

The Heist Film

Spring 2026

(Syllabus subject to change)

MAB2 (Maryland Pkwy)

Tuesdays 12:45—2:30

Danielle Hartnett, Instructor

deehartnett13@gmail.com

PART ONE

In the first part of this course, you will be introduced to the heist film's roots in film noir. We will discuss common tropes related to this "left-handed form of human endeavor," including frames, double-crosses, and twists of fate. We will also explore themes related to moral ambiguity and how they affect the viewer.

Week One (Feb 3)

Course Introduction: Film Noir Roots

The Asphalt Jungle

(1950, Starring Sterling Hayden—1 hr 38 min)

Week Two (Feb 10)

The Asphalt Jungle [Part 2]

Week Three (Feb 17)

The Killing

(1956, Starring Sterling Hayden—1 hr 24 min)

Week Four (Feb 24)

Kansas City Confidential

(1952, Starring John Payne, Lee Van Cleef, and Neville Brand—1 hr 39 min)

THIS CLASS WILL RUN OVER TIME

(CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE)

REVISED

PART TWO

REVISED

In the second half of this course, we will confine our study to the resurgence of the heist film in the late 1990s into the 2000s. We will explore how notable directors like Spike Lee and David Mamet experimented with the genre and gave it a new vitality. **IMPORTANT NOTE: Some of the films in this unit contain violence and profanity that may be offensive.** We will discuss these artistic choices within their cultural and historical context.

Week Five (March 3)

Redefining the Heist Film—Experimentation and Reinvigoration

Ocean's Eight

(2018, Starring Sandra Bullock and Kate Blanchett—1 hr 50 min)

Week Six (March 10)

Ocean's Eight [Part Two]

Spring Break (March 17)—No Class

Week Seven (March 24)

The Spanish Prisoner

(1997, Starring Campbell Scott and Steve Martin—1 hr 50 min)

THIS CLASS WILL RUN OVER TIME

Week Eight (March 31)

Inside Man

(2006, Starring Denzel Washington and Clive Owen—2 hr 9 min)

Week Nine (April 7)

Inside Man [Part 2]

Week Ten (April 14)

The Usual Suspects

(1995, Starring Gabriel Byrne and Kevin Spacey—1 hr 50 min)

THIS CLASS WILL RUN OVER TIME