

THFM 2311-001

FILM COMEDY

Fall/Winter: 2019/2020
Classes every Wednesday: 14:30-17:15
Room 0T10

Instructor: John Kozak
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Office Hours: Tuesday, 13:00-14:00
Thursday, 13:00-14:00
(and by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will look at film comedy, from the pioneering silent film comedies of Max Linder and John Bunny to the recent comedies of Seth Rogen and Edgar Wright, from the perspective of the cinematic techniques used to achieve a comic action or comic perspective. Though the course will study comedy forms and styles and take an historical perspective on the development of film comedy, the emphasis will be on an exploration of the cinematic tools of the comedy filmmaker.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

FIRST TERM

September 4 - 25

Comic Modes
Comedy & Narrative
Elements of character
The Comic Perspective

1st Assignment: Script Outline

Write a 3 to 4 page Outline for a 5 to 10 minute comedy film. Each student will present their outline in class for analysis and discussion. This will be the outline for the film which students will shoot in second term.

Due October 23

October 2 – November 6

Cinematic Techniques in Comedy
Comic strategies
 Suspense – Tension & Release
 Surprise – Concealment of information
 Clash of Context
Verbal Comedy

November 13 – November 27

Script analysis

LAB**There will be 2 Lab assignments**

Students will form groups and shoot a series of short scenes highlighting the implementation of two different Comedic strategies: 1). Tension and Release, 2). Concealment of Information.

Each Lab is worth 5% of your final grade

Schedule TBA**2nd Assignment: Final Draft Script**

Students will write an 8 to 10 page script, based on their assignment # 1 outline, to be used for their final film assignment. Scripts will be graded on narrative structure, comic tone, character perspective and the application of the comedic principles of set-up and pay-off, suspense and/or surprise and/or clash of context. Students will also be graded on correct screenplay format.

Due January 8**SECOND TERM**

January 8 - March 25

History of Comedy – From Max Linder to Contemporary comedy

January 8 – Max Linder to Harry Langdon

January 15 – Charlie Chaplin & Buster Keaton

January 22 – Marx Brothers, W.C. Fields & the Three Stooges

January 29 – Comedy in the 1940s – Abbott & Costello & Preston Sturges

February 5 – Jerry Lewis

February 12 – Comedy in the 1960s – Blake Edwards & Billy Wilder

February 17-21 – READING WEEK

February 26 - Comedy in the 1960s – Mel Brooks & Woody Allen

(Note: March 4 & March 11 – In-class editing on film projects)

March 18 – Comedy in the 1990s – films TBA

March 25 – Comedy in the 2000s – films TBA

April 1 – Screening of class film projects

3rd assignment: Film Project

Shoot a short 5 - 10 minute comedy film. Detailed assignment parameters TBA

Due March 18

4th assignment: Essay

Students will write an essay of approximately 1000 – 1500 words (4 – 6 pages double-spaced).

Topics and detailed assignment parameters TBA

Due: April 13

EVALUATION

Grade evaluation will be based on the four (4) assignments as outlined above, plus the 2 LABS and Class Participation.

Class Participation

Students are expected to attend all classes and participate in class exercises and class demonstrations, make a contribution to the script analysis sessions, and contribute to the set-up and breakdown of equipment in class. Students are also expected to spend a reasonable amount of time outside of class on pre-production for their film shoots. Class Participation is worth 10% of your final grade and is graded on attendance, attitude and participation in class and labs. Each unexcused absence will result in 1 mark deducted from the participation grade.

Mark Breakdown

Script Outline (Due October 23).....	10%
Final Draft script (Due January 8).....	10 %
Major Film Project (Due March 18).....	35 %
Essay assignment (Due April 13).....	25%
Labs (2 X 5%).....	10%
Class Participation.....	10%
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Total.....	100%

There Is No Final Exam

Penalty for Late Assignments: Late assignments will be marked down at the rate of 1% per calendar day after the due date.

Presentation of Assignments: All written assignments must be submitted **TYPED**, on standard 8½ X 11 paper, with 1 staple in the top left corner. No binders or folders of any kind please.

Written assignments must be double-spaced and single-sided. **NUMBER THE PAGES!**

All written assignments must be handed in; assignments submitted by email will not be accepted.

CONVERSION SCALE

A+	90 - 100%	GPA	4.5
A	85 - 89.9 %	GPA	4.25
A-	80 - 84.9 %	GPA	4.0
B+	75 - 79.9 %	GPA	3.5
B	70 - 74.9 %	GPA	3.0
C+	65 - 69.9 %	GPA	2.5
C	60 - 64.9 %	GPA	2.0
D	50 - 59.9 %	GPA	1.0
F	below 50 %	GPA	0

Work not submitted will be graded as 0.

