CHINESE 360 (COLL 200 ALV/CSI + COLL 300):
Introduction to Chinese Cinema

Instructor: Professor/Dr. Emily Wilcox
Email: eewilcox@wm.edu

Time and Location:
Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00am-12:20pm, Chancellors Hall 123

Office Hours: Wednesdays 11am-1pm in Washington Hall 213 or online (please select).
Sign up here: https://calendly.com/emilywilcox/prof-wilcox-office-hours
What values and attitudes are expressed in film?
What can we learn about a diverse and changing China through film?
How can films teach us to be more empathetic and informed global citizens?

Course Overview:
China is not only the world’s second largest economy and the oldest documented continuous civilization on the planet, it is also home to one of the largest and most dynamic global film industries. From melodrama to martial arts cinema to documentaries, Chinese films regularly circulate and gain large audiences internationally, while the domestic market for Chinese films is one of the most active and vibrant in the world. In this class, we will watch and discuss a broad range of Chinese-language films created over the past eighty-five years, stretching from the birth of sound cinema in the 1930s to the age of the international mega-budget co-production in the late 2010s. While the focus of this course will be on cinema produced in mainland China, the term “Chinese cinema” will be defined broadly to include examples of Chinese-language cinema from across the Chinese-speaking world. Our films will include well-known Chinese film “classics” of different genres and periods. They will also include more mainstream and popular films that address important themes in contemporary society.

Through a combined practice of viewing, reading, discussing, and writing, we will learn to unpack the attitudes and values expressed in Chinese films produced in different eras and dealing with diverse human experiences. By situating films in their historical and cultural contexts of both creation and representation, we will become familiar with important events, people, places, and issues in Chinese culture and society through the film medium. If being a global citizen means having the capacity to empathize with and learn from people all over the world, then this class aims to cultivate such a sensibility through the thoughtful, interactive, and empathetic viewing of Chinese films. In this process, we will also practice and hone key methods in Chinese film studies, including historical contextualization, close reading, and comparative interpretation. Through guest lectures and essays, we will also reflect on our identity as global citizens.

Prerequisites: None.
COLL 200 Requirement:
This course counts toward the COLL 200 requirement of the William & Mary College Curriculum in the Liberal Arts. It can be used for either one of two COLL 200 knowledge domains: Arts Letters, and Values (ALV) or Cultures, Societies, and the Individual (CSI). The course covers 50% content in each domain. This course meets these domain requirements in the following ways:

Arts, Letters, and Values (ALV)
- Collaborative research presentations require students to identify and communicate the values and attitudes expressed in the assigned films;
- Interactive discussions facilitate debate and expression of values and attitudes among students in response to the assigned films;
• Analytical papers ask students to evaluate an assigned film in relation to their own values and attitudes or those expressed in the assigned films.

*Cultures, Societies, and the Individual (CSI)*

• Collaborative research presentations require students to identify and communicate historical, social, and cultural issues in the assigned films;
• Interactive discussions facilitate examination of cultures, societies, and individuals as represented in the assigned films;
• Analytical papers ask students to describe, theorize, and explain aspects of cultures, societies, and individuals in their variety over time and space in relation to the assigned films.

**COLL 300 Requirement:**
This course counts toward the COLL 300 requirement of the William & Mary College Curriculum in the Liberal Arts. This course meets the COLL requirements in the following ways:

• Through the study of Chinese cinema, students gain an understanding of how diverse communities and individuals in China have experienced their lives and the world across time and place;
• Students will gain a grounded understanding of Chinese history, society, politics, and culture through viewings, discussions, and readings on Chinese cinema from different time periods and dealing with a range of themes;
• By engaging in interpretation and debate, students will develop critical thinking abilities and learn to challenge narrow US-centered views of the world;
• Through interactions with guests, students will engage in the study of Chinese cinema through the processes of direct experiential encounters and dialogue;
• Through the film presentations, analytical essays, class discussions, and final reflection paper, students will have an opportunity to express their own ideas and reflect on their own role in the world in relation to the course content.

**Reminders about COLL credit:** This course can count for either COLL 200 or COLL 300 but not both. A single course may fulfill one COLL requirement or one COLL requirement and a proficiency. A maximum of three courses may be double counted toward the COLL requirements and toward the major(s).

