In its relatively brief history (scarcely more than a century), film has arguably become the most significant art form and medium for the origination and transmission of culture. Perhaps because of the brevity of its existence, or perhaps due to its dismissal as merely “popular” culture (a form of cultural production often deemed unworthy of serious reflection) it has received relatively little attention from philosophers. When, however, philosophers have attended to film, they have commonly sought only to adapt accepted “philosophical” problems to their study of the subject (traditional metaphysical and epistemological problems concerned with the relationship between experience and reality, for example, take the form of the examination of the relationship of film to reality), or worse still, they have regarded film as capable only of shallow, but perhaps more accessible, illustration of already charted philosophical ground (e.g. “The Truman Show” as crudely illustrative of Plato’s Cave Allegory). 

This course, premised upon the view that philosophy is a disciplined practice of inquiry and evaluation that does not have its own particular subject matter (other than its own practice), will, instead, endeavor to develop films philosophically. That is to say, the films themselves will be regarded as subject matter for philosophical examination. They will be allowed to raise their own problems, advance their own claims, and propose their own solutions, all to be carefully examined, interrogated and evaluated.

Required Texts:

- All required readings will be available for download on the course’s Blackboard page.

Course Requirements and Grades:

- **Two Essays**, 5-7 pages in length (40%)
- **Briefer film “Developments” and Responses**. Analyses (1-1½ pp.) must be posted to [http://filmtank.org/forum/](http://filmtank.org/forum/) by no later than Tuesday at Noon. Responses (½-1 pg.) must be posted no later than Wednesday or Friday at Noon, respectively. (40%)

  *(Note that completion of this portion of the course requires registration at filmtank.org, a non commercial, publicly accessible website that has been developed, and offered to the world, out of this course at the University of Oregon.)*
• **Attendance and Participation** (this includes lectures, discussion sections, and film screenings, all of which are required). (20%)

Assignment Guidelines:

All written work, unless otherwise specified, must be submitted both in hard copy and electronically to SafeAssignment, a Blackboard based electronic screener for incidents of plagiarism. You are encouraged to discuss all aspects of this course with your fellow students, but the work you turn in must be entirely your own. All materials quoted or referenced in producing your written work must be properly cited. **Violation of these policies will result, at minimum, in a failing grade for the course.** Late essays will be marked down according to degree of lateness. Late developments and responses will not be accepted. No work will be accepted via email without prior authorization.

**Schedule**

All film screenings (in bold) are **Sundays at 7 p.m in 110 Willamette.** The group responsible for initial developments is noted in bold after each film (*G1, G2, etc.*). The same pattern for developments, responses, rejoinders, and follow-ups established and detailed for Week 2 will be repeated for Weeks 3-10, with only the responsibilities changing according to who is responsible for initial development that week.

**Week 1**
- M (9/26): *Introduction*
- W (9/28): *Film Thinking*
- F (10/30): *Film Thinking* **(specific films listed below subject to change)**

**Week 2**
- Sun (10/02): “**Little Caesar**” (Mervyn LeRoy, 1930) *G1*
- M (10/03): Film Discussion - “Little Caesar”
- T (10/4): [Noon - *G1* developments due on filmtank.org]
- W (10/05): Film Discussion - “Little Caesar” – [Noon - *G2-G8* responses due]
- U (10/6): [Noon – *G1* rejoinders due]
- F (10/07): Film Discussion - “Little Caesar” – [Noon - *G2-G8* follow-ups due]

**Week 3**
- Sun (10/09): “**Office Space**” (Mike Judge, 1999) *G2*
- M (10/10): Film Discussion - “Office Space”
- W (10/12): Film Discussion - “Office Space”
- F (10/14): Film Discussion - “Office Space”

**Week 4**
- Sun (10/16): “**Casablanca**” (Michael Curtiz, 1942) *G3*
- M (10/17): Film Discussion - “Casablanca”
- W (10/19): Film Discussion - “Casablanca”
- F (10/21): Film Discussion - “Casablanca”
Week 5
Sun (10/23): “The Battle of Algiers” (Gillo Pontecorvo, 1966) G4
M (10/24): Film Discussion - “The Battle of Algiers”
W (10/26): Film Discussion - “The Battle of Algiers”
F (10/28): Film Discussion - “The Battle of Algiers”
**[Development Essay #1 Due in class]**

Week 6
Sun (10/30): “D.O.A.” (Rudolph Mate, 1950) G5
M (10/31): Film Discussion - “D.O.A.”
W (11/02): Film Discussion - “D.O.A.”
F (11/04): Film Discussion - “D.O.A.” [**Film Assignments 3-4 Due in class**]

Week 7
Sun (11/06): “WALL•E” (Andrew Stanton, 2008) G6
M (11/07): Film Discussion - “WALL•E”
W (11/09): Film Discussion - “WALL•E”
F (11/11): Film Discussion - “WALL•E”

Week 8
M (11/14): Film Discussion - “Ghost World”
W (11/16): Film Discussion - “Ghost World” [**Film Assignments 5-6 Due in class**]
F (11/18): Film Discussion - “Ghost World”

Week 9
Sun (11/20): “The Cruise” (Bennett Miller, 1998)
M (11/21): Film Discussion - “The Cruise”
W (11/23): Film Discussion - “The Cruise”
F (11/25): Thanksgiving

Week 10
Sun (11/27): “The Big Lebowski” (Joel and Ethan Coen, 1998) G8
M (11/28): Film Discussion - “The Big Lebowski”
W (12/03): Film Discussion - “The Big Lebowski”
F (12/02): Film Discussion - “The Big Lebowski”
[**Film Assignments 7-8 Due in class**]

Finals Week
Tuesday (12/07) **[Development Essay #2 Due]**

Bring completed essays to Philosophy Department office (3rd Floor PLC) by noon.