February 14 – Voluntary withdrawal date

TEXTS**No Required Text**

Recommended - Film Comedy by Geoff King

NOTE: Cellular phones **MUST BE TURNED OFF** during classes, both in the lecture room **AND** in the Editing room. Students discovered talking on their cell phones during class time will be asked to leave the class. Ringing cell phones will be confiscated for the duration of the class.

FILM EQUIPMENT ORIENTATION, COSTS AND REQUIREMENTS

IMPORTANT NOTE: READ THIS! All computer hard drives in OT14 will be wiped clean as of Monday, May 4/2020. If you have any personal project material or lab work which you wish to save on the edit room hard drives, make sure you have saved it to your own hard drive by this date.

COSTS

This is a practical hands-on course in filmmaking utilizing video and film equipment and students should take note of certain costs involved.

There is a **\$50.00 non-refundable Technology Fee** to help defray the costs of regular equipment maintenance. **You paid this fee with your tuition.**

In addition to the non-refundable Technology Fee, students are required to pay a **\$200 refundable Damage Deposit** for this class. In return, we will loan you our equipment for use on class projects. If you lose or damage equipment while it is in your care, the Damage Deposit will be applied to the costs of repair or replacement, but note: **you are responsible for the total value of the loss even if it is more than this deposit.** Any unused portion of your Damage Deposit will be returned to you, usually by the end of June.

The deadline for payment of the Damage Deposit is **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2019. THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS.** If you fail to pay in full by the deadline, a "hold" will be placed on your student file and **you will not be permitted to sign out or use any equipment.**

In order to make payment:

- Take the "Damage Deposit Ticket" handed out in class to Student Central by the deadline above.
- Once you have paid, take your receipt to Melinda Tallin in Room 3T03.
- You will be required to complete an *Equipment Loan Damage Deposit Agreement*.
- Keep a copy of the Agreement as you must show to the Equipment Manager the first time you attempt to sign out equipment.

(NB: if you are taking more than one course requiring a Damage Deposit, you only pay the Damage Deposit once during the Fall/Winter term.)

FILM EQUIPMENT ORIENTATION SESSIONS

The Department of Theatre and Film will hold two separate Equipment Orientation Sessions:

Monday, Sept. 23, 12:30 - 1:30, Room OT10

Tuesday, Sept. 24, 5:30 - 6:30, Room OT10

For students attending THFM-2310 Filmmaking I (both sections) ATTENDANCE IS COMPULSORY.

Failure to attend one of these sessions will result in:

- your being prohibited from borrowing equipment (without which you cannot pass your course);
- an automatic deduction of \$25 from your Damage Deposit; and
- you will have to meet separately with our Equipment Manager.

Please PLAN NOW to attend one of these REQUIRED sessions.

Students in THFM-2311, THFM-3310 and THFM-3312 are encouraged to attend particularly if they have not attended before, or as a refresher.

STUDENT EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- Students are expected to provide their own hard drives for project storage and editing. The recommended minimum drive is a 1TB USB2 7200RPM drive. Thunderbolt and USB drives are supported. Drives must be formatted for Mac computers.
- Students should also have a flash drive available every class to copy assignments and media, and to hand in film work. Please note, they are very unstable storage devices and are not to be used in place of a hard drive.
- Students are required to provide their own media cards to record their video assignments on. It is advised to bring them to every class. Recommended is a Class 10 16 gig card.
- Students will be expected to work on the Media Lab computers (OT14) on the Apple-based editing software.
- Acceptable editing software is Apple's Final Cut Pro 7, and Adobe Premiere. All other editing software, including Apple's Final Cut 10, is not allowed.
- Students are required to provide their own headphones.

HEALTH AND ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Life happens to everyone. If you are experiencing a crisis in your life, or if you have a physical or mental health issue, communicate with your Professor or Accessibility Services – let us know so we can provide support or direct you to those who can. The earlier we know, the earlier we can discuss what resources might be available. Students with documented disabilities, or temporary

or chronic medical conditions requiring academic accommodations for tests/exams/presentations (e.g., private space or more time) or during lectures/labs (e.g., note-takers) are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services (AS) at 204-786-9771 or accessibilityservices@uwinnipeg.ca to discuss appropriate options. All information about a student's disability or medical condition remains confidential. If you are registered with Accessibility Services, do not assume that Accessibility Services (AS) has informed your instructor that you have registered with them. Please see <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility>. If you do not register with AS, you cannot be granted special consideration (e.g. extra time to write exams/tests, attendance issues because of physical or mental health conditions, etc.).