**Readings and other course materials:** This course takes advantage of materials available for free to students through the W&M Swem Library and other online resources. All required course readings are available to students at no cost. The instructor has made every effort to assign films for this class that are available for free online. In some cases, memberships to film viewing platforms are required, but there is a free trial period in which the films can be viewed for free. In some cases, students can pay a minimal rental fee in place of the free membership signup. Because this is a Chinese film course, most of the films we will watch are in Chinese. However, all required readings are in English, and all assigned films come with English subtitles.
**Course Requirements:** Students will be graded on attendance and participation, daily film quizzes, two collaborative film presentations, four short film analysis papers, and a final project.

Grades will be broken down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film Quizzes</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Film Presentations (2)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Film Analysis Papers (4)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Presentation and Reflection Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
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- **Attendance:** Class will begin promptly at 11:00am and end promptly at 12:20pm. Students are expected to arrive on-time and attend class in its entirety. All students will be allowed one free unexcused absence to be used anytime during the semester without notice. After that, excused absences will be granted only for extenuating circumstances such as severe illness, family emergency, or required participation in a university activity. Students must email the professor before class for an excused absence. Please review the [W&M Honor Code](#). Additional unexcused absences will result in a “0” for the attendance and participation grade for that day, as well as a “0” on any missed quiz. Quizzes missed for excused absences can be made up for full credit and may be administered at the start of the next class period or in office hours.

- **Participation:** As a discussion-based course, this class employs interactive teaching methods in place of a lecture format. Students are expected to complete required film viewings before class and to arrive prepared to participate actively in class discussion. While active listening is an important component of participation, a complete participation grade requires verbal contributions to class discussion, either in large or small groups. An important part of full participation will also include leaving time for all classmates to talk and responding meaningfully to others’ contributions. Students may use laptops to take notes during class but should not allow them to become a distraction. Attendance and participation grades will be posted on Blackboard each week; students are encouraged to contact the professor with any questions or concerns.

- **Film quizzes:** Film quizzes will take place at the beginning of each class to assess students’ preparation of the assigned film viewing for that day. Quizzes are designed to provide incentives for keeping up with the film viewings, as well as a system to identify and reward students who consistently complete the viewings on time in preparation for class discussion. Quizzes typically consist of ten true/false and multiple choice questions and are designed only to assess whether the film was watched, not comprehension or analysis. There is no time limit, but students may not consult outside materials or leave the classroom during the quiz.

- **Film Presentations:** Each student will sign up for a total of two film presentations throughout the semester. In groups of two or three, students will work collaboratively to give a presentation of 18-20 minutes at the beginning of class (after the film quiz) on the film assigned for that day. Presentations will be worth a total of 20 points each, and students will be graded as a group. Thus, you are strongly encouraged to work as collaboratively as possible. Students can be creative, but each presentation must include the following elements:
1) **Introduce the film** (~5 points):
   o Introduce the director and notable actors/actresses (w/ photographs if possible)
   o Introduce the time/place the film was made and the time/place the film is set
   o Review the basic plot and main characters (w/ screenshots and names).

2) **Explain interesting points of cultural or social background** that help to better understand the film—this could include social practices or cultural references in the film, a piece of literature or famous story the film was adapted from, information about the context in which the film was made or its aftermath, information about the genre to which the film belongs, historical events or people depicted in the film, etc. This will vary depending on each film (~5 points/CSI).

3) **Interpret what you see as any major values or attitudes expressed in the film**, and explain how you see these values or attitudes being expressed. Include analysis of at least two scenes from the film to support your interpretation. In your analysis, you can look at things like plot, character, dialogue, visual composition, use of camera angles, music or other sound, costume, lighting, etc (~5 points/ALV).

4) **Explain any major arguments made in the assigned reading for that day** (content from the reading should also be used to supply information for sections #1, #2, and #3, in addition to your own interpretations and outside research), AND **raise at least two questions for class discussion** (~5 points).

Some additional points:
- All presenters must draw on some content from the assigned reading, and this content should not be overlapping between presenters.
- All presenters must include some information gained through additional research or original analysis beyond what is presented in the reading.
- Please use abundant visuals and screenshots to illustrate your discussion.
- Slides are due on Blackboard (either as a file upload or a link) before 11:00am on the day of your presentation (only one person from the group needs to submit them).
- In addition to content, clarity, enthusiasm, preparation, and time management will all be taken into account in the presentation grade.

