1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

SCAND 360/COMP LIT 315 surveys the cinema of the Nordic countries from the first film exhibitions in Scandinavia (1895) to the present. The course has two aims. First, it seeks to acquaint you with the key institutions, periods, film styles, and figures in Nordic cinema during the last one hundred ten years, including Mauritz Stiller, Carl Th. Dreyer, Ingmar Bergman, Lars von Trier, and Aki Kaurismäki. Second, it seeks to deepen your knowledge of film history and improve your skills in analyzing film.

2. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Toward these ends, there are three specific sub-aims for the course.

a. Acquire a basic vocabulary of film analysis to guide your analysis and arguments about the films we watch.

b. Organize your familiarity with the films we watch into historical and comparative categories. In other words, you should know which countries the films come from, who made them, what period they belong to, and what defines that period. On this basis, you should be able to compare the films among themselves, and with others outside Scandinavian cinema.

c. You should be able to write accurately and thoughtfully about these films, and their histories, which you’ll demonstrate through class assignments.

So what? What is the benefit of knowing about Scandinavian cinema? The course will help you succeed in other courses in Scandinavian studies. It will help you compare Scandinavian national cultures among themselves, and with other cinematic cultures. It may also help you better understand a part of your own or a friend’s cultural heritage, or provide a sense of the culture of a country or city you may read about or visit. It will also provide you a framework and set of terms for studying and analyzing cinema. Since the average American watches scores of films on DVD or the big screen each year (and we’re addicted to television) understanding the moving image is a key component of cultural literacy. “Yeah, that was good,” or “that sucked—it was boring” does not explain why we like a film, or why we hate one. So studying a different cinematic tradition helps us sharpen our skills in viewing by challenging many of our assumptions about cinema.
Scandinavian cinema does share some similarities with Hollywood—in fact, many Scandinavians have made prominent careers in Hollywood. But, because Scandinavian cinema also draws on different theatrical, cinematic, and cultural ideas and traditions, it also differs significantly from American cinema. By learning about the similarities and differences, we begin to understand Scandinavian cinema. In doing so, we also acquire the ability to see and make sense of our own culture of the moving image more critically. And, you can impress your friends with your knowledge of Ingmar Bergman.

3. TEXTS

Required

Course Reader is available at the Ave. Copy Center, 4141 University Way NE.

4. GRADES

The scheme I’ll use for calculating your final grade will be the following:

- Participation 10%
- Study Questions 20 %
- Writing Assignments 35 %
- Final Exam 35 %

5. ASSIGNMENTS

FILM VIEWING: Films will be screened during class time on Mondays. You are encouraged to view films more than once.

Please note that many of the films we are watching are distributed on European standard DVD and VHS, requiring special equipment to screen them. You’ll find it most convenient to view the films during the screenings. Furthermore, by projecting them on a large screen, the quality of the image is better than when displayed at home. For these reasons, I urge you to watch the films during the screenings. However, I will also put the films on 4-hr reserve in the Odegaard Media Center, so that you can (re)watch them at Odegaard. Some of the films are available for rental at Scarecrow Video (5030 Roosevelt Way NE).

Please note on the syllabus that some films may go a few minutes over the regularly scheduled class period of 110 minutes. If you need to leave, you can watch the end of the film in the library at the Odegaard Media Reserve.

READING: It is essential that you complete all readings, so that you can understand the frame of reference for each lecture as well as be ready to discuss the films. You should have the reading completed by the day that it is listed in the syllabus, and be prepared to ask questions about and discuss the assigned texts. You should also draw on the readings in completing your writing assignments.
LECTURES: Another key component in the course is the in-class lecture. The lectures provide explanations of the key terms in the course, which provide context for understanding the history of the films. Each week’s lectures will be posted on the course website by Tuesday. You can use the posted notes as a guide to taking notes in class.

