

### WEBCAMPUS

Log into this class on WebCampus for assignments, announcements, grades and supplementary material. You may post the ten written 'Discussions' on or before the due date. No paper copies please.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

During this term, we will examine the films of Japanese director Akira Kurosawa from the following perspectives: historical, social, cultural, political, artistic and humanistic, guiding students to a richer understanding of Japanese culture. Students will be introduced to basic aesthetic and technical film language, genres, and critical applications in analyzing the films. We will consider the cinematic accomplishments of Kurosawa through the screenings of his films in addition to writing and reading assignments.

### COURSE OVERVIEW

We will view the films of Akira Kurosawa in chronological order to appreciate his growth as a director. We will analyze his stylistic contributions (cinematography, editing, narrative content and themes,) and his mastery of genres (samurai, drama) and the impact and influence that Kurosawa has generated in the international film community. Although most of his films were panned by Japanese critics for being too 'Western', he did not compromise the content or spirit of his stories, many of which are based on historical events, myths or legends.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

Introduce students to the films of Akira Kurosawa, the first Japanese filmmaker to achieve international honors and recognition.

Discuss how his early life experiences influenced the subject matter of his films.

Analyze Kurosawa's storytelling style and the employment of specific themes in his films.

Understand Kurosawa's films within historical, political, social and cultural contexts.

Evaluate the roles of gender in Japanese society that are mirrored in his films.

Interpret the function of allegory in his films.

Appreciate the influence he had on international directors especially Francis Ford Coppola and George Lucas.

Examine Kurosawa's translations of Japanese novels into films.

Continue to develop a basic film vocabulary for writing critically about film.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Be familiar with the major works of Akira Kurosawa and understand his stature as a 'Major Figure' and an internationally acclaimed director.

Express what Kurosawa's films reveal about Japanese history, society, and culture.

Analyze and explain the ways in which societies and cultures other than our own address human needs and concerns.

Reveal our understanding of the ways in which culture, race, ethnicity, gender, and class affect individual and collective identities, experiences, and interpretations of experiences.

Cultivate a greater interest in the extraordinary development of Japanese cinema and in national cinemas outside Hollywood.

### REQUIRED FILM VIEWING

We will view each film during the Monday class meetings.

All the films listed in the syllabus are required viewing and are available on Amazon for supplementary viewing. Some of the films are also available on Netflix.

REQUIRED READINGS: ebooks available Lied Library (no purchase necessary)

Title: *Akira Kurosawa* Peter Wild

<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/lib/unlv/detail.action?docID=1839945>

Title: *Akira Kurosawa: A Viewer's Guide* Eric San Juan

<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.library.unlv.edu/lib/unlv/reader.action?docID=5554176>

### SCREENING CONTENT

Some of the screenings included in this course may contain sexually explicit, violent, and/or disturbing material, all of which will be discussed in an intellectually responsible manner. Such material will be flagged in advance of individual screenings, and alternative assignments will be provided for students who request them.

You are not required to sit through a film that offends, disturbs, or upsets you in any way. Please inform the instructor. Your grade will not be affected.

HOWEVER if you cannot view R rated films for religious or any other reason, we recommend that you do not take this course.

### CLASS SCHEDULE/PROCEDURES

This course begins January 27 with a Midterm Exam on March 10 and concludes with the Final Exam May 11. During Monday's class, we will view one of Kurosawa's films. Each film will be introduced by the instructor before the screening with a discussion period following the film. There are ten (10) mandatory written discussion posts regarding the films we view. The questions are located by clicking on 'Discussions' on the course website.

Exam dates are strictly adhered to and clearly listed in this syllabus and the online 'Announcements'. Make arrangements now with your employment and social situations so you can take exams on the scheduled days. Due dates are your responsibility. Mark your calendar.

### Film Screening Etiquette

Cell phones, tablets, and laptops must be turned off for the duration of film screenings. The use of these or any similar devices during class screenings will negatively affect your grade and you will be asked to leave the classroom.