**Short Film Analysis Papers:** At the end of each unit, students will write a short film analysis paper (minimum 3 full pages/maximum 4 full pages, double-spaced, 12-point New Times Roman font). The goal of the paper is to select one theme and compare how two of the films from the unit address this theme. The specific theme you select is open, but you must address an attitude or value expressed in the films (ALV), and you must support your analysis by taking into account the social and cultural context of the film, either in terms of the time/place/group being represented in the film or the time/place/group in which it was produced and/or consumed (CSI). **All papers must include analysis of two films and significant engagement with two supporting readings assigned during that unit** (usually, the assigned readings will be the ones assigned for the films being analyzed, but there may be exceptions). No outside research is allowed for this
assignment; arguments should be based on your own personal interpretation and analysis of the films and the readings.

Papers will be graded on the following elements:

- Use of details from the films to support your analysis;
- Clarity and depth of ideas presented in the discussion;
- Meaningful engagement with the content of the two readings (you do not need to agree with the authors, but it should be clear that you read and took into account the ideas and information they presented);
- Discussion of attitude or value takes a clear position comparing the two films;
- Discussion of social and cultural context is specific to the films and avoids broad generalizations or stereotypes;
- Accuracy of the analysis in light of information discussed in class.

- **Final Project and Self in the World Reflection Paper:** There is no final exam or paper for this class. Instead, students will give a short in-class presentation about one Chinese film that was not included in the course syllabus and write a short reflection paper on the class as a whole. The presentation should introduce the film and make a case for why the film should be included in this class in the future. The format of the presentation is entirely open, but it must fall into a 10-minute period that can be presented via Zoom in class. The professor will provide a list of classic Chinese films that were not included in the course for students to choose from. Students are also encouraged to select their own films. Only one student is allowed to present on each film, however, so students are encouraged to email the professor to claim a film when you have an idea. Additionally, students will write a short (3-4 pages double spaced) personal paper reflecting on how this course has shaped their understanding of their relationship to the world. Students may respond to any of the following questions or additional questions of their own: How has this course changed your understanding of yourself, your identity, or your relationship to the rest of the world? How has this course made you think in new ways about China, Chinese diaspora communities, or other international communities worldwide? What aspects of this course were most surprising to you? In what way do experiences discussed in this course seem similar to your own experiences? How are they different?

**Viewings and Readings:** All students are required to watch the assigned film listed for that day. The assigned readings are only required for the presenters who will present on the film assigned for that day. Other students are free to skim the readings, read sections that interest them, or simply not do the reading. Reading for the day a film is due may help with participating in the class discussion, but it is entirely optional. However, all students must complete at least two readings from each unit for their analysis paper due at the end of that unit.

**Assignments and Grades:** Except for film quizzes, all assignments—presentation slides, analysis papers, and final reflection papers—will be submitted using Blackboard. Students will receive written feedback and grades on Blackboard Gradebook. Students
should email the professor if they see a mistake in the posted grades or have a question about how to submit an assignment.

**Office Hours:** This is a precious opportunity to get to know the professor and to get one-on-one attention and advice. Take advantage of it! You can use office hours to get feedback on a recent assignment, to brainstorm ideas for your final project, or to talk about the class and your interests in general. Times and instructions can be found at the top of this syllabus.

**Email:** Students are responsible for regularly checking and reading all course-related emails and Blackboard announcements. The professor will make every effort to respond to student emails within 24 hours, excluding weekends. Questions posed in email should be limited to those that can be answered within 2-3 sentences. Complex content-related questions or requests for feedback on individual assignments should be addressed during office hours or in class. If a problem occurs with the film link, please email the professor immediately so the problem can be resolved as soon as possible.

**Disabilities and Special Accommodations:** William & Mary accommodates students with disabilities in accordance with federal laws and university policy. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a learning, psychiatric, physical, or chronic health diagnosis should contact Student Accessibility Services staff at 757-221-2512 or at sas@wm.edu to determine if accommodations are warranted and to obtain an official letter of accommodation. For more information, please see [www.wm.edu/sas](http://www.wm.edu/sas). The professor will honor any special accommodations related to disabilities, student athletics, ROTC, and other matters for which the College has established rules for such accommodations. Please submit requests for accommodations in writing with proof of College support within the first two weeks of class.

**Illness and Quarantine/Isolation:** Fall 2022 guidelines state that “W&M students who test positive for COVID-19 need to isolate and not attend in-person classes for at least five days. Unvaccinated or unboosted students also quarantine if they are identified as close contacts.” Students who cannot attend class due to sickness or required isolation/quarantine should contact the professor to arrange to attend class on Zoom. If the student is too ill to attend class remotely, they should attend office hours to make up missed material.

