

Media Arts in Los Angeles (Summer 2023, Session II)

MRTS 4415 - Hollywood History (3 credits)

Professor: Dr. Jennifer Porst (she/her)

Email: Jennifer.Porst@unt.edu

Office: RTFP 235 / LA location TBD

Office Hours: By appointment

MRTS 4450 - Contemporary Hollywood (3 credits)

Professor: Dr. Courtney Brannon Donoghue (she/her)

Email: Courtney.Donoghue@unt.edu

Office: RTFP 234 / LA location TBD

Office Hours: By appointment

Denton Meetings

Dates: Tuesday, June 27 & Thursday, June 29 1 pm to 5:50 pm

Classroom: RTFP 282

Los Angeles Trip

Dates: Sunday, July 9 to Saturday, July 22

Course Description

This course explores the historical and contemporary Hollywood film and television business through on-the-ground learning in Los Angeles. During the study in LA program, students will visit film studios, libraries and archives, museums, and other historical sites to explore the history of the Hollywood studio system using a variety of research methods. Students will also research film and TV work, examine breaking trade coverage, and meet with industry professionals to analyze current issues and trends shaping the media landscape.

Student Learning Goals

- 1) To develop an understanding of historical and contemporary Hollywood business cultures, institutional dynamics, and industry trends using a variety of historical, critical, and methodological approaches.
- 2) To gain professionalization opportunities and forge pathways towards successful creative careers in the media industries.
- 3) To analyze Los Angeles as a media capital and industry hub through hands-on, experiential learning via site visits, field trips, and guest industry speakers.

Required Readings & Screenings

- All readings are available on Canvas under the weekly schedule. Reading formats include PDFs and links. There is no assigned textbook for this course.
- Screenings are available for free via Kanopy and via streaming platforms. We have provided a range of screening options for most assignments, in the hope that students can use platforms they already have access to. If you have any concerns about accessing any of the screenings or completing any of the assignments, please contact your professors.

Communication Expectations

- Please check Canvas for our daily LA activities, field trips, and speaker meetings.
- All course information and assignment details are posted to Canvas.
- Class communication will take place on our GroupMe during the Los Angeles trip. Any changes to the schedule, course activities, etc. will be posted to both GroupMe and Canvas.

Assessment

Attendance/Participation: 55%

Speaker and Tour Prep: 15%

Daily discussion board reflections: 15%

Final reflection essays: 15%

Grades and Late Policy

Grades on course requirements are based on your ability to follow directions, execute the assignment, interpret and comprehend the overall rationale for the course by reading materials. Your projects must be turned in by the due date and time. Please contact me prior to the due date if you have an emergency or situation where you need flexibility with a deadline. *All late assignments will lose points for each day late.*

Letter grades indicate the following levels of performance:

A (90-100) = Outstanding work

B (80-89) = Good work

C (70-79) = Fair work

D (60-69) = Passing work

F (0-59) = Failing work

Class Participation & Attendance

Students are expected to be on time and attend ALL class meetings, field trips, and speaker visits. Our tours and speaker visits are all unique experiences that cannot be made up, so it is only in the case of a documented emergency or serious illness or injury that a student may be excused from any of the class activities.

Also, we will be representing ourselves and UNT in public and professional spaces, so all students should behave and dress accordingly. Speakers are sharing their valuable time with us, so students should be alert, attentive, and engaged at all times.

Writing and Research Resources

For assignments, you can use either Chicago or MLA Style. For more information about style guides, see the UNT Library site. Since this course relies on research and writing skills, you are encouraged to look for outside resources and support. I strongly recommend that you contact the UNT Writing Lab. Tutors are available to work with undergraduates and graduates. Learn more about the Writing Lab by visiting their website (<https://writinglab.unt.edu>), calling them at 940-565-2563, or by visiting their office in Sage Hall, room 152.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is of central importance in education, and academic misconduct will not be tolerated in this class. It is the responsibility of all UNT students to know and adhere to the University's policy on academic integrity, which can be found at: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>. If you have any questions concerning this policy or about documentation of sources in work you produce in this course, please meet with Dr. Brannon Donoghue.

Class Community Guidelines

Our class is a community and a space for intellectual exploration and expression. Many of the topics we discuss may be emotionally charged. All students must attend class, show up on time and stay the entire time, keep up on readings, turn in assignments on time, and actively participate in discussion. But just as important, the success of this class as a whole depends on each one of us supporting, encouraging, and respecting other people in the class. Every student is responsible for adding value to our classroom experience.

You are asked to respect your instructor and classmates during all discussions and group assignments. Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave group meetings and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Triggers and Warnings

We may discuss potentially sensitive topics during class. Please see me immediately if you feel that you will have difficulties attending class or completing the assignments. It is your responsibility to notify me if you become triggered by readings, films, and/or discussions.

