and TV broadcasts (even the once mighty SBS is now a shadow of its former self in regards to keeping viewers in touch with compelling international cinema). It is, rather, to DVD releases and major film festivals that one must now usually turn to keep track of the most important action outside the domain of Hollywood. Contemporary World Cinema and its Contexts, however, enables us to watch, discuss and read about some key examples of recent contemporary cinema – and articles responding thereto – that has caused much excitement, and sometimes controversy, around the world. The course takes a diverse approach to this principle, being based around 13 very rich, diverse, and frequently topical films from around the world, taking in regions commonly called Asia, Europe, North America and the Middle East.

Contemporary World Cinema is founded on the principle that cinema is a truly global medium, and therefore its genuine appreciation cannot be limited to looking only at films from English-speaking countries. From the very start of cinema’s history, some of the greatest and most celebrated films and filmmakers have been from outside the English-speaking world (numerically unsurprising, when you think of the make-up of the world’s population). In the opinion of many critics and scholars, that situation has never been truer than it is today. In the decades following World War II, Western and Northern Europe was often seen as the ‘home’ of much cutting-edge feature film cinema; today, many believe such work now emanates from that enormous part of the world the West likes to call ‘Asia’. So-called globalisation isn’t always one-way, of course, and recent years have seen an extraordinary impact by non-English-language (particularly Asian) films on normally subtitle-averse Anglophone audiences.

For those of you not used to watching films in other languages, and hence also being unfamiliar with styles of filmmaking (as well as cultural contexts) very different to those made familiar to us by Hollywood, some of the films and related discussion may initially be challenging. However, an important principle is worth keeping in mind as you take these journeys into ‘the (cinematic) world’: if you don’t immediately like, or love, a film, don’t despair! It is likely that the work in question is so different to what you are used to, that you simply don’t have the ‘nodes’ with which to appreciate and eventually ‘like’ it. (In fact, if you do like it immediately, it may be because the film is operating in a register very familiar to you, and will be swiftly forgotten because it’s insufficiently distinct from all the other films you’ve seen.) It is important – as with anything in life – to have an open mind if you are investigating experiential phenomena and conceptual domains with which you are unfamiliar. You may ultimately find, as countless viewers have before, that a film which at first you found un-engaging (‘difficult’, ‘boring’ or ‘bad’) will eventually – as the days and weeks go by (or following a productive tutorial discussion) – worm its way into your mind, or even your ‘heart’… Indeed many of my own favourite films were not ‘love at first sight’. However, they worked their mysterious magic over time, so that eventually I was drawn back to them and a whole new world emerged. Such is the potentially generative process of growing a ‘new node’, co-authored (or custom-designed) between oneself and a strange new film-world…

So: while debate and discussion is very important, it is sometimes necessary – even liberating – not to rush to judgement on a film (or idea). Transcending the realm of a ‘default’ response based on pre-existing tastes (“I liked it”, or “I didn’t like it”) is initially important here, so as to enable us to grow and change as viewers and as human beings. I’m confident many of you will have some such experiences; I hope you all at least get something positive out of the process. I look forward to your participation along the way.

Hamish Ford.
Weekly Course Participation
Each week, you are expected to attend the lecture, see the film, and do the set readings from the Course Reader in time to attend your tutorial. All written work must show genuine, consistent engagement with the course material, and show regular attendance at lectures and tutorials. If you do attend and engage regularly, your work will show this as a matter of course; if you do not, your work will show it, and will suffer accordingly.

Lectures:
Each week the lecture will contain information about the film and filmmaker, discuss analytical and conceptual dimensions of its global, cultural, cinematic, artistic and institutional contexts, and screen clips from other related films. Attendance is essential if you wish to guarantee at least a pass grade – the lectures will frequently contain material and extensive clips from other films unavailable elsewhere in the Course literature. Though the main forum for questions and issues will be the tutorials, you are also welcome to arrange a consultation time with me if you are having problems with the course, readings, assessment items, etc.

Screenings:
I have selected films that I consider to be representative of the very best and most interesting world cinema over the past decade, covering work from much-celebrated contemporary directors and diverse films that occupy both the ‘popular’ and ‘art house’ ends of the spectrum. In the process, students will get a taste of what might be called cutting-edge world cinema: recent films that are important and relevant for their role in, and reflection upon, culture flows traversing the ‘local’ and the ‘global’.