**Writing Resources Center:** Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of one-on-one peer consultation and other forms of writing support provided by the Writing Resources Center (WRC). The WRC “help[s] you strengthen your writing and communication skills by providing resources, workshops, and individual support for all kinds of assignments and projects that require writing: academic essays, presentations, storyboards, posters, personal statements, creative writing, applications, and more.” [https://www.wm.edu/as/wrc/](https://www.wm.edu/as/wrc/)

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:** Plagiarism will result in an automatic failing of this course and possible disciplinary action by the University. It is your responsibility to
understand the rules of plagiarism and to cite your sources appropriately in assignments for this course. For more information, see the explanation of Honor Code Violations.

Land and Slavery Acknowledgment: William & Mary acknowledges the Indigenous peoples who are the original inhabitants of the lands our campus is on today – the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway), Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Mattaponi, Monacan, Nansemond, Nottoway, Pamunkey, Patawomeck, Upper Mattaponi, and Rappahannock tribes – and pay our respect to their tribal members past and present. William & Mary acknowledges that it owned and exploited slave labor from its founding to the Civil War; and that it had failed to take a stand against segregation during the Jim Crow Era.

Classroom environment: All students are of equal importance and value in this classroom. If you ever feel that your ability to participate and learn in this class is limited by the behavior of the professor or of other students, please let the professor know immediately so that change can be made. The professor welcomes student input at all times and on all aspects of the class. Humanistic inquiry acknowledges and values diversity in ideas and personal experiences. Let us join in celebrating these differences and similarities, and let us work together to make this classroom safe and respectful space for the expression of all views and all backgrounds.

Grading Scale for Final Grades:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93 – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 – 92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 – 89.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 – 86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 82.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 – 79.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73 – 76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 – 72.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67 – 69.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63 – 66.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60 – 62.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
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</tbody>
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SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction to the Course

Thurs, Sept 1—Course Overview
Sign up for Film Presentations

UNIT ONE: Family, Gender, and Romance

Week 2: Family and Gender

Tues, Sept 6—*Eat Drink Man Woman* 饮食男女 (1994, dir. 李安 Lǐ Ān/Ang Lee)
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):
Thurs, Sept 8—**New Women** 新女性 (1935, dir. 蔡楚生 Cài Chǔshēng)
Viewing (free): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Q4zhLxCB&list=PLhA05Qf09xBaz_tynYbyZ-Porcj7bui&index=13](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Q4zhLxCB&list=PLhA05Qf09xBaz_tynYbyZ-Porcj7bui&index=13)
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):


- **Guest Speaker**
  Linshan Jiang, Postdoctoral Fellow, Duke University

**Week 3: Heterosexual Romance**

Tues, Sept 13—**In the Mood for Love** 花样年华 (2000, dir. 王家卫 Wáng Jiāwèi/Wong Kar-wai)
Viewing (free 14-day trial with signup): [https://www.criterionchannel.com/into-the-mood-for-love](https://www.criterionchannel.com/into-the-mood-for-love) (also available on HBO Max and for rent on Amazon Prime for $5.99)
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):


Thurs, Sept 15—**Li Shuangshuang** 李双双 (1962, dir. 鲁韧 Lǔ Rèn)
Viewing (free): Link to Swem Library streaming content on Blackboard
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):


**Week 4: Queer Romance**

Tues, Sept 20—**Fish and Elephant** 今年夏天 (2001, dir. 李玉 Lǐ Yù)
Viewing (free): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q904tyn5s3U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q904tyn5s3U)
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):


Thurs, Sept 22—**Queer China, Comrade China** 志同志 (2008, dir. 崔子恩 Cuī Zǐēn)
Viewing (free with W&M login): [https://docuseek2-2.com.proxy.wm.edu/df-qc1](https://docuseek2-2.com.proxy.wm.edu/df-qc1)
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):


- **Film Analysis #1 due by Sunday at 11:59pm**
UNIT TWO: Education, Work, and Class

Week 5: Students and Education

Tues, Sept 27—Young Style 青春派 (2013, dir. 刘杰 Liú Jié)
Viewing (free): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oMUxdwumGd0
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):

Thurs, Sept 29—Breaking with Old Ideas 决裂 (1975, dir. 李文化 Lǐ Wénhuà)
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):
Michael Mikita, “Screening the Maoist Mr. Science: Breaking with Old Ideas and Constructing the Post-Capitalist University,” Wei, Chunjuan Nancy, and Brock, Darryl E. Mr. Science and Chairman Mao’s Cultural Revolution Science and Technology in Modern China, pp. 143-161. Lexington Books, 2013.