PARTICIPATION: Participation is your responsibility, and so you contribute to deciding your participation grade. Before the final exam, you must submit a self-evaluation of your participation made up of a narrative and a grade on the UW’s 4.0 scale. People participate in different ways, and so I trust that you can be the best judge of your participation. Remember, as well, that part of earning a university education is learning to speak to others about complex ideas with thoughtfulness, clarity, and at least apparent ease.

I reserve the right to change your proposed participation grade, if I disagree with your self-evaluation. For example, students who don’t make class a priority, but claim 4.0 participation, don’t persuade me.

STUDY QUESTIONS: Four sets of study questions are included in the syllabus. Please respond to ONE of the two study questions in writing (typed, double-spaced), one page maximum. Responses are due on the day they are listed in the syllabus. I will not accept electronic submissions. If you cannot be in class on the Wednesday questions are due you must turn in your study questions early. The questions serve to reinforce your comprehension of the readings and lectures, while giving you a chance to respond to them, as well. I will grade study questions on a pass/no-credit basis.

A total of five study questions are required by the course schedule. I will determine your grade on the basis of four submissions, which means you have one freebie. If you turn in four study questions which all merit a “pass,” you will receive full credit. If you turn in all five study questions, you will receive .05 grade points extra credit added to your study question grade.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS: You will submit two writing assignments over the course of the quarter on the due dates indicated in the syllabus, for which you will receive an evaluation. The writing assignment will be a response to a question I post on the course website at least one week before the assignment is due. Each writing assignment should be at least three pages, but no longer than five. It should have a title and be printed in double-spaced format. Papers are due in a hard copy before the end of the class period in which they’re due. I do not accept email attachments—no exceptions! (This is to protect students, because email attachments can easily get lost, but if the paper is in my hands, I will not lose it.) After each writing assignment is submitted, we will discuss and critique examples from student writing in class. On the basis of those discussions, you will revise one of your papers and submit to me on the last day of class your revision and a copy of your original essay, including my evaluation form. I will grade that submission. Your revised paper will increase in length to five to seven pages.

If you turn either of the initial submissions in less than one week late, I will deduct .5 GPA points from your final writing assignment grade as a penalty. Papers more than one week late will not be accepted and will lead to a deduction of 1.0 from your final writing grade. I will not accept any late papers for the final submission.
How will you learn from these writing assignments? First, the process of writing about the films regularly will help you understand the films better. Second, my brief numerical evaluation of the first two papers will give you a sense of your papers’ strengths and weaknesses. Last, we will discuss passages from exemplary papers in class as a learning exercise. Of all the papers submitted, I will choose several passages—erasing any information that would identify the student that wrote the passage. We will then analyze, discuss and edit each passage together. This process will help you understand better how I read student papers, and focus in concrete ways on how to improve your writing about film for the final writing assignment, which is the most important paper.

FINAL EXAM: The final exam will be comprehensive for the entire course. It will be structured in three parts. The first section will be a text-recognition and discussion section. Here, you will be asked to identify three of five film excerpts, and identify the film and director. You will also be asked to explain why the film is significant, and how this particular excerpt exemplifies its significance. The second part of the exam will feature a list of twenty keywords from the course, of which you will be asked to define fifteen in two or three sentences. In the third part of the exam, you will answer four of seven mini-essay questions about the films in the course. This will require knowing the films, readings, and lectures. I will distribute a study guide before the final, which will help guide your preparation. The exams will be graded on the accuracy, thoroughness, and thoughtfulness of your responses. The final will be held in our usual meeting room on 2:30-4:20 p.m. Monday, Mar. 17, 2008. Because the final involves showing clips, I will only offer it ONLY ONCE. If you cannot take the final during the scheduled time in the course catalogue, I advise you to withdraw from the course.