Statement on Diversity and Inclusion

Every student in this class will be honored and respected as an individual with distinct experiences, talents, and backgrounds. Students will be treated fairly regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, socio-economic status, or national identity. Issues of diversity will be a part of class discussion, assigned material, and projects, and I will make every effort to ensure that an inclusive environment exists for all students. Even though there may be times when students disagree, it is expected that all students in this classroom treat each other with respect. If you have any concerns or suggestions for improving the classroom climate, please do not hesitate to speak with me or to contact the Division of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) at 940-565-2711 or by email at: Equity.Diversity@unt.edu

Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Policy 16.004)

The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

Students with Disabilities

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Access website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Course Materials and Recordings

- Students are not allowed to record class sessions, unless the Office of Disability Access has informed your instructor that a particular student has an approved accommodation that requires recording.
- All class materials are reserved for use only by students in this class for educational purposes. Lecture recordings or other materials should not be shared outside the class in any form. Failing to follow this restriction is a violation of the UNT Code of Student Conduct and could lead to disciplinary action.
- The information our speakers are sharing with us may be confidential, so do not Tweet or otherwise disseminate anything they say with anyone outside of our class.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 - UNT in-person meetings (RTFP 282)

Tuesday, June 26 (1 to 5:50 pm)

- Introductions
- Team building activity, part 1
- Review practical info about LA accommodations and discuss travel to LA
- Review Syllabus and schedule for LA
- Introduce history component, archival research, and the catalogs for the archives we will visit
- Review optional activities and websites
- Discuss prep work for Thursday

Assignment for Thursday (details and links in Canvas assignments):

- Watch first hour: *LA Plays Itself*
- Read: choose/read one interview from [*Voices of Labor: Creativity, Craft, and Conflict in Global Hollywood*](#) (edited by Michael Curtin & Kevin Sanson)
- Sign-up for an industry daily newsletter–*Variety* or *The Hollywood Reporter*

Thursday, June 28 (1 to 5:50 pm)

- Team building activity, part 2
- Discuss LA as an imagined space and as “Hollywood” in *LA Plays Itself*
- Safety and getting around in LA; packing for LA
- Discuss interview homework - what questions prompted good responses?
- Introduce contemporary component: how to research internships and jobs, how to find UNT alums working in the industry, how to write a good interview question; how to read the trades & follow industry news
- Discuss Week 2 prep work

Week 2 - Remote Learning (Canvas activities)

July 3 - 7 Independent Prep and Travel

Complete all “Speaker and Tour Prep” assignments on Canvas by 11:59P on Friday, July 7th

Week 3 - Los Angeles

Sunday, July 9

- Travel day/arrive at UCLA
- Dorm check-in - De Neve Residence Hall at Front Desk
- Welcome group dinner

Monday, July 10

- Class meeting (De Neve Holly H9 Lounge)
- Private Starline Tour of Hollywood

To Do: Daily Reflection in Canvas

Tuesday, July 11

- Academy Museum of Motion Pictures
- Class meeting (De Neve Holly H9 Lounge)
- Speakers: Miranda Banks & Courtney Lilly

To Do: Daily Reflection in Canvas

Wednesday, July 12

- UCLA Film & Television Archive & Special Collections
- Class meeting (De Neve Holly H9 Lounge)

To Do: Daily Reflection in Canvas

Thursday, July 13

- Margaret Herrick Library & Special Collections
- Class meeting (De Neve Holly H9 Lounge)
- Speakers: Mark O'Brien & Beth Bruckner O'Brien

To Do: Daily Reflection in Canvas

Friday, July 14

- Writer's Guild Foundation Library
- Class meeting (De Neve Holly H9 Lounge)
- Speaker: Mariam Qureshi

To Do: Daily Reflection in Canvas

Saturday, July 15 and Sunday, July 16

Student Free Time

Suggested Activities in Student Info Page on Canvas

Week 4 - Los Angeles

Monday, July 17

- Class meeting (De Neve Holly H9 Lounge)

- WGA Picket line visit @ Disney studio
- Speakers: Phil Klemmer & Marcelena Campos Mayhorn

To Do: Daily Reflection in Canvas

Tuesday, July 18

- Warner Bros. Studio Tour
- Television Academy

To Do: Daily Reflection in Canvas

Wednesday, July 19

- Sony Studio Tour
- Class meeting (De Neve Holly H9 Lounge)
- Speaker: Noa Bolozky & Cheryl Marks

To Do: Daily Reflection in Canvas

Thursday, July 20

- Open office hours: Dr. Porst & Dr. CBD
- Independent Study - conduct interview or visit archive

Friday, July 21

- Independent Study - conduct interview or visit archive
- Class meeting (De Neve Holly H9 Lounge)
- Speaker: Heath Banks
- Closing reception with UNT alum

Saturday, July 22

Students check out and return to DFW

Week 5 - Remote Learning

Monday, July 24 to Thursday, July 27

- Students work independently to complete/submit Final Essay
- Final Essay due at 11:59 pm on Thursday, July 27