

Western University  
Department of Modern Languages and Literatures

**CLC 2105A/Italian 2280A/Film 2197A – Spaghetti Westerns (Origins, Legacy and Popular Cinema, from Sergio Leone to Quentin Tarantino) - Fall 2019**

Lectures: M 1.30-3.30 pm, UCC 56  
Screenings: W 1.30-4.30 pm, SSC-2032

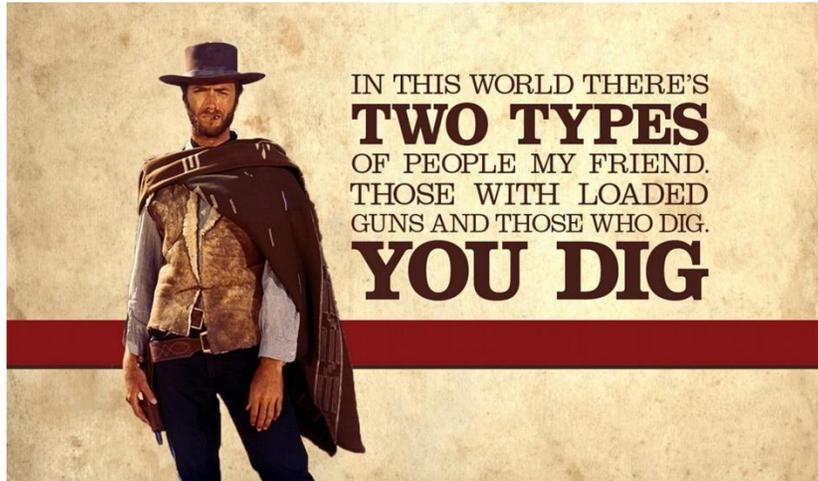
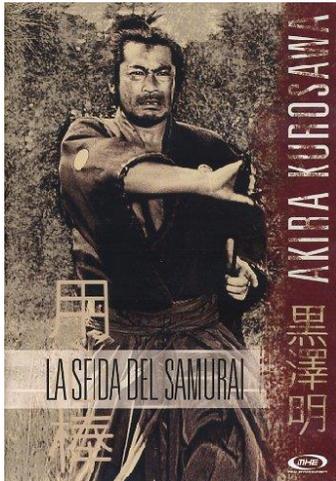
**Professor Yuri M. Sangalli, UC4313**

**office hours: Monday, 3.30-4.30 pm**

**☎: 661-2111 ext. 87390**

**✉: Please use OWL for all course correspondence**

**(login: <http://owl.uwo.ca/>)**



Please refer to this course outline and schedule regularly, for important information related to the course. You are responsible for the information that follows: please read it carefully.

**Course outline and aims:**

The “Spaghetti Western” enjoyed a wide international box-office success in the 1960s and 1970s. The appeal of the Italian Western derives from the stylized, exaggerated, cutting, often humorous renditions of a world regularly portrayed as ruthless and vengeful. The Italian take on the genre favoured explicit brutality and featured an unmistakable visual style that was at odds with earlier Westerns. The course will consider the ideological work Italian Westerns perform by examining the genre’s conscious departure from the conventions, iconic codes, and myths of the “classic” Hollywood Western. Topics include: the origins of the Italian Western in the context of earlier European efforts to retell the tale of the West (German adventure fiction, postwar Italian comic strips, Spain’s *Zorro* film cycle); the influence of Akira Kurosawa’s Samurai pictures on Sergio Leone; the development of the genre and the stylistic formalism of Sergio Leone and Sergio Corbucci; the political themes and “proletarian fables” of the Zapata-Spaghetti Westerns; the parodies and satirical comic Westerns of Enzo Barboni, Marco Ferreri, and Tonino Valerii; the legacy of the Italian Western, from Sam Peckinpah to Quentin Tarantino. Boundaries between genres, sub-genres, hybrid genres, and the legacy of specific films within and beyond national borders will receive attention. A conceptual framework will be drawn from theories of narrative structure and generic conventions (genre theory), and from recent Italian social history. The concepts learned will be applied when analyzing the narrative organization and the conventions of style of the films screened. “Spaghetti Westerns” aims:

- To analyze genre-films in terms of theories of narrative structure and generic conventions
- To identify and explore the key organizing principles of Italian Westerns and their relation to the broader social, historical, and (national/global) cultural contexts in which they are produced
- To consider connections between Italian Westerns and popular genres in film industries around the world (e.g., Hollywood, Japan, Germany, Hong Kong, etc.)
- To understand the relationship between text, inter-text and context
- To generate enthusiasm for a deeper understanding of other societies and cultures and offer a wider consideration of the study of genres through the lens of Cinecittà (the Italian film industry)
- To introduce students to the different concepts of what constitutes genre studies by broadening their understanding of the genesis and evolution of film-genres, and by enriching their appreciation of the problems and issues in identifying genres
- To generate enthusiasm for a deeper understanding of other societies by enhancing the students' intercultural competence with reference to Italian and North American popular culture

## Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this course students will be able to do the following:

- Gain familiarity with the significant films of closely related genres and be conversant about their critical and audience reception in national and international contexts
- Show an ability to read and evaluate key genre-films through skills of textual analysis and in terms of generic conventions
- Exhibit a broad knowledge of significant cultural, social and political issues as the basis for an understanding of the Western film (and its legacy) in relation to the changing national/global context of its production
- Analyze and describe the internal organization of Italian Westerns not simply with regard to a list of independent properties, but as a process of evolving, interrelated features
- Be prepared to participate in class discussions (both individually and by engaging constructively in group work) with a growing degree of familiarity, competence and sophistication
- Select information from a range of library and web-based sources and effectively translate the results of their independent research into information that can be disseminated in several different communication formats (oral, written, web-based)
- Refine their appreciation of similarities and differences in relation to specific intercultural elements and situations (e.g., distinct national cultural, social and political issues, variable film style and film genre conventions, etc.)

## Texts:

Required: Course package, available in September at the Western bookstore.



## Marking scheme:

Mid-term test (2 hours, in class)	15%
Group presentation + report (written/web-based)	15%
Essay (2000-2200 words)	25%
Final exam (3 hours, during examination period)	30%
Preparation and active participation*	15%

\*attendance taken at each screening and class



Please note: at times, lecture material normally discussed on Mondays may need to spill over into our Wednesday screening time. Three hours are scheduled for our Wednesday screenings, and although many films run to about 2 hours, students are expected to be available for the full 3 hours, when required.

Students are expected to attend all screenings and lectures and complete all readings before coming to class. Late Assignments will lose 5% per day including weekends for 2 weeks, after which they will no longer be accepted. Students are responsible for contacting their Instructor immediately should they fail to submit coursework within the deadline. Assignments will not be accepted after the last day of term. Please keep hold of a hard copy of your essay.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Antirequisites:** None