5. EXTRA CREDIT

Students can earn extra credit in this course by attending films at the Northwest Film Forums’ Sisu Cinema: Nine From the Finnish New Wave during the first two weeks of February -- http://www.nwfilmforum.org/cinemas/finnish.php/. The festival will feature Finnish films from the 1960s-1970s, and it offers an excellent opportunity to learn more about Finnish cinema, and get involved with an exciting local film institution, the Northwest Film Forum. When you attend a film at the festival, beyond the one I am requiring for class, you may submit to me your ticket stub and a one-page response to the film. For each response paper I receive from you, I will add .05 grade points to your final writing assignment.
6. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

I will evaluate each writing assignment according to the following questions. You can use this as a checklist to guide your drafting, proofreading, and revision:

1. Is a clear and rich thesis the basis for the paper’s argument?
2. Does the argument address the prompt in response to which the paper is written?
3. Are the different paragraphs organized both internally and in relation to each other?
4. Does the paper analyze in detail at least two examples from the films and/or readings that support the argument?
5. Does the paper use citations from the readings assigned to support and qualify the analysis?
6. Does the paper employ key terms of film analysis in accurate and useful ways?
7. Does the writer display critical thinking and imagination?
8. Is the writing clear and error free?

7. COURSE POLICIES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: The University of Washington is a community dedicated to learning. Ethical expectations of students belonging to the community are defined in the student conduct code (http://www.washington.edu/students/handbook/conduct.html). Plagiarism, cheating, and disruptive behavior in class violate the code, and harm your own and others’ learning. Any violations of the code in connection with the course will result in referral to the university administration for appropriate action. If you want to learn more about how to avoid plagiarism, please consult the following resource page on academic honesty, (http://depts.washington.edu/grading/issue1/honesty.htm), or speak to me directly.

GRADES GRIEVANCE POLICY: If you disagree with the grade you have been awarded and wish to appeal your grade, you must follow the policy outlined below. I will make no exceptions to this policy, and I reserve the right to refrain from considering your complaint if you do not follow the policy.

a. Wait twenty-four hours from the time you receive the grade.
b. Deliver a written statement to my post-box in Raitt 318 (Campus Mail Box 353420) explaining your complaint. (No emails or telephone calls accepted)
c. Make an appointment with me to discuss your written complaint (email is fine for making the appointment).
d. I will indicate my final decision to you by email after our meeting.
e. If you disagree with my final decision, request a meeting with the Chair of the Scandinavian Department, Prof. Terje Leiren, and me to come to a final solution.
f. In cases involving academic integrity, you may also appeal to the Committee on Academic integrity administered by the college.
# Course Schedule

## Week 1: From the Beginnings to a Golden Age (1895-1924)

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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| M. 1/7 | Course Introduction  
*The Lion Hunt (Løvejagten på Elleore, DK, 1907)* 10 min. Nordisk  
Sir Arne’s Treasure (Herr Arnes pengar, 1918, Mauritz Stiller) 106 min. Svensk filmindustri |
| W. 1/9 | Lecture 1: Into The Golden Age of Scandinavian Cinema  
Read: “Reading a Film Sequence” and “Glossary of Terms for Film Analysis”; Tytti Soila et al. Nordic National Cinemas excerpts 1-6, 146-163; and Tom Gunning, “The Aesthetic of Attractions” |

## Week 2: Carl Th. Dreyer (DK, Active Career 1919-1964)

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<th>Activity</th>
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| M. 1/14 | The Passion of Joan of Arc (La passion de Jeanne d’arc, 1928, F/DK Dreyer) 110 min.  
Read: Carl Dreyer Interview |
| W. 1/16 | Lecture 2: The Iconoclast, Carl Th. Dreyer  
Read: Bela Balazs “The Close Up” and “The Face of Man” (CR)  
Writing #1 Due |

## Week 3: Practicing Film Analysis

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>M. 1/21</td>
<td><em>No Class Martin Luther King Jr. Day</em></td>
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| W. 1/23 | Discussion of Writing #1  
Clip Analysis  
Review: “Reading a Film Sequence” and “Glossary of Terms for Film Analysis”  
Read: David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson’s “Summary: Style as a Formal System” |