It is essential for your participation in the course that you see these films each week. Some of them are commercially unavailable in Australia (you will only find some at your local video store, and only if it is a very good one with a decent ‘foreign’ section). I have ordered the DVDs so as to be accessible through Short Loans in Auchmuty Library – very important for your written assignments as you’ll want to watch these films more than once, many of them gaining immeasurably on subsequent viewings. However, it will cause havoc on a weekly basis for students to individually watch the films in the library instead of attending the official screening time – not to mention that early in the semester some of the DVDs may not yet have arrived in the library. Most importantly though, these films are often remarkable aesthetic experiences: to watch them as projected on a big screen is the way to see such movies, rather than on a small monitor in the library or on a laptop.

Readings:
If you want to get anything out of the course – and guarantee a passing grade – it is also essential to keep up to date with the set readings contained in the Course Reader (to be available from the Callaghan campus bookshop by the start of semester). As with the screenings and lectures, if you fall behind you will find tutorials very dull indeed and your grades will plummet. I have carefully selected readings for each week to help get a grip on often-unfamiliar cultural and filmic contexts. This includes articles that have become pivotal texts within the growing discourse around the given film/context at hand. Some of you will find some of this material difficult at first. While most of it is directly related to the specific film or cinema we are watching, some articles may require re-reading. In general, especially when there is a fair amount of reading for the week, it is best to break it up: read the longest article in a separate sitting (accompanied by your favourite coffee perhaps).

Each week I have also listed in the Detailed Weekly Screening and Reading Program below (starting on page 12 of the Outline) some recommended suggestions for ‘further reading’. This extra – but optional – reading can be utilised when your interest leads you on to further investigation; or where you are struggling with the concepts in the primary readings and need some more background coverage; and certainly when it comes to writing your Film Analysis and Major Research Essay. Where possible, I have included articles available online, with internet url links, so that you can easily access them from home or uni. When the material in question is an academic journal article not accessible via Google (which is the case for the majority of academic scholarship), I have provided in brackets the database through which the article is available at the end of the citation.
We can access such journal databases through the university library web page. Simply click the ‘databases’ link in the top blue bar of the library NewCat page, then you can select a database by title or subject area. Hit the link to the database you want to use (for the articles I’ve listed below, ‘Expanded Academic’ or ‘JSTOR’ have been recommended), then hit ‘connect’. You’ll be asked to submit your library access details, following which you will be able to search and find the article you want.

*Tutorials:*

The weekly one-hour tutorials are your chance to ask questions, discuss and debate course material. Your tutor will facilitate discussion. Regular attendance is compulsory to pass the course, and a roll will be marked each week. Over three absences risks your failing the course, with the exception of serious medical considerations. You will be marked for your attendance, but also for participation. You will also be assigned a week to generate discussion of a particular film and readings. And this *is* a participatory process: inquire away with a spirit of ‘leave your pride at the door’, because any queries you have about a cultural context, film, theoretical paradigm, assessment item, etc., will undoubtedly be shared by many others in the room. In fact, the ‘smartest’ students (including postgraduates, and even Course Co-ordinators!) – the ones who learn the most, and get the best results – are those who readily admit what they don’t know.

**Assessment Details**

*NB: All assignments to be submitted in hard copy to the Student Hub (and concurrently through Turnitin)*

**Weekly Journal:**

The purpose of this assessment item is to ensure that you are keeping up with the course, and engaging on a week-by-week basis. You are required to submit a Journal containing brief responses to the films viewed within the weekly film schedule, informed where appropriate by the readings and lecture material. You can make this Journal process fork for you via a draft form, by taking notes in preparation for (but also during and after) tutorials, in response to the readings, and following the film and lecture. Then, when the time comes, use these notes to type up your Journal in polished form. One reason this two-step process can be enlightening is that your responses to a particular film, idea or reading will likely change (often for the better) over time. The submitted Journal demonstrates the level of your weekly participation in the course and responsible knowledge building, while the other two assessment tasks involve much more specific, depth-oriented scholarship. You will submit two instalments containing roughly the same quota (around 5 entries each). Do not submit an entry for the film and week on which you’re planning to base your Film Analysis.

