

BROOKLYN COLLEGE
FILM 2129

FILM DEPARTMENT
SYLLABUS

JOHN BEATTY
SPRING 2016

Film 2129 Film Genres: Comedy
2:15 PM - 5:55 PM
Thursdays
WEB 220

The class will meet on Feb 11th in the LaGuardia Library room 120

SYLLABUS AND COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Readings

Packet of readings at Far Better Copy Center

Exams and Papers

The final exam is on Thursday May 26th from 3:30-5:30 in the same room 220 W.E.B. (in which the class is held). Do **NOT** make plans to travel before the exam.

One of the questions on the final will be to compile an annotated bibliography of 10 to 15 books and articles on a specific person connected with film comedies (e.g. W.C. Fields or Hal Roach). No more than 3 of these are to be web sites. Electronic data bases are acceptable as printed matter. There should be a one paragraph synopsis of 5 of the articles. This can be turned in no later than the time of the final, but may be turned in earlier. You need only annotate 5 of the references

There are two papers: one is due March for the midterm which is due April 21st. The paper should be double spaced in Verdana or Courier New and in

nothing larger than 12 point. The topic of the papers should be chosen from the following (one topic for each paper):

1 Discuss the ways in which comedy is made visual both in films with and without synchronized sound – e.g. through film techniques not through the actor or the lines.

2 Apply one of the theories of humor to an American film NOT shown in class. Use the theory to explain why aspects of the film are humorous

3 Some people report having seen a comedy and thought it was hilarious, only to see it again many years later and claim it was not funny at all, and they have no idea why they ever thought it was funny in the first place. How do theories of humor deal with this?

4 The course concentrates specifically on American comedies. Discuss the problems that arise when view comedies from other cultures. Consider not only the language problems.

Do NOT start your paper with “The film I am going to write about is _____” I will be able to figure that out when I read the paper. This is a lame opening and should be avoided like the plague.

The department has writing tutors who are in room 200 WEB. You should be absolutely certain to make an appointment with them and work with them on your paper. It will be helpful not only for this course but for any other course which requires a paper.

E-mails

If you contact me by e-mail (Profbeatty@hotmail.com) put your full name and course number on the e-mail. Names like “sexy dancer” are not on my roster. If they are not there I will not respond to the e-mail. Do NOT e-mail me asking me questions that are answered in the syllabus or the schedule of classes (e.g. “When is the final?”) Learn how to look these things up. This is not grade school

Web Site

There is a web site for the course – <http://Johnbeatty.name> - and from there, follow the links (start with “film courses”)

Attendance and Lateness

Departmental policy allows you two absences a term. Since classes meet only once a week, each absence means you have missed more than three hours of class time. Students who miss more than two classes for whatever reason will fail the course. Students are considered absent if they come more than 15 minutes late.

Cell Phones

If you have one, turn the damned thing off! If the phone goes off during class it is an automatic "F" in the course, plus expulsion from the college and a slow painful death. Your cell phone will also be destroyed. No joke.

Computation of the final grade

Paper 1	30%
Paper 2	30%
Final	35%
Participation	<u>5%</u>
	100%

THE COURSE

The course covers the history and structure of film comedies. It will cover some of the famous comedians, directors and studios that dealt in comedy such as Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin, Harold Lloyd, Harry Langdoen, Laurel and Hardy, Abbott and Costello, Mae West, W.C. Fields Marx Brothers. Keystone Kops. Woody Allen, Max Sennett and Hal Roach among others

The course will also examine the various sub genres in the field (slapstick, spoof, screwball comedy and so on).

There is information posted on the web site:

<http://www.johnbeatty.name>

From there click on "Film Courses" and then [Film 2129 Film Genres: Comedy](#)

You can e-mail me at profbeatty@gmail.com

OFFICE HOURS

Thursday 9:00 – 9:30, 1:10-2:15; Friday 9:00 – 9:30

Also by appointment. If you make an appointment and are late I may not be around.