* DK = Denmark (Danmark); I = Iceland (Ísland); N = Norway (Norge); S = Sweden (Sverige); SF = Finland (Suomi/Finland)
**Week 4: The Scandinavian Studio Film**

| M. | 1/28 | **Song of the Scarlet Flower** (Laulu tulipunaisesta kukasta, 1937, SF, Tulio) 110 min.  
Read: Kimmo Laine’s “Pääosassa Suomen kansa” (Starring The Finnish People) |
| W. | 1/30 | Lecture 3: The Scandinavian Studio Film  
Read: Kristin Thompson, “Classical Technique” |

**Study Questions #1**

1. How does Bergman explain the role of the filmmaker in his article? In your view, is Bergman’s a conventional way of understanding the filmmaker’s role? Why?
2. What does Susan Sontag mean by “self-reflexiveness,” and what is one instance of self-reflexiveness, according to Sontag, in *Persona*?

**Week 5: Ingmar Bergman (S, Active Career 1944-1982)**

Read: An essay by Ingmar Bergman; Andrew Sarris “Notes on Auteur Theory, 1962” |
| W. | 2/6 | Lecture 4: Ingmar Bergman  
Read: Susan Sontag “Bergman’s *Persona*”  
**Study Questions #1** Due |
Study Questions #2

1. What are three definitive elements of the art film, according to David Bordwell?
2. What elements define *Eight Deadly Shots* or *Skin, Skin* as an art film, in Bordwell’s definition?

### Week 6: Institution of The Scandinavian Art Film, 1960s-1980s

| M. | 2/11 | No Class – Watch *Skin, Skin* (2/9) or *Eight Deadly Shots* (2/10) at the NW Film Forum’s *Sisu Cinema: Nine From the Finnish New Wave* [http://www.nwfilmforum.org/cinemas/finnish.php](http://www.nwfilmforum.org/cinemas/finnish.php)  
Read: David Bordwell, “The Art Cinema as a Mode of Film Practice” |
| W. | 2/13 | Lecture 5: The Scandinavian Art Film  
Read: Andrew Nestingen and Trevor Elkington, “Introduction” to *Transnational Cinema in a Global North*  
Study Questions #2 Due |

Study Questions #3

1. Is *Hamsun* be an example of a self-defeating co-production, as Hjort describes this concept?
2. What does David Harvey mean by the “heritage industry”?

### Week 7: The Heritage Film, 1980s-2000s

Read: Selections from *The Condition of Postmodernity* by David Harvey |
| W. | 2/20 | Lecture 6: The Heritage Film  
Read: Mette Hjort “From Epiphanic Culture to Circulation”  
Study Questions #3 Due |

### Week 8: Regionalization and Swedish Cinema

Recommended Viewing: *Show Me Love* (*Fucking Åmål*, S, 1999) Lukas Moodysson |
| W. | 2/27 | Lecture 7: Regionalization and Swedish Cinema  
Visiting Lecturer, Prof. Anna W. Stenport, Univ. Illinois  
*Readings to be made available by PDF on course website* |
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<th>Day</th>
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<tr>
<td>M. 3/3</td>
<td><strong>Writing #2 Due</strong></td>
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**Study Questions #4**

1. Does Toiviainen think Kaurismäki’s films should be understood as national films? Why or why not?
2. Is *The Man Without a Past* a nostalgic film, as Toiviainen suggests all of Kaurismäki’s films are?

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**Week 9: Aki Kaurismäki (Active Career, 1980s-)**

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<td>Read: Sakari Toiviainen, “The Kaurismäki Phenomenon” in CR</td>
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<tr>
<td>W. 3/5</td>
<td>Lecture 9: Aki Kaurismäki</td>
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<td><strong>Discuss Writing #2</strong></td>
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**Week 10: Dogma 95 and Lars von Trier**

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<td>Read: “Dogma Manifesto” and “Vow of Chastity” (CR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>W. 3/12</td>
<td>Lecture 8: The New Scandinavian Cinemas and Genre</td>
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<td>Read: Peter Schepelern “Film According to Dogma” (CR)</td>
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<td><strong>Final Writing Assignment Due in Class</strong></td>
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Submit participation grade by email to akn@u.washington.edu before final

**FINAL** 2:30-4:20 p.m. Monday, Mar. 17, 2008