Course Content:

Film is a collaborative art and music has a tremendous influence in it. In many cases it is the second-most important element of film, second only to the images. We all experience many movies, and it is good that we understand how music works within them, and how the scores came to be. By watching video clips and listening to musical cues together, and by discussing the effects of the music in the film (the “what”) and the technical, musical means by which those effects are achieved (the “how”) we will, as a group discuss and understand film sequences and the music that is inextricably found to them in a critical way.

No prior education in music is expected. In class we will develop the terms (musical and film-musical) that are needed, and these terms are the ones that must be used on examinations and assignments, and during in-class discussion. Attendance is of paramount importance, because the learnings and realizations will take place in class, with the combination of film clips and discussion. The live experience of the film and music cannot be made up for by reading notes, or even by watching the clips.

The course will unfold in an approximate chronology order to highlight the changing relationship between music and images, and there will be an emphasis on historically important films. No X-rated films will be shown and none shall be discussed in class or written about on assignments.

Required Texts:

Instead of a text book, required listening and viewing will be assigned each week. Also you will be expected to understand and use the musical and film-musical terms on your class handout. The clips discussed are widely available online and found easily. I am legally permitted to play portions of copyrighted films and music, but it is legally controversial for me to “point to” them, so I will leave it to you to further your studies online.

In addition to the above, some readings will be assigned through links on OWL, and as a class we will curate a list of “memorable musical moments in movies” which you will be required to know for examinations. Online sites (Blackboard, OWL) will be announced in class.
Course Requirements:
Attendance (be sure to sign the attendance sheet at each class—the university minimum attendance policy applies in this course—no more than three classes may be missed); review of clips and cues; use of course terms.

Course Objectives:
Understanding the role and function of music in film; commenting critically on the means and effects of music in film; familiarity with musical and film-musical terminology; critical listening and viewing; understanding of the history of film music.

Grade Breakdown:
Assignments (Two; see course schedule) 35%
Quizzes (4 quizzes, unannounced and submission of a “memorable moment of film music”) 5%
Midterm Test (in-class) 20%
Final Exam (date TBA by Registrar’s Office) 40%
Final Grade 100%

* There will be four short pop quizzes administered during class, designed to check your basic skills. If you arrive late and miss a quiz there will be no makeup opportunity for these quizzes. But you may be excused for missing a quiz if extenuating circumstances prevail (as described in the ‘Notes’ section ‘v’ below). The quizzes will be in multiple-choice format and may include video clips and musical cues, as well as musical terms and concepts.

** In order to pass the class a student must earn a combined weighted-average score of at least 50% on the midterm test and the final exam. (The formula used for the weighted average is Avg = Midterm*0.33 + Final*0.67) The midterm and final will be in multiple-choice format and may include video clips and musical cues, as well as musical terms and concepts.

*** Students are advised not to make travel and/or employment arrangements for the winter recess until after the official final exam schedule is posted by the Registrar’s Office and the exam is administered.

This course has no prerequisite.

Notes:
i) No X-rated films are to be discussed in class or referred to on exams or in assignments.

ii) Grading scale for all aspects of the course is A+=90-100%, A=80-89%, B=70-79%, C=60-69%, D=50-59%, F=0-49%.
iii) Students are expected to use the terms developed in class and in class materials.

iv) Students are responsible for making up any missed classes or assignments as soon as possible. In order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing more than 30% of the student’s overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation in the form of a completed and appropriately signed Student Medical Certificate (SMC) indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities, or the equivalent documentation for non-medical or compassionate grounds.

Students seeking academic consideration must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours after the end of the period covered by either the self-reported absence or SMC, or immediately upon their return following a documented absence, to clarify how they will be expected to fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed during the absence. Documentation, if required, shall be submitted to the Office of the Associate Dean, Undergraduate (TC210).

Note that the new Self-Reporting Absence Portal may not be used for requesting academic relief for work worth more than 30%, or for Final Exams scheduled during the official examination period. Students are directed to read the full Senate policy on accommodation for medical illness at the following website:
https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf

A pdf copy of a Senate approved Student Medical Certificate (SMC) may be downloaded here:
https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

v) In cases where students miss work that is worth 30% or less of the total course grade due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if an online absence report is submitted using the new Self-Reporting Absence Portal, or if documentation is voluntarily submitted to the Associate Dean’s office and the Associate Dean deems that accommodation is warranted, then the missed assignment(s) or quiz(ies) may be discounted in the calculation of the final grade for the course. If documentation is not submitted voluntarily then the missed assignment(s) or quiz(ies) will receive a grade of zero.

vi) Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western at the following website https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

vii) Students may be excused to observe a religious holy day of their faith without penalty provided they notify the instructor in advance. Students are responsible for material covered in their absence and each student shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up missed work.

viii) If you require academic accommodations because of a disability, please let the instructor know during the first week of classes, and, if you have not done so already, register as
soon as possible with Accessible Education (formerly known as Services for Students with Disabilities). You can learn more about the Student Success Centre’s services for accessible education at http://success.uwo.ca/academics/sas/index.html.

ix) Hand in assignments to the instructor at the beginning of class on the day for which the assignment is due. Never leave completed assignments in the faculty mailboxes in the main office nor slide them under the instructor’s door. Acceptance of late assignments will be at the discretion of the instructor and only if extenuating circumstances prevail; otherwise late assignments will NOT be graded! *A drop box on OWL will probably be used for handing in the two assignments; at the time of preparation of this outline that is not set up.

xi) Plagiarism: Complete assignments independently. Submission of work with which you have received help from someone else (other than the course instructor or TA) is an example of plagiarism. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

xii) The Midterm Test and Final Exam will be cumulative with respect to course content. You are responsible for all topics covered in class.

xiii) Electronic devices of any type will NOT be permitted during the Midterm Test and/or Final Exam in this course (unless required for accessibility reasons through a request from SAS).

xiv) Other important dates:
September 5 - classes begin  September 13 - last day to add a first term half-course  October 14 - Thanksgiving Day Holiday (classes excused)  November 4-10 - Fall Reading Week (classes excused)  November 12 - last day to drop a first term half-course  December 5 - classes end  December 6-7 - Study Days (classes excused)  December 8-19 - examination period
MUS 2709A—Fall 2019 Class Schedule


(Thanksgiving Oct. 14)


Oct. 28 Interview of Howard Shore and his scores: eXistenZ, Philadelphia, Lord of the Rings


Final Examination in the exam period. Note: the list of specific films and the precise schedule may be altered depending on class interests.