**Length –** each entry approximately 300 words  
**Weighting –** 30% in total  
**Due –** 5 pm. Friday, week 8 (installment 1, worth 15%) at the Hub; and 5 pm. Friday, week 14 (installment 2, worth 15%) at the Hub

**Film Analysis:**

For the films and readings you find especially stimulating, choose these 2 weeks’ topics as the basis for your Film Analysis and Major Research Essay. The Film Analysis is a longer, more developed and analytical piece than the Journal entries. This is your chance to compose a concentrated, close account of a particular film we’ve watched in the course. You can also, if you wish, write about a film from later in the course. You do not have to research outside the Course Reader (though if you do that is certainly fine). Do not write a ‘film review’ as such, giving the film three stars out of five etc, but rather an analytical piece drawing out what you find most interesting about the film in terms of its aesthetic, thematic and cultural elements. (Timothy Corrigan’s article ‘Writing About the Movies’ from the Course Reader is a useful account of different ways to write about films; this will be useful for all your work, but especially the Film Analysis and Major Research Essay.)

**Length –** 1,000 words  
**Weighting –** 20%  
**Due –** Monday, week 10, at the end of the lecture  

*NB: Your Film Analysis and major Essay cannot be on the same film/topic.*
Major Research Essay:

This is your major research-based project for the course. In it, you will further develop and deepen the skills gleaned through the Journal and Film Analysis, but go much further in constructing a substantial scholarly essay on your preferred topic. The essay requires a strong, well-developed argument delivered via rigorous analysis (rather than merely the assertion of opinion), utilizing your own developing critical skills in concert with the work of scholars you utilize via substantial research. This latter point cannot be stressed enough: **For this assignment it is essential to do substantial research beyond each week’s set readings (reading, and using, at least three scholarly articles).**

We will discuss and clarify what this entails in more detail closer to the time. Suffice to say here that substantial research involves more than a quick Google search (and there will be a ban on using Wikipedia as a quoted source). You should certainly utilize material in the Course Reader, plus the ‘further reading’ recommendations for each week’s topic listed later in this Outline, but do not rely exclusively on these sources for your essay. (A general recommended reading list covering the areas of world cinema, film studies, and global culture has also been included after the weekly details ahead in this Outline, for broad- and entry-level scholarship in such areas; though more specific journal-length articles will need to be researched as well.) Where possible, you should also watch other films relevant to your topic.

The essay questions will be distributed halfway through the course. There will be one question for each week/film/topic, as well as some more generally framed questions about contemporary world cinema. It is recommended that you start thinking about which area/week’s topics interest you in terms of a potential essay around the middle of the course so that preliminary thinking, reading and watching can commence before narrowing down your project via an essay question and then in the actual writing process itself. (See the relevant section later in this Outline for some useful essay writing guidelines.)

