

FILM COURSES, SPRING 2014

**104 INTRO TO FILM, two 75-min. lecture-discussions & film screening each week, Curry, A. Basu, & Staff
same as MACS 104**

This discussion-oriented introductory course (taught in separate small sections) studies analysis of narrative strategies, shot properties, mise-en-scène, editing, and sound in films. We focus also on genres and styles of films, including, e.g., film noir and musicals, as well as documentaries and alternative independent films.

Expect to write a couple of short essays; to take a midterm and a final; and take some quizzes on the readings, films, and discussions. Grants Gen Ed credit in Humanities and the Arts.

**199 T UNDERGRADUATE OPEN SEMINAR, S. Camargo. TUTH 3:30–5:20
TOPIC: Drugs, Sex, and Rock ‘n’ Roll: Countercultures in the Movies, 1930s–1960s**

This course studies cinematic representations of alternative behaviors, emphasizing practices that were suppressed by established authorities in the United States and Europe from the 1930s through the 1960s. While the organization of the course is chronological, it is not genetic; that is, there is no assertion of causal relationships among these periods. In reading these postcards from the edge, we will also explore why and how these stories of “outsiders” became integrated into the mainstream of commercial cinema. Evaluated work will include short response papers and 3–4 medium-length essays.

**CW 202 C TOPICS IN CREATIVE WRITING, Capino. M 10–12:50
TOPIC: Dramatic Writing**

This course teaches the rudiments of dramatic writing for the theatre and cinema. Workshop sessions are at the center of this course, which also entails screenings, exercises, and lectures. Students will write a one-act play and develop a second writing project of their choice. Readings include essays on dramatic composition (e.g., Smiley, Archer, Egri, Field) and published scripts. A few additional workshop sessions will be scheduled beyond class time to accommodate the reading and discussion of class projects.

**273 Q AMERICAN CINEMA SINCE 1950, S. Camargo. Lect: TUTH 12:30-1:45; Screening: W 3:30-6
same as MACS 273**

Explores American cinema from 1950 to the present, focusing on key issues in film studies (e.g., authorship, genre, narratology, film style, gender analysis, and the spectacle of violence), contextualized within moments of major transition in the American film industry. Units this term will include "Hitchcock in American Culture," "The New Hollywood," and "Four Films about Race." Viewing and discussion of one film each week. Evaluated work will include three medium-length essays.

**300 S1 WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE, Curry. TUTH 2-3:15
TOPIC: Writing Film Criticism**

The Writing Film Criticism topic section of English 300 offers students who are seriously interested in film and related forms of media an opportunity to learn about the history of published popular discourse on cinema as well as to practice being movie critics. The course is based on the premise that one learns best to write engaging, persuasive reviews through attentive reading of analyses of diverse styles and approaches; equally broad and attentive viewing; and regular writing, with multiple revisions. In addition, students will research how film criticism operates as a popular, institutional, economic, and political discourse (for example, through film festivals, including the Ebertfest, which will occur during the semester).

Each student will write four original reviews of varying length and projected readership and on diverse types of films (one an optional television review), receiving editorial feedback from peers and professor through several drafts. Small writing teams that shift with each review and the use of Moodle as a means of sharing work will foster the peer review and (re)writing process. Each student will give several in-class presentations on assigned research topics (such as a specific film critic) and must pay scrupulous attention to deadlines for all assignments and participate reliably and helpfully in writing groups in class and through the class webboard.

The course, which grants Advanced Composition credit, requires two books and some additional book extracts and articles demonstrating and analyzing techniques and issues in film critical writing. (A previous college course in film studies such as "Intro to Film" or "American Cinema since 1950"

is helpful but not required.) **It is strongly recommended that all English and Teaching of English majors take ENGL 300 and ENGL 301 BEFORE taking any other 300- or 400-level courses.**

373 S SPECIAL TOPICS IN FILM STUDIES, A. Basu. TUTH 2-3:50; same as MACS 373

TOPIC: Bollywood Cinema

In this course we will undertake a critical and historical study of the international media phenomenon known as “Bollywood,” the world’s largest entertainment industry. We will see exciting, colorful films and also understand how these texts can be connected to the history, political transformations, and national and regional aspirations in South Asia. We shall critically take a look into matters of form (how exactly are popular Hindi films different from or similar to Hollywood or Japanese films?) and how these narratives respond to shifting realities of post-colonial nation-building, tradition, mythology, modernity, globalization, the country/city divide, and the information revolution. Bollywood films can combine imaginations drawn from classical Indian epics with aspects of the modern world like space aliens, technology, terrorism, pop culture, American superhero genres, and world cinema/world music conventions.

Students will be required to participate in a group project, write short response papers and two longer mid-term and final-term papers. There will also be a final examination.

455 2U/2G MAJOR AUTHORS, T. Newcomb. TUTH 2-3:50

TOPIC: Citizens Coen: The Cinema of the Coen Brothers

For nearly thirty years Joel and Ethan Coen have occupied a distinctive place in American cinematic culture. Their films consistently foreground their own roles as creators, which has made them key predecessors for later “star” directors such as Quentin Tarantino and Spike Jonze. They have won many awards including the Oscar, yet they are still regarded with skepticism by some academic critics who find their films all about style and genre pastiche rather than substance. This class will explore these contradictions and many others as we survey the Coens’ work of the past three decades, along with some of the “originals” that have inspired them to rethink cinematic genres, especially the screwball comedy, the Hitchcockian thriller, the gangster picture, and the hard-boiled film noir.

You can expect essays, quizzes, brief oral presentations, and a final exam.

461 1U/1G TOPICS IN LITERATURE, Carico. TUTH 3:30-4:45
TOPIC: Genres of the American Frontier

What is the frontier? And where, and when? We'll think broadly about the "frontier" as a space of time that's in flux, poised between changing orders of law, economy, and culture—from William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* to Werner Herzog's *Fitzcarraldo*, from the *Dred Scott* case to *Django Unchained!*, and from paintings of the American West to field recordings of the American South. We'll also figure out how new forms and categories—new "genres"—try to re-order that space and time. Westerns are surely concerned with frontiers, but so are folk songs and zombie-apocalypse narratives. As we think critically about the frontier, we will also explore its history of violence and domination, especially with regard to the indigenous and the enslaved.

503 F HISTORIOGRAPHY OF CINEMA, Capino. M 2-3:50 same as MACS 503

TOPIC: Film Historiography: National Cinema

Is national cinema the corpus of work by the citizens of a particular state or the totality of films, both "local" and "foreign," exhibited within its borders? Does the rubric embrace films made by expatriates or works that are funded, European Union-style, through international co-productions? In charting the history of a national cinema, do we figure the "national" through space, fantasies of common substance, language, the director's citizenship, or fugitive tropes of nationalist discourse? This graduate seminar examines "national cinema" as a persistent, tactical, and often productive category of analysis in film history and criticism. Students will investigate this rubric in relation to others used in the field, including such categories as regional, hemispheric, continental, tricontinental, transnational, and global. The primary aim of the course is to help students identify a national cinema that interests them and to discover a point of intervention within its discourse.

504 A THEORIES OF CINEMA, Kaganovsky. MW 3-4:50
same as MACS 504, CWL 504

This semester the course begins with a review of basic and formative film theory, understood within the historical context in which it was and is written and received. Building on this groundwork, the course then moves on to consider rhetorical aspects of film theory and asks what theories film scholars can use to address the relationships among film, politics, and society.