The University of Winnipeg promotes a scent-free environment. Please be respectful of the needs of your fellow classmates and your instructor by avoiding the use of scented products while attending lectures. Exposure to perfumes and other **scented products (such as lotion)** can trigger serious health reactions in persons with asthma, allergies, migraines or chemical sensitivities. We are asking for your cooperation to create a scent-free environment **on campus** by students, faculty and staff.

"THE REAL THING" LECTURE SERIES

The Department of Theatre and Film presents a series of six lectures which will be held on **Wednesdays during the free period (12:30-13:20) in Theatre 1T15**. Please note the dates in your diary **NOW**:

September 18th (Yvette Nolan, playwright/director/author/arts administrator)
October 30th
November 13th
January 22nd
February 12th
March 4th

This series will feature speakers from a range of areas in the performing arts: technical, performance, design, management, film, directing, playwriting, etc. These speakers will specifically address issues related to "the business of the business."

Attendance at **ALL** lectures is **MANDATORY** for **ALL Honours students in Theatre (4000-level courses, all areas), as well as students in: THFM-3101 Acting III: General, THFM-3201 Styles in Design, and THFM-3801 Production II**. Penalties for absence may be assigned by individual instructors.

Attendance for potential Theatre Honours/Majors and for Film Majors is optional but highly recommended.

2019 ORIENTATION ASSEMBLY

Each year in September we hold an *Orientation Assembly* to welcome students to the new term, introduce our new students to faculty and other students; provide information about the department, its various activities and those of its professors; and deliver news about what's coming up. This year our *Orientation Assembly* will be held on **Wednesday, September 11th, 2019, 12:30-13:20 in Theatre, 1T15. ATTENDANCE IS COMPULSORY** for all Majors and Honours students. Those considering Honours are strongly recommended to attend. All others are welcome and encouraged to attend.

TAFSA

All students enrolled in at least one theatre or film class are automatically members of TAFSA, the Theatre and Film Students' Association, which plans a number of exciting activities each academic year. Activities organized by TAFSA include regular **Performance Jams, Department parties** and **Socials** as well as **DioFest** (a new play festival featuring student written and produced plays), and **24/7** (an event in which students move into our building and several plays are written, rehearsed, produced, and presented – all in a period of 24 hours!).

Please join TAFSA to find out more at its organizational meeting, tentatively scheduled for Mon Sept 16th, 12:30-13:20 pm, Room OT10. This is a great opportunity for students to connect with other like-minded people and a way to get involved in the department events.

BUILDING SECURITY

The Asper Centre for Theatre and Film (home to the Department of Theatre and Film) is open from 8:00 am to 5:30 pm weekdays only. Students are permitted to be in the building between 8:00 am and 10:00 pm seven days per week (except statutory holidays when the University is closed) **BUT PLEASE NOTE:** outside of regular building hours, it is **MANDATORY** that everyone in the building **EITHER** carry an access card **OR** have a booking confirmation form in their possession (hard copy or electronic). **ALL EVENING STUDENTS in the building for classes MUST have an access card.** If a Security Guard checks and you do not have proper accreditation, **you may be evicted.**

These rules are in place to protect our students and our equipment; please respect them.

All studios and labs are locked outside of building hours. Evening and weekend access can be added to your student card by visiting Melinda in the Department office, 3T03.

ELECTRONIC COURSE OUTLINE ADDENDA

Students must check our website at <http://uwinnipeg.ca/theatre-film> and read the menu items called *Fire Safety Instructions in the Asper Centre for Theatre and Film, Access Card/Building Use Policy* **AND** *Room Booking Instructions*. The link to the electronic *Online Room Booking Form* is also found at this location. Please read and note all instructions carefully.