**Length –** 2,000 words  
**Weighting –** 40%  
**Due –** Friday, November 14, through the Hub

NB. Please read the sections on essay submission and essay writing before submitting all written work. Note the penalties for plagiarism, and that all assignments must be submitted **both** in hard copy to the Student Hub and to Turnitin via Blackboard. Marks will be deducted for poor presentation and incorrect referencing, as well as late submission without a pre-arranged extension (on medical or other unforeseen grounds).
# The Course at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Week Commencing</th>
<th>Lecture Topic and Screening</th>
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| 1    | 21/07/2008      | Introduction: What is ‘Contemporary World Cinema’?...
  |                  | (screening: 11'09''01 – September 11) |
| 3    | 04/08/2008      | On the other side – suicide bombers & moral gravity in the
  |                  | Occupied Territories (screening: Paradise Now) |
| 4    | 11/08/2008      | From Iran – a celebrated national cinema and master auteur
  |                  | (screening: Taste of Cherry) |
| 5    | 18/08/2008      | A fantastic culture and history: simulated China for the (western) world
  |                  | (screening: Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon) |
| 6    | 25/08/2008      | The lure of the new Beijing and a virtual world (screening: The World) |
| 7    | 01/09/2008      | At home in Taipei & Paris: trans-cultural alienation, across time zones
  |                  | (screening: What Time is it There?)
  |                  | ~ Friday: installment 1 of Journal due ~ |
| 8    | 08/09/2008      | Asian Hollywood – the Korean nation(s) divided
  |                  | (screening: JSA: Joint Security Area) |
| 9    | 15/09/2008      | Hybrid subjects and histories – the fight over representations of ‘home’
  |                  | & holocaust (screening: Ararat) |
| 10   | 22/09/2008      | Contemporary grit: experience and identity at the margins of
  |                  | contemporary Europe (screening: The Promise)
  |                  | ~ Monday: Film Analysis due ~ |
| 11   | 29/09/2008 -    | Semester Recess: |
| 12   | 06/10/2008      | Monday 29 September to Friday 10 October 2008 |
| 14   | 20/10/2008      | An intimate void – autumnal meditations of a quintessential ‘art cinema’
  |                  | director (screening: Saraband) |
| 15   | 27/10/2008      | State secrets: the repressed, hybrid identity of the (‘post’) colonial
  |                  | European subject (screening: Hidden) |
| 16   | 03/11/2008      | Difficult relations: a feminist, liberal Western woman face-to-face with
  |                  | an erotic Arab ‘other’ (screening: Yes)
  |                  | ~ Friday: installment 2 of Journal due ~ |
| 17   | 10/11/2008      | ~ Friday November 14: Major Research Essay due ~ |

**Examination period:** Monday 10 November to Friday 28 November 2008
Weekly Screening and Reading Program

~ Week 1 ~

Introduction: What is ‘Contemporary World Cinema’?

Film:
11’09’01 – September 11 (Youssef Chahine, Amos Gitai, Alejandro González Iñárritu, Shohei Imamura, Claude Lelouch, Ken Loach, Samira Makhmalbaf, Mira Nair, Idrissa Ouedraogo, Sean Penn, Danis Tanovic; France/UK/Egypt/Japan/Mexico/USA/Iran, 2002)

Reading:

~ Week 2 ~

Liberal Hollywood’s global engagement, post-‘9/11’

Film:
Syriana (Stephen Gaghan, USA, 2005)

Reading:
- Kenneth Turan, film review, Los Angeles Times:
  http://www.calendarlive.com/movies/turan/cl-et-syriana23nov23,0,7214793.story

Suggested further viewing:
- In this World (Michael Winterbottom, UK, 2003)
- Good Night, and Good Luck (George Clooney, USA, 2005) *(denotes film is available is in the Library)*
- The Good Shepard (Eric Roth, USA, 2007)

Further suggested reading:
- Peter Suderman, ‘Black Gold’, National Review Online:
  http://www.nationalreview.com/comment/suderman200512160817.asp
~ Week 3 ~

On the other side – suicide bombers & moral gravity in the Occupied Territories

**Film:**

Paradise Now (Hany Abu-Assad, Palestine/France/Germany/Netherlands/Israel, 2005)

**Reading:**

Further viewing:
- *Walk on Water* (Gal Uchovsky, Israel/Sweden, 2004) *
- *Close to Home* (Vidi Bilua & Dalia Hager, Israel, 2005)
- *The Terrorist* (Santosh Sivan, India, 1999)

Further reading:

~ Week 4 ~

From Iran – Celebrated national cinema and a master auteur

**Film:**

Taste of Cherry (Abbas Kiarostami, Iran/France, 1997)

**Reading:**

Further viewing:
- *Close-Up* (Kiarostami, Iran, 1990) *
- *The Wind Will Carry Us* (Kiarostmai, Iran/France, 1999) *[on order]*
- *Ten* (Kiarostmai, Iran/France, 2002) *[on order]*
- *Baduk* (Majid Majidi, Iran, 1992) *

Further reading:
~ Week 5 ~

A fantastic culture and history: simulated China for the (western) world

Film:
*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (Ang Lee, Taiwan/Hong Kong/USA/China, 2000)

Reading:
Full article available to download at: http://www.scribd.com/doc/10861/Baudrillard-Simulacra-and-Simulation

Further viewing:
- Memoirs of a Geisha (Rob Marshall, USA, 2005)
- *House of Flying Daggers* (Zhang Yimou, China, 2004)
- *Hero* (Zhang Yimou, China, 2000) *

