**FILM NOIR**

# ENGL 610 | M 5:00-7:45PM | FALL 2016

In this course, we will engage in close analyses of a series of notoriously gritty, sexy, paranoid, and brazenly anti-humanist crime films collectively known as film noir. Difficult to define and endlessly debated, *film noir* is perhaps the most troublesome term to emerge out of Classical Hollywood. The term is problematic because the filmmakers working within its traditions had no clear sense that they were “doing *noir*” in the same way they understood they were making a Western or a gangster film. Many scholars refer to *film noir* as a genre, some call it a style, and others identify it as a cycle of films, but, more often than not, *film noir* fails to satisfy those looking for a thorough definition. The elusive nature of *film noir* should not, however, dissuade us from pursuing a definition. On the contrary, the impossibility of fully classifying *film noir* can help explain its persistence. Required weekly screenings will include classic American *films* noir such as *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), Double Indemnity (1944), and Kiss Me Deadly (1955), as well as neo-noirs such as Blade Runner (1982) and Memento (2000).  Assignments such as a close reading essay, an annotated bibliography, a research essay, and a final exam will be required.



## Yes, I killed him. I killed him for money—and a woman—and I didn't get the money and I didn't get the woman. Pretty, isn't it?

**—Walter Neff,**

***Double Indemnity***

### For more information, contact Jason Landrum at jason.landrum@selu.edu.