

FILM IN THE 1970s:

The Film School Generation and the Birth of the New Hollywood OLLI at Illinois – Spring Semester 2021

Thursdays, 9:00-10:30 a.m. – January 28 through March 18

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Format: This course will be offered online-only via Zoom Webinar.

The 1970s began with Hollywood experiencing financial and artistic challenges, but quickly became a decade marked by creativity, experimentation, collaboration, and transformation – an era known as the New Hollywood. The driving force behind this Hollywood renaissance was a group of influential young directors fresh out of film school (Francis Ford Coppola, George Lucas, Martin Scorsese, Steven Spielberg, and others) who would change the art and business of filmmaking in the 1970s and beyond. These filmmakers and their films transformed the film industry, paving the way for everything that has come after. We will also examine the significant political and social influences of the era and other developments that had an impact on film in the 1970s – from multiplex theaters and HBO to the VCR and the rise of the blockbuster.

This will be a 90-minute lecture/discussion course, illustrated with clips from key films of the decade. For those students who wish to explore the subject in more detail on their own, each week's class meeting will end with the recommendation of five feature films that express the concepts and directors covered in that week's class, along with where to find those films.

COURSE SCHEDULE

January 28 – Introduction: Overview of the Film Industry in the Years Leading Up to the 1970s, and the Status of the Film Industry as the Decade Begins

February 4 – The Film School Generation: The Rise of the Superstar Director

February 11 – New Topics, New Modes of Storytelling

February 18 – The Blockbuster: How One Year (and One Great White Shark) Transformed an Industry

February 25 – Other Stories and Characters That Emerged in the 1970s

March 4 – New Technologies: Dispatches from a Galaxy Far, Far Away

March 11 – Alternatives and Independents: Women, Minorities, LGBT Filmmakers and Stories – Behind the Camera, and On the Screen

March – Reckoning with the Changes of the Decade – and How the 1970s Influenced Everything to Come