Further reading:
- Christina Klein, ‘”Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon”: A Diasporic Reading’, *Cinema Journal* Vol. 43, No. 4 (Summer, 2004), pp. 18-42. [Available through Expanded Academic Journal database]

~ Week 6 ~

The lure of the new Beijing and a virtual world

Film:
*The World* (Jia Zhang-ke, China/Japan/France, 2004)

Reading:

Further viewing:
- *Yellow Earth* (Chen Kaige, China, 1984) *
- *Raise the Red Lantern* (Zhang Yimou, China, 1991) *
- *Unknown Pleasures* (Jia Zhang-ke, China, 2001) * [on order]
- *Beijing Bicycle* (Wang Xiaoshuai, China, 2002)

Further reading:
- Chadhuri, ‘East Asian Cinema’ chapter, from *Contemporary World Cinema* [excerpt: pp. 93-100]. *[on order]
~ Week 7 ~

At home in Taipei & Paris: trans-cultural alienation, across time zones

**Film:**

*What Time is it There?* (Tsai Ming-liang, Taiwan/France, 2001)

**Reading:**


Further viewing:

- *Yi Yi* (Edward Yang, Taiwan, 1999) *
- *The River* (Tsai Ming-liang, Taiwan, 1997)
- *The 400 Blows* (François, Truffaut, France, 1959) *
- *L’avventura* (Michelangelo Antonioni, Italy/France, 1960) *

Further Reading:

- Chadhuri, ‘East Asian Cinema’ chapter, from *Contemporary World Cinema* [excerpt: pp. 100-102]. *[on order]*

~ Week 8 ~

Asian Hollywood; the Korean nation(s) divided

**Film:**

*JSA: Joint Security Area* (Chan-Wook Park, South Korea, 2000)

**Reading:**


Further viewing:

- *Swiri/Shiri* (Kang Je-gyu, South Korea, 1999)
- *Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter...and Spring* (Kim Ki-duk, South Korea/Germany, 2003)
- *Lies* (Jang Sun-Woo, South Korea, 1999)
- *Oldboy* (Park Chan-Wook, South Korea, 2003)

Further reading:

- Chadhuri, ‘East Asian Cinema’, from *Contemporary World Cinema* [excerpt: pp. 110-113]. *[on order]*
~ Week 9 ~

Hybrid subjects and histories – the fight over representations of ‘home’ & holocaust

Film:
Ararat (Atom Egoyan, Canada/France, 2002)

Reading:

Further viewing:
- Family Viewing (Egoyan, Canada, 1987) *
- Calendar (Egoyan, Armenia/Canada/Germany, 1993)
- The Sweet Hereafter (Egoyan, Canada, 1997) *
- Schindler’s List (Steven Spielberg, USA, 1993) *

Further reading:

~ Week 10 ~

Contemporary grit: experience and identity at the margins of contemporary Europe

Film:
La Promesse/The Promise (Jean-Pierre & Luc Dardenne, Belgium/France/Luxembourg, 1996)

Reading:

Further viewing:
- Rosetta (Dardenne brothers, France/Belgium, 1999)
- The Child (Dardenne brothers, Belgium/France, 2005)
- The Bicycle Thieves (Vittorio de Sica, Italy 1948) *

Further reading:
- Chadhuri, ‘European Cinema’ chapter, from Contemporary World Cinema, pp. 14-33. *[on order]

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~ Week 11 ~

**Dogme: a digital, anti-Hollywood revolution**

**Film:**
*Festen/The Celebration* (Thomas Vinterberg, Denmark/Sweden, 1998)

**Reading:**

Further viewing:
- *The Idiots* (Lars von Trier, Denmark/Sweden/France/Netherlands/Italy, 1998) *
- *Dancer in the Dark* (Lars von Trier, Denmark/Germany/Netherlands/USA/UK/Sweden/Finland/Iceland/Norway, 2000) *
- *Open Hearts* (Susanne Bier, Denmark, 2001)

Further reading:
- Chadhuri, ‘Scandinavian Cinema’ chapter, from *Contemporary World Cinema*, pp. 34-53. *[on order]*
- Thomas Beltzer, ‘Lars von Trier’, *Senses of Cinema*:
http://www.sensesofcinema.com/contents/directors/02/vontrier.html