Week 6: Urban Inequality and Post-Industrial China

Tues, Oct 4—Beijing Bicycle 十七岁的单车 (2001, dir. 王小帅 Wáng Xiǎoshuài)
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):

Thurs, Oct 6—Piano in a Factory 钢的琴 (2010, dir. 张猛 Zhāng Měng)
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):

Week 7: FALL BREAK

Tues, Oct 11—WORK DAY (NO CLASS)

Thurs, Oct 13—FALL BREAK (NO CLASS)

❖ Film Analysis #2 by Sunday night at 11:59pm.

UNIT THREE: Animation, Musicals, and Martial Arts
Week 8: Animation and Opera Film

Tues, Oct 18—**Princess Iron Fan** 铁扇公主 (1941, dirs. 万古蟾 Wàn Gǔchán and 万籁鸣 Wàn Làimíng)
Viewing (free): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oeUp840yj2c&list=PLhA05Qf09xBaz_t_ynYbyZ-Porcj7bui&index=17](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oeUp840yj2c&list=PLhA05Qf09xBaz_t_ynYbyZ-Porcj7bui&index=17)
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):

Thurs, Oct 20—**Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai** 梁山伯与祝英台 (1954, dirs. 桑弧 Sāng Hú and 黄沙 Huáng Shā)
Viewing (free): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJgaaGen1mA&t=6s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJgaaGen1mA&t=6s)
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):

Week 9: Ethnic Minority Music and Dance Films

Tues, Oct 25—**Liu Sanjie** 刘三姐 (1960, dir. 苏里 Sū Lǐ)
Viewing (free): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NYmV9Q3rRk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NYmV9Q3rRk)
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):
  ❖ **Guest Lecture**
  Jessica Ka Yee Chan, Associate Professor, University of Richmond

Thurs, Oct 27—**You Beautify My Life** 你美丽了我的人生 (2018, dirs. 阎清秀 Yán Qīngxiù and 于德安 Yú Dé‘ān)
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):

Week 10: Martial Arts Films

Tues, Nov 1—**Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon** 卧虎藏龙 (2000, dir. 李安 Lǐ Ān/Ang Lee)
Viewing (free 30-day trial with signup): [https://www.amazon.com/Crouching-Tiger-Hidden-Dragon-UHD/dp/B00OQVQNUA](https://www.amazon.com/Crouching-Tiger-Hidden-Dragon-UHD/dp/B00OQVQNUA)
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):
Thurs, Nov 3—Ip Man 叶问 (2008, dir. 叶伟信 Yè Wěixīn)
Viewing (free): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zGD9OFmxYXM
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):

❖ Film Analysis #3 due by Sunday night at 11:59pm.

UNIT FOUR: Historical Dramas

Week 11: Qing Dynasty

Tues, Nov 8—ELECTION DAY (NO CLASS)

Thurs, Nov 10—The Opium War 鸦片战争 (1997, dir. 谢晋 Xiè Jìn)
Viewing (free): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWzeZ5sNxmk
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):

Week 12: Republican Era

Tues, Nov 15—Soong Sisters 宋家皇朝 (1997, dir. 張婉婷 Zhāng Wǎntíng/Mabel Cheung)
Viewing (free): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLn2NGaS6dg
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):

Thurs, Nov 17—Beginning of the Great Revival 建党伟业 (2011, dir. 黃建新 Huáng Jiànxin and 韩三平 Hán Sānpíng)
Viewing (free): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEDv6MaYTkY
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):

Week 13: PRC Era

Tues, Nov 22 (ONLINE)—To Live 活着 (1994, dir. 张艺谋 Zhāng Yìmóu)
Viewing (free): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qKttEgcGZsM
Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):

Thurs, Nov 24—THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO CLASS)

**Week 15: Tang Dynasty**

Tues, Nov 29 — *Xuanzang* 大唐玄奘 (2016, dir. 霍建起 Huò Jiànqǐ)

Viewing (free): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ulDzLjz0wdw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ulDzLjz0wdw)

Reading (required for presenters, optional for non-presenters):


Thurs, Dec 1—Final Project Presentations

❖ **Film Analysis #4 due by Sunday night at 11:59pm.**

**Week 16: Final Projects**

Tues, Dec 6—Final Project Presentations

Thurs, Dec 8—Final Project Presentations

❖ **Self in the World Reflection Paper due by 5pm Friday, December 16th**