January 27	<i>Stray Dog</i>	1949
February 3	<i>Roshomon</i>	1950
February 10	<i>Ikaru</i>	1952
February 17	Presidents' Day	No Class Meeting

February 24	<i>Seven Samurai</i>	1954
March 2	<i>Throne of Blood</i>	1957
March 9	<i>The Lower Depths</i>	1957
March 16	Spring Break	No Class Meeting
March 23	<i>The Hidden Fortress</i>	1958
March 30	<i>The Bad Sleep Well</i>	1960
April 6	<i>Yojimbo</i>	1961
April 13	<i>High and Low</i>	1963
April 20	<i>Red Beard</i>	1965
April 27	<i>Dersu Uzala</i>	1975
May 4	<i>Ran</i>	1985

In each of the modules, the readings correspond to the film(s) to be viewed in class.

### **Module One**

Readings: Peter Wild: Intro, Chapters 1, 2 and 3

Eric San Juan: *Intro, Stray Dog*

Screening: *Stray Dog* January 27

## **Module Two**

Readings: Peter Wild: Chapters 4 and 5

Eric San Juan: *Roshomon, Ikaru, Seven Samurai*

Screenings: *Roshomon* February 4

*Ikaru* February 10

*Seven Samurai* February 24

## **Module Three**

Readings: Peter Wild: Chapter 6

Eric San Juan: *Throne of Blood, The Lower Depths*

Screenings: *Throne of Blood* March 2

*The Lower Depths* March 9

## **Module Four**

Readings: Peter Wild: Chapter 7

Eric San Juan: *The Hidden Fortress, The Bad Sleep Well*

Screenings: *The Hidden Fortress* March 23

*The Bad Sleep Well* March 30

## **Module Five**

Readings: Peter Wild: Chapter 8

Eric San Juan: *Yojimbo, High and Low*

Screenings: *Yojimbo* April 6

*High and Low* April 13

## **Module Six**

Readings: Peter Wild: Chapter 9

Eric San Juan: *Red Beard*

Screening: *Red Beard* April 20

## **Module Seven**

Readings: Peter Wild: Chapter 10

Eric San Juan: *Dersu Uzala, Ran*

Screenings: *Dersu Uzala* April 27

*Ran* May 4

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING PROCEDURES

<u>GRADING</u>	Midterm Exam	March 10	100 points
	Final Exam	May 11	100 points
	Discussion Papers (10)	10 points each	100 points
			<u>300 Total Points</u>

Midterm March 10 Short Answers Essay Questions

Final May 11 Short Answers Essay Questions

Missed exams cannot be made up without medical or family emergency documentation.

Plan your schedule now to avoid conflicts on the exam dates. Jobs, employment, travel plans, working on a film project etc. are not acceptable excuses to miss an exam.

The final course grade is determined by dividing your point total by 266 for the percentage.

For example, if your point total is 200, then divided 200 by 266 for a percentage of 75 %.

A	92.1 - 100 %
A-	90.0 - 92.0 %
B+	88.1 - 89.9 %
B	82.1 - 88.0 %
B-	80.0 - 82.0 %
C+	78.0 - 79.9 %
C	72.0 - 77.9 %
C-	70.0 - 71.9 %
D+	68.0 - 69.9 %
D	62.0 - 67.9 %
D-	60.0 - 61.9 %

DISCUSSION PAPERS – Grade value is 10 (ten) points per paper.

- 1) A minimum of three hundred fifty (350) words per question, reflecting your insights and observations. Writing less than 350 words is a five point loss.
- 2) Posts must be supported with specific illustrations and examples from the film.
- 3) The content of the papers consists of your thoughts and observations and must include specific examples from the film itself. There will be a serious loss of points if you do not support your statements and observations with specific examples from the films that should include characters, scenes, themes, and events. General comments will receive no credit because it indicates that you did not see the film.
- 4) Original content only. Do not cite or quote outside sources.
- 5) Do not list the director, the actors, production co, awards etc. Answer the topic question.

Each discussion post is worth up to 10 points depending on its quality and length and illustrations/examples from the film itself.

No credit will be received for late discussion posts.

The final course grade will drop one full grade for every two (2) discussion posts not turned in.

For example, if your final course grade is a B and you missed two discussion posts, then your final course grade will be a C.

Discussion Paper Due Dates

Disc 1 February 2

Disc 6 March 22

Disc 2 February 9

Disc 7 March 29

Disc 3 February 23

Disc 8 April 12

Disc 4 March 1

Disc 9 April 19

Disc 5 March 8

Disc 10 May 3

**EXTRA CREDIT:** This raises the question of fairness to all students.

If one student is given the privilege of extra credit, then in fairness to all students, everyone should have that option. Therefore there is no extra credit.