~ Week 12 ~

**An intimate void – autumnal meditations of a quintessential ‘art cinema’ director**

**Film:**
*Saraband* (Ingmar Bergman, Sweden/Italy/Germany/Denmark/Finland/Austria, 2003)

**Reading:**
- Yvette Bíró, ‘*Saraband: Bergman’s Ship Sails On*’, *Rouge* 6, 2005:

Further viewing:
- *The Seventh Seal* (Bergman, Sweden, 1957) *
- *Persona* (Bergman, Sweden, 1966) *
- *Scenes from a Marriage* (Bergman, Sweden, 1973) *
- *Fanny and Alexander* (Bergman, Sweden/France/West Germany, 1982) *

Additional reading:
~ Week 13 ~

State secrets: the repressed, hybrid identity of the (‘post’-)colonial European subject

Film:
Hidden/Caché (Michael Haneke, France/Austria, 2006)

Reading:

Further viewing:
- Funny Games (Haneke, Austria, 1998) *
- Code Unknown (Haneke, France, Germany, Romania, 2000)
- The Pianist (Haneke, Germany/Poland/France/Austria, 2001) *
- Why does Herr K. Run Amok? (Rainer Werner Fassbinder, West Germany, 1970)

Further reading:

~ Week 14 ~

Difficult relations: a feminist, liberal Western woman face-to-face with an erotic Arab ‘other’

Film:
Yes (Sally Potter, UK, 2004)

Reading:
- Cynthia Lucia, ‘Saying “Yes” to Taking Risks: an Interview with Sally Potter’, Cineaste (Fall 2005), pp. 24-30.

Further viewing:
- Orlando (Potter, UK/Russia/France/Italy/Netherlands 1992) *
- The Tango Lesson (Potter, UK/France/Argentina/Germany/Netherlands, 1997)

Further Reading:

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Some Useful Books on World Cinema, Film Studies, and Global Culture & Representation:

(All in the library)

World cinema:

Shohini Chaudhuri, Contemporary World Cinema, Edinburgh University Press, 2005. [on order]


Film Studies:


Joanne Hollows, Peter Hutchings, Peter Hutchings & Mark Jancovich (eds.), The Film Studies Reader, Oxford University Press, 2000.


Global culture and representation:


Peter Beilharz & Trevor Hogan (eds.), *Social Self, Global Culture: an Introduction to Sociological Ideas*: Oxford University Press, 2002.


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**GUIDELINES ON ESSAY WRITING**

1. **THE ESSAY**

The majority of major assignments you will be required to write in Film Studies will be in essay form. These guidelines address the essentials of essay design and academic style in fairly general terms. For more detailed guidance on writing specifically on film, see David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction*, 5th edition (NY: McGraw-Hill), pp. 431-436.

An essay is not a mere presentation of facts. We not only want to find out how much you know; but also what you think and how you think. A good essay argues a case and supports it with evidence.

An unsatisfactory essay structure consists of: a first paragraph that restates the topic in other words; a middle essay that quotes from what other authorities have said, or from parts of the text that might be used to support a point of view on the topic, though no point of view is argued for; and a last paragraph that restates the topic in other words again.

It is better if you can find in the essay topic: a problem that requires solution; an issue which can be argued in more than one way; a point of view that is overstated unless other considerations are taken into account. The middle of the essay then becomes a marshalling of evidence: to find an solution to the problem; to weigh up arguments pro and con before giving a final judgement; to set out what can be said in defence of the topic statement but what, in view of competing formulations, would be a better definition of the case. If you conceive of your first paragraph as the proposal of a problem for solution, your last paragraph will become non-repetitive and easier to write.

2. **THE ESSAY QUESTION**

a) The instructional word “discuss”

“Discuss” means “examine by argument,” and it asks you to express your opinion about, or your point of view on, the idea that follows: e.g., “Discuss Renoir’s use of nature in *The Rules of the Game*.” In the context of a Film Studies essay, “discuss” does not mean “hold a leisurely conversation” or “toss about ideas that seem relevant”. Nor does it mean “provide a survey of all possible opinions about the course”. You are being asked to take a stand: to examine an idea, to formulate an opinion about it, and to support that opinion by a reasoned, coherent argument.
b) Other instructional words

Compare: examine similarities and differences.