GENERAL NOTES

- This course outline should be considered a guideline only. Time constraints and other unforeseen factors may require that some topics be omitted or covered in less detail than indicated.
- Archival records such as videotapes, sound recordings, and photographs may be made or taken during class or lab times. The University uses such materials primarily for archival, promotional, and teaching purposes. Promotional use may include display at open houses or conferences, or use in advertising, publicity, or brochures. In reading and accepting the terms in this course outline, students acknowledge consent for such use by the University. Should a student not wish to convey such consent, s/he should withdraw from this course immediately.
- Cellular phones **MUST** be turned off during classes and examinations; texting is **NOT** permitted in class.
- Any student attending a test or final examination may be required to present proof of identity; photo identification is preferred.
- It is the student's responsibility to retain a photocopy or computer disk copy of **ALL** assignments submitted for grading; in the event of loss or theft, a duplicate copy is required.
- When it is necessary to cancel a class due to exceptional circumstances, instructors will make every effort to inform students via uwinnipeg email (and/or using the preferred form of communication, as designated by the instructor), as well as the Departmental Assistant and Chair/Dean so that class cancellation forms can be posted outside classrooms. ***Students are reminded that they have a responsibility to regularly check their uwinnipeg e-mail addresses to ensure timely receipt of correspondence from the university and/or their course instructors.***
- Students are strongly advised to read the sections 8, 9, and 10 of the *Academic Calendar* for information on Academic Misconduct including plagiarism, and Appeals (found online at: <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/academics/calendar/docs/regulationsandpolicies.pdf>).
- Detailed information regarding these policies can be found at the following:
 - Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedures: <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/institutional-analysis/docs/policies/academic-misconduct-policy.pdf> and <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/institutional-analysis/docs/policies/academic-misconduct-procedures.pdf>
 - Non-Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedures: <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/institutional-analysis/docs/student-non-academic-misconduct-policy.pdf> and <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/institutional-analysis/docs/student-non-academic-misconduct-procedures.pdf>

- *Misuse of Filesharing Sites.* Uploading essays and other assignments to essay vendor or trader sites (filesharing sites that are known providers of essays for use by others who submit them to instructors as their own work) involves “aiding and abetting” plagiarism. Students who do this can be charged with Academic Misconduct.
- *Avoiding Copyright Violation.* Course materials are owned by the instructor who developed them. Examples of such materials are course outlines, assignment descriptions, lecture notes, test questions, and presentation slides. Students who upload these materials to filesharing sites, or in any other way share these materials with others outside the class without prior permission of the instructor/presenter, are in violation of copyright law and University policy. Students must also seek prior permission of the instructor /presenter before photographing or recording slides, presentations, lectures, and notes on the board.
- Students conducting research interviews, focus groups, surveys, or any other method of collecting data from any person, including a family member, must obtain the approval of the appropriate ethics committee before commencing data collection. Exceptions are research activities in class as a learning exercise. See <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/research/human-ethics.html> for submission requirements and deadlines.
- All students, faculty and staff have the right to participate, learn and work in an environment that is free of harassment and discrimination. The UW Respectful Working and Learning Environment Policy may be found online at www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect.
- Students may choose not to attend classes or write examinations on holy days of their religion, but they must notify their instructors at least two weeks in advance. Instructors will then provide opportunity for students to make up work examinations without penalty. A list of religious holidays can be found at <http://uwinnipeg.ca/academics/calendar/docs/important-notes.pdf>

VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL DATES (all courses)

The voluntary withdrawal dates for each term, without academic penalty, are:

- **FALL TERM COURSES:** November 12, 2019 for Fall courses which begin September 2019 and end December 2019
- **FALL/WINTER TERM COURSES:** February 14, 2020, for Fall/Winter courses which begin September 2019 and end April 2020
- **WINTER TERM COURSES:** March 13, 2020, for Winter courses which begin January 2020 and end April 2020

Please note that withdrawing before the VW date does not necessarily result in a fee refund.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION POLICY & COURSE CONTENT

Theatre & Film are communal art forms in which a number of interdependent artists and crafts people co-operate to create a work of art. This fact is necessarily transferred to the learning situation, and is reflected in many of the Department's courses. Consequently, it is the Department's policy that students are required to: complete homework such as reading, line-learning, script analysis, prop lists, design drawings, etc.; attend classes; attend rehearsals, meetings or shoots both within and outside of class times; and, in short, exhibit commitment towards the inevitably shared endeavours of our field of study.

Any student failing to fulfil these requirements is harmful to the progress of dedicated students and may, after due warning, be asked to withdraw from any individual Departmental course.

COURSE CONTENT NOTE

Dramatic Literature depicts a wide variety of human action, both elevated and base, public and private, physical and psychological, sexual and non-sexual, etc. The Department of Theatre and Film will not undertake to censor the subject matter of dramatic works.

Students who have concerns about dealing with the full range of content and style in drama/film are urged to discuss these concerns with the course instructor.