Missed exams cannot be made up without a documented medical or family emergency excuse. This is film department policy. Any other excuse is not acceptable.

Plan your schedule now to avoid conflicts on the exam dates. Work, social engagements, travel plans, etc. are not acceptable excuses to miss an exam.

IMPORTANT As a film student, you will have opportunities to work on film projects. You are encouraged to participate, but not at the expense of your classwork. Working on ANY production is not an acceptable excuse for missing assignments or exams.

Academic Misconduct Policy, <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/misconduct/policy>, which defines, “acting or attempting to act as a substitute for another, or using or attempting to use a substitute, in any academic evaluation or assignment” as a form of academic misconduct. Intentionally sharing ACE login credentials with another person may be considered an attempt to use a substitute and could result in investigation and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

### Identity Verification in Online Courses

All UNLV students must use their Campus-issued ACE ID and password to log in to WebCampus. UNLV students enrolled in online or hybrid courses are expected to read and adhere to the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/misconduct/policy>, which defines, “acting or attempting to act as a substitute for another, or using or attempting to use a substitute, in any academic evaluation or assignment” as a form of academic misconduct. Intentionally sharing ACE login credentials with another person may be considered an attempt to use a substitute and could result in investigation and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

UNLV students enrolled in online courses are also expected to read and adhere to the Acceptable Use of Computing and Information Technology Resources Policy, <https://www.it.unlv.edu/policies/acceptable-use-computing-and-information-technology-resources-policy>, which prohibits sharing university accounts with other persons without authorization.

To the greatest extent possible, all graded assignments and assessments in UNLV online courses should be hosted in WebCampus or another UNLV-managed platform that requires ACE login credentials for access.

**Academic Misconduct** – Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV’s function as an educational institution.

An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the *Student Academic Misconduct Policy* (approved December 9, 2005) located at: <http://studentconduct.unlv.edu/misconduct/policy.html>.

From the Student Handbook:

## II. Academic Misconduct Violations – Definitions

Academic Misconduct is any intentional or unintentional occurrence of the following:

- 1 Using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the source(s), commonly called plagiarism.
- 2 Receiving unauthorized external assistance during an examination or any academic exercise for credit. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - Providing or receiving aid in connection with any academic assignment;
  - Use or possession of camera telephones, text messages, computer disks, audio recorders, calculators, solution materials, photocopies, materials from previous classes, commercial research services, notes or other means to copy or photograph materials used or intended for academic evaluation for use during the academic evaluation or assignment;
  - Communication in any manner with another student;
  - Working with others on graded coursework, including in-class, on-line and take-home examinations; or

- Possessing, reading, buying, selling or using any materials intended for an academic evaluation or assignment in advance of its administration.
- 3 Turning in the same work in more than one class (or when repeating a class), unless permission is received in advance from the instructor.
  - 4 Falsifying information for inclusion in an assigned paper, project or exercise; including inventing or altering data from a laboratory or field project, or creating fictional citations for a paper.
  - 5 Attempting to influence or change any academic evaluation, assignment or academic records for reasons having no relevance to academic achievement. This includes, but is not limited to, bribery, threats and making unauthorized changes to any academic record.
  - 6 Falsifying or misrepresenting attendance, hours, or activities in relationship to any class, internship, externship, field experience, clinical activity or similar activity.
  - 7 Acting or attempting to act as a substitute for another, or using or attempting to use a substitute, in any academic evaluation or assignment.
  - 8 Facilitating, permitting or tolerating any of the above-listed items.

### Auditing Classes

Auditing a course allows a student to continue attending the lectures and/or laboratories and discussion sessions associated with the course, but the student will not earn a grade for any component of the course. Students who audit a course receive the same educational experience as students taking the course for a grade, but will be excused from exams, assessments, and other evaluative measures that serve the primary purpose of assigning a grade.

### Classroom Conduct

Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in class and in the libraries in ways that do not interfere with the rights of other students to learn or of instructors to teach. Use of electronic devices such as pagers, cellular phones, or recording devices, or potentially disruptive devices or activities, are only permitted with the prior explicit

consent of the instructor. The instructor may rescind permission at any time during the class. If a student does not comply with established requirements or obstructs the functioning of the class, the instructor may initiate an administrative drop of the student from the course.

