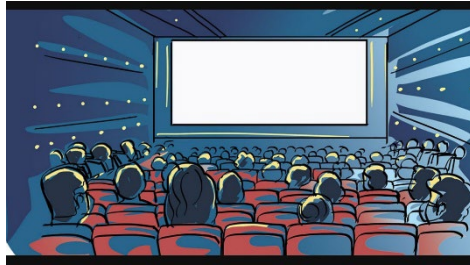


**LMC 4500 A: Storytelling in Global Cinema**  
**Fall 2026**

**Instructor:** Krystian K. Ramlogan  
**Email:** [kramlogan3@gatech.edu](mailto:kramlogan3@gatech.edu)  
**Office Hours:** By appointment  
**Class Time:** M/W 12:30pm – 1:45pm  
**Credits:** 3  
**Prerequisites:** ENGL 1102



“I have never tried to please my audience through the embellishment of reality. I am a participant and an observer of my society.” Ousmane Sembène, interview with Françoise Pfaff, in *The Cinema of Ousmane Sembène*, Greenwood Press, 1984, p. 40.

"I was to discover that the line which separates a witness from an actor is a very thin line indeed. Nevertheless, the line is real." James Baldwin *Remember This House* (unfinished manuscript, c. 1979; published in *I Am Not Your Negro*, ed. Raoul Peck, Vintage, 2017).

### **Catalog**

An in-depth investigation of a major movement, theory, period, or technological development in film studies.

### **Course Description**

What does it mean to tell a story? And whose grammar governs the telling?

This seminar investigates the narrative structures, artistic traditions, and historical contexts of Black cinema across American, Caribbean, African, and global contexts. Students develop analytical fluency through an original narrative framework developed by the instructor, grounded in Caribbean performance traditions and offering a rigorous alternative to dominant Western story structures. The framework centers cyclical time, collective heroism, and the logic of survival and collective endurance.

The course traces a transnational arc across major Black artistic movements, from the Harlem Renaissance and Chicago Black Renaissance through the Black Arts Movement, the LA Rebellion, and contemporary global cinema. Along the way, students examine how canonical literary and theatrical works travel into film, and what is gained, lost, or transformed in that passage. Students will encounter Langston Hughes, Lorraine Hansberry, and Ntozake Shange alongside filmmakers

Haile Gerima, Charles Burnett, Bill Gunn, Ousmane Sembène, Sarah Maldoror, and Steve McQueen, among others.

At the heart of the course is a question the framework makes newly answerable: not whether a film is "about" race, but how its narrative structure encodes the logic of collective survival. Graduate students engage course materials at the level of original research, producing scholarship suitable for peer-reviewed submission.

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Trace the historical development of Black cinema across American, Caribbean, African, and global contexts, situating major movements, filmmakers, and artistic traditions within their cultural and historical moment.
- Apply an original analytical framework to examine how narrative structure encodes cultural values, collective experience, and modes of storytelling across cinematic traditions.
- Analyze how filmmakers use formal techniques — narrative structure, visual language, performance, and adaptation — to construct meaning, drawing on both literary and cinematic sources.
- Engage canonical literary and theatrical works alongside their cinematic adaptations, interpreting what is gained, lost, or transformed in the passage between forms.
- Produce clear, evidence-based analytical writing that integrates close film analysis with scholarly sources.
- (Graduate students only) Develop original research of publishable quality that situates course frameworks within broader debates in film studies or comparative narrative scholarship.

### **Required Texts and Reading Materials**

- **Film Blackness: American Cinema and the Idea of Black Film** by Michael Boyce Gillespie.
  - ISBN-10 : 0822362260 | ISBN-13 : 978-0822362265
- **Additional reading materials** - will be available via Canvas and/or a Cloud Drive Folder.

### **Recommended Texts**

- *Black American Cinema*, by Manthia Diawara.
  - ISBN-10:9780415903974 | ISBN-13:978-0415903974

### **Technology Requirements**

- Computer/Laptop with a reliable internet connection.
- Pen/Pencil/Notebook or Tablet/Stylus for in-class notes.
- Software to complete assignments: MS Word/PowerPoint, Google Docs, Adobe, etc.
- Computer Storage: access to reliable local and/or cloud-based storage for backing up your work.
- Access to streaming platforms for some films.

**Grading Breakdown**

ASSIGNMENT OR ACTIVITY	POINTS	DATE
Small Group Discussions	10	
Screening Responses	20	
Comparative Framework Analysis	20	
Genealogy Mapping Presentation	20	
Final Project (UG / Grad)	30	
TOTAL	100	

- Small Group Discussions: student reflections on the weekly discussion.
- Screening Responses: student response to a prompt about the assigned film screening.
- Comparative Analysis: comparative analysis of 2 films.
- Genealogy Mapping Presentation: mixed groups.
- Final Project
  - Undergrad: Research Paper (analytical essay)
  - Grad: Research Paper with abstract + bibliography (publishable)

**Grading Scale**

GRADE	POINTS	DESCRIPTION
A	90 - 100	Excellent, 4 quality points per credit hour
B	80 – 89	Good, 3 quality points per credit hour
C	70 – 79	Satisfactory, 2 quality points per credit hour
D	60 – 69	Passing, 1 quality point per credit hour
F	0 – 59	Failure, 0 quality points per credit hour

**Extra Credit Opportunities**

Any extra credit opportunities, if offered, will be discussed in class. Details, expectations, and eligibility will be communicated at that time.

## Course Policies, Expectations and Guidelines

### **Academic Integrity**

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. [Review Georgia Tech's Honor Code](#) and the [student Code of Conduct](#).

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, [contact the Office of Disability Services](#) (404-894-2563) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

### **Attendance, Participation, and Engagement**

Regular attendance and active participation are required in this course.

Please also review the Institute [expectations and restrictions related to attendance](#), including information about excused absences.

### **Collaboration, Group Work, and Use of Generative AI**

You are allowed to work in groups on all homework and out-of-class assignments but any work you turn in must be your own original work created for this course. Students may **not** use Generative AI without the instructor's explicit permission. Unauthorized use of AI tools will be treated as a violation of academic integrity.

### **Communication Policy**

Email: I will respond to emails as soon as possible, with a standard 48-hour turnaround time. Weekend communication is welcome with the same 48-hour standard response time.

### **Extensions, Late Assignments, & Re-Scheduled/Missed Exams**

Late homework will be penalized accordingly. Make-up exams are given for illness, approved Institute activities or religious observances.

**Recording: No recording** (audio, video, or photographic) is permitted without explicit permission from the instructor. This protects the privacy and intellectual property of all class participants.

### **Religious Observances**

Georgia Tech recognizes the diversity of its student body and respects students' religious practices. Students who wish to be absent from class for religious observances must provide **two (2) weeks advance notice** in writing via email. Alternative arrangements for missed work will be made on a case-by-case basis. More information about approved exceptions can be found [here](#).

**Course Policies, Expectations and Guidelines**

**Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement**

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. [The Student-Faculty Expectations](#) articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

**Student Well-Being**

At Georgia Tech, we are concerned about your overall physical, social, and mental well-being. A comprehensive list of wellness related resources has been compiled and maintained by the Office of the Vice President for Student Engagement and Well-being ([student-resource-guide.gatech.edu](http://student-resource-guide.gatech.edu)).

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**This syllabus is subject to change. Changes, if any, will be announced in class. Students will be held responsible for all changes.**

*Syllabus Revision 1.0 (any changes to the syllabus will result in a new revision number, e.g., from 1.0 to 1.1, etc.)*