Criticise: make a reasoned assessment (whether favourable or unfavourable)

Analyze: break the whole into parts so that you can interpret each part separately and examine internal relationships between parts, before reconsidering the whole.

Relate: describe connections.

Evaluate: analyse strengths and limitations, in order to pass a reasoned judgment.

c) The question

Having noted the instructional word, look carefully at the whole question: e.g., “Discuss Renoir’s use of nature in The Rules of the Game.” The question does not ask for a catalogue of natural imagery in The Rules of the Game: rather, it asks you to determine what use Renoir makes of nature — as an agent in the narrative, as a device for revealing character, as a means for creating atmosphere or as a source of imagery and recurrent motifs.

Your essay should be focused directly on the essay question. Read the question carefully, and read all of it. Do not simply seize on a few key words and use them as a launching pad for a general discussion of the text. The question should rather give you a basis for planning your essay structure.

d) The word limit

It is not there simply to tell you when to stop writing. A word limit forces you to be selective, to decide what you think are the most important issues, and to express your ideas as clearly and succinctly as possible. A 500-word essay may require less writing than a 2000-word essay, but it does not require less thought. Going substantially over the word limit indicates lack of an essay plan; falling well short of the essay limit indicates that not only forethought is lacking. You should have to plan carefully and write precisely to fit your argument into the word limit.

3. ESSAY DESIGN

Your essay will need an opening paragraph that is a deliberate beginning and not an accident: it should establish the character and tone of your argument, and its direction, telling the reader where you are going in the rest of your essay and why you want to go there. Your essay will need a substantial middle that defines and amplifies your argument, making it concrete and convincing. And your essay will need a conclusion that feels like a conclusion and not as if you have run out of steam: it should drive your point home, letting the reader know you have arrived, and precisely where. As has been suggested, conceiving of the topic as proposing a problem for solution (for the solution of which you will need to assemble data) is a more promising approach than considering the topic as indicating an area in which data needs to be assembled.

4. THE ARGUMENT

Your argument should not be based simply on personal taste or private belief but on reasoned judgement. The substance of your argument should consist mainly of evidence you provide to support your opinions or the approach you have taken. In a Film Studies essay “evidence” usually takes two forms:

a) Examples from the film

You should instance specific episodes, scenes, sequences, shots or lines of dialogue which support your ideas with concrete examples. When you refer to the film, avoid merely paraphrasing the plotline, or merely quoting lengthy passages of dialogue: summarise, criticise and relate. You should make clear how the example supports your argument, why it is relevant, what interpretation of the section of the film cited is suggested by your argument.

b) Use of authorities or critics

An authority or critic can provide persuasive support for an argument you have already made (or are about to make). The critic’s opinion can only be a support, never a substitute for your own argument. You should enter into dialogue with the critic’s theory or opinion; it should be placed within the structure
of your own argument. Some authorities you may find good reason to disagree with. Citing a critical opinion which you are setting out to disprove valuably establishes your essay’s credentials as an argument.

Whenever you make use of a critic, whether you quote the critic directly or simply make use of his or her ideas, you must acknowledge the debt in a footnote. Where you quote directly, all the words cited should be enclosed in quotation marks. The borrowing should be introduced with an appropriate acknowledgment and the context from which the borrowing has been drawn should be noted. Consider this passage from Thomas M. Leitch, *Find the Director and Other Hitchcock Games*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991:

Although *Rear Window* has unmistakable similarities with Hitchcock’s forties films, its more accepting view of society marks a dramatic change in the relation Hitchcock establishes with his audience. Instead of inviting them to identify with an innocent hero or heroine who is threatened by a hostile environment, a villainous double, or a treacherous intimate, Hitchcock makes their identification here far more equivocal, since Jeff is anything but innocent. (Leitch 174)

This is a correct citation from the passage:

In Thomas M. Leitch’s view, where the typical protagonist of Hitchcock’s films of the forties is an innocent “threatened by a hostile environment, a villainous double, or a treacherous intimate,” *Rear Window* presents us with a hero who “is anything but innocent.” (Leitch 174)

When you make use of an authority’s ideas, even if you do not repeat him or her verbatim, you should still acknowledge the source. The following paraphrase also sufficiently acknowledges a reliance on Leitch: “According to Thomas M. Leitch, the hero of *Rear Window* is a more morally questionable figure than any of Hitchcock’s protagonists of the forties (174).”