**Copyright** – The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. **You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you

to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: <http://provost.unlv.edu/copyright/statements.html>.

**Disability Resource Center (DRC)** – The Disability Resource Center (DRC) determines accommodations that are “reasonable” in promoting the equal access of a student reporting a disability to the general UNLV learning experience. In so doing, the DRC also balances instructor and departmental interests in maintaining curricular standards so as to best achieve a fair evaluation standard amongst students being assisted. In order for the DRC to be effective it must be considered in the dialog between the faculty and the student who is requesting accommodations. For this reason faculty should only provide students course adjustment after having received an “Academic Accommodation Plan.” If faculty members have any questions regarding the DRC, they should call a DRC counselor.

UNLV complies with the provisions set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The DRC is located in the Student Services Complex (SSC-A), Room 143, phone (702) 895-0866, fax (702) 895-0651. For additional information, please visit: <http://drc.unlv.edu/>.

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**Religious Holidays Policy** – Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses

(excepting modular courses) or within the first 7 days of the course for summer and modular courses, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. This policy shall not apply in the event that administering the test or examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the university that could not reasonably be avoided. For additional information, please visit: <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=4&navoid=164>.

**Transparency in Learning and Teaching** – The University encourages application of the transparency method of constructing assignments for student success. Please see these two links for further information.

[www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning](http://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning)

[www.unlv.edu/provost/transparency](http://www.unlv.edu/provost/transparency)

**Incomplete Grades** - The grade of I – Incomplete – can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed all course work up to the withdrawal date of that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student’s control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. A student who receives an I is responsible for making up whatever work was lacking at the end of the semester. If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

**Tutoring and Coaching** – The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching and academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit [www.unlv.edu/asc](http://www.unlv.edu/asc) or call 702 895 3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of the SSC (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TEB second floor.

## **Library Resources**

Librarians are available to consult with students on research needs, including developing research topics, finding information, and evaluating sources. To make an appointment with a subject expert for this class, please visit the Libraries' Research Consultation <http://guides.library.unlv.edu/appointments/librarian>. You can also ask the library staff questions via chat and text message at: <http://ask.library.unlv.edu/>.

**UNLV Writing Center** – One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available through walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>

**Rebelmail** – By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students' Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV's official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students' e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always [@unlv.nevada.edu](mailto:@unlv.nevada.edu).

## Missed Classwork

Any student missing class, quizzes, examinations, or any other class or laboratory work because of observance of religious holidays will be given an opportunity during that semester to make up the missed work. The make-up opportunity will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for Fall and Spring courses (except for modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for Summer and modular courses, of their intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit the Policy for Missed Work, under Registration Policies, on the Academic Policies webpage, <https://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531>.

In accordance with the policy approved by the Faculty Senate regarding missed class time and assignments, students who represent UNLV in any official extracurricular activity will also have the opportunity to make up assignments, provided that the student provides official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es).

The spirit and intent of the policy for missed classwork is to offer fair and equitable assessment opportunities to all students, including those representing the University in extracurricular activities.

Instructors should consider, for example, that in courses which offer a “Drop one” option for the lowest assignment, quiz, or exam, assigning the student a grade of zero for an excused absence for extracurricular activity is both contrary to the intent of the Faculty Senate’s policy, and an infringement on the student’s right to complete all work for the course.

This policy will not apply in the event that completing the assignment or administering the examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the University that could reasonably have been avoided. There should be a good faith effort by both the instructor and the student to agree to a reasonable resolution. When disagreements regarding this policy arise, decisions can be appealed to the Department Chair/Unit Director, College/School Dean, and/or the Faculty Senate Academic Standards Committee.

For purposes of definition, extracurricular activities may include, but are not limited to: fine arts activities, competitive intercollegiate athletics, science and engineering competitions, liberal arts competitions, academic recruitment activities, and any other event or activity sanctioned by a College/School Dean, and/or by the Executive Vice President and Provost.

#### Rehearsals and/or Screen Performances

UNLV FILM is committed to creating an inclusive and respectful environment for all students. Whenever physical contact of any kind between performers is anticipated, individuals coordinating the shoot or rehearsal (directors, instructors, etc.) should outline the nature and rationale of the planned contact, ensure that participants are comfortable with the actions that will occur, and provide alternatives if requested.