The brief note in brackets is sufficient to identify your exact source, as long as full details of the critical text are properly entered in your bibliography (see below, The Bibliography).

Simply placing a footnote at the close of your borrowing from a critic does not indicate where the borrowing (which might extend over many sentences) begins. This is why it is essential to mark the point at which your indebtedness begins with a phrase like “In Thomas M. Leitch’s view” and to mark the point of closure with a note. The following note does not adequately acknowledge indebtedness to Leitch:

*Rear Window* demands a very different response from viewers than Hitchcock’s films of the forties both because its view of society is more positive and its hero, conversely, “anything but innocent” (Leitch 174).

Acknowledging the critic by name at the beginning of the borrowing is more than simply a courtesy. Consulting critics and acknowledging them properly raises the level of scholarship of your essay. Students who fail to note adequately where they have drawn from their critical reading are falling into habits of plagiarism, and plagiarism is taken very seriously by the School of Language and Media and by the Faculty of Education and Arts (the Faculty plagiarism policy is set out eat the end of this book).

5. THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

All assignments presented to the School should include a bibliography. Even if your bibliography includes no more than details of the video you have watched in order to write on a particular film, that information is of use to a marker. It informs the marker which version you have used, and it informs her or him that you have not consulted critical authorities.

You should list all the books and articles you have used in preparing an assignment, even if you have not quoted from them. Exceptions to this are a dictionary (though if you quote a dictionary’s definitions, you should name the dictionary in your essay) and the Bible (though if you quote from the Bible, you should cite book, chapter and verse in your essay).

Books and articles should be arranged alphabetically, by authors’ surnames.

Necessary publication details for a book are author, title, place of publication, publisher, date of publication and page number. Necessary publication details for an article are author, title of article, name of journal, volume number of journal, date of publication and page numbers.
Titles of films, books or periodicals may be either underlined (Citizen Kane, The Hitchcock Reader, Cinema Journal) or italicised (Citizen Kane, The Hitchcock Reader, Cinema Journal). The title of a journal article, a chapter or an essay from a book should be placed inside quotation marks.

An example of a book entry:

An example of an article in a book collection of articles:

An example of an article in a periodical:

An example of a film:
Citizen Kane (Orson Welles, 1941)

**6 ESSAY PRESENTATION**

Attach a cover sheet (available at the Student Hub).

**Hard copy submission:**

- **Type your assignments:** All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use double spacing, and include page numbers.
- **Word length:** The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
- **Proof read your work** because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
- **Staple the pages** of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips or place in a folder of any kind).
- **University Assessment Item Coversheet:** All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet available at: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/)
- **By arrangement with the relevant lecturer, assignments may be submitted at any Student Hub located at:**
  - Level 3, Shortland Union, Callaghan
  - Level 2, Student Services Centre, Callaghan
  - Ground Floor, University House, City
  - Opposite Café Central, Ourimbah
- **Date-stamping assignments:** All students must date-stamp their own assignments using the machine provided at each Student Hub. If mailing an assignment, this should be address to the relevant School. Mailed assignments are accepted from the date posted, confirmed by a Post Office date-stamp; they are also date-stamped upon receipt by Schools.

Student name:
Course name and code:
Lecturer’s name:
Date due:
Essay topic.

Please word-process or type assignments. Leave a wide left-hand margin for comments. Please double-space assignments, i.e., leave one line blank between each line of text.

A bibliography must be attached to every assignment (see previous section).

Give page numbers for the work(s) quoted. These should be keyed to your bibliography. If your essay is only about one work, or you have introduced the name of the author or critic you are discussing, you can simply enclose a page number in brackets: e.g., (206). If there is any doubt about the author or critic being referred to, include the author or critic’s surname: e.g., (Ellmann 103).

The recommended reference work to consult for further details of academic style is: Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.