
JUNIOR SEMINAR: CINEMA THROUGH THE ARCHIVES in Spring 2021 (FM3096)

Course Code	FM3096	Professor(s)	Valerio Coladonato
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-L20
Class Schedule	MR: 13:45-15:05 in Q-704	Office Hours	Mon 15:15-16:40 (please make appointment by email)
Credits	4	Email	vcoladonato@aup.edu
Semester	Spring 2021	Office Tel. Ext.	

Course Description

In this class, we will explore the relationship between cinema and the archives, through an introduction to different theoretical perspectives and several hands-on research activities on digitized film archives and Paris-based institutions (such as the Cinémathèque Française). We will address key questions on the methods and uses of archival work for both the analysis and interpretation of individual films and the larger social and cultural concerns that characterize the “New Film History”. We will also question how archives shape memory, what power relationships they reproduce, and how they serve the collective understanding of film as both an art form and popular entertainment. Students will be responsible for a research project that will involve the archival investigation of one edition of the Cannes film festival (integrating aspects of narrative, mise-en-scene, production, circulation, and reception of the participating films).

Course Learning Outcomes

Students will engage with theories related to film archives and their cultural functions
Students will be able to select and interpret primary and secondary sources in film history
Students will develop their skills in film analysis and interpretation through the use of archival sources
Students will improve their writing skills through both individual and collective research projects and a peer-reviewed paper
Students will strengthen their ability to understand and produce research through the approaches of the New Film History
Students will be able to engage in the writing practices and culture of their chosen major, adding to the skills acquired in the Research, Interpretation, and Writing classes to develop a personal, authentic disciplinary voice (CCR)

General Education

Course Outline

January

Week I – 18th – 21st

Topic: Film history and primary sources

Screening: Howard Hawks, *Scarface*, (U.S., 1932)

Reading: Chris Yogerst, “Hughes, Hawks, and Hays: The Monumental Censorship Battle Over *Scarface* (1932)”

Assignment: Small groups of students write blog posts discussing the “Motion Picture Production Code” and at least two primary sources (New York Times articles or other digitized newspapers from the 1930s).

Week II – 25th – 28th

January 24th – last day to drop/add courses online

Topic: Locating and using online archives

Readings: J. Chapman, M. Glancy, M. Harper, Introduction to: *The New Film History*. Sources, Methods, Approaches; Thomas Elsaesser, “The New Film History as Media Archaeology”.

February

Week III – 1st – 4th

Topic: Revisiting early cinema

Screenings: Excerpts from the collections: “The early Lumière brothers' films” and “Landmarks of early cinema”

Readings: Charles Musser, “Rethinking Early Cinema: Cinema of Attractions and Narrativity”; Tom Gunning, “The Cinema of Attraction(s): Early Cinema, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde.

Assignments: - Discussion of Gunning’s article as writing model (questions addressed: how does the author incorporate primary and secondary sources as evidence? How does he progressively build a counter-narrative of early cinema and its modes of spectatorship?).

Week IV –11th

REVIEW + PRESENTATIONS

February 8th – 10th, Mini break 1, (no classes)

Week V – 15th – 18th

Topic: The public uses of film archives (I)

Screening: Excerpts from Jean-Luc Godard’s “Histoire(s) du cinema”

Readings: “Godard the Historiographer”

Week VI – 22nd

February 24th – 28th, Mini break 2, (no classes)

March

Week VII – 1st – 5th

Topic: The public uses of film archives (II)

Screening: “Henri Langlois, Phantom of the Cinematheque” (excerpts)

Reading: Thomas Ballhausen, “On the History and Function of Film Archives”

Week VIII – 8th –12th

MIDTERM EXAM

Week IX – 15th – 19th

Topic: Review of video-essays + presentations on FIAF archives

Assignment: Group work on collaborative document + initial planning for research projects

March 17th, Mid-semester

March 19th, Mid-semester grades due

Week X – 22nd – 25th

Topic: Archives and feminist historiography (II)

Readings: Jennifer Bean, "Introduction: Toward a Feminist Historiography of Early Cinema"

Assignments: Creation of a collaborative list of digital databases and archives of film history sources, with description and access info. This shared document will support all other research activities in the semester.

Screenings: Excerpts to be determined (depending on the case studies that will be selected in class)

Week XI – 29th – 2nd

Assignment: group work on secondary sources on films from the 1968 Cannes film festival assigned for the final research project; first survey of primary sources; creation of a shared databased.

Readings: Samuel Sieber, "The Politics of the Archives: Media, Power and Identity"; Trond Lundemo, "Archives and Technological Selection".

April 2nd, last day to withdraw from a course.

Last day to choose the CR/NC grading option.

April

Week XII – 5th – 8th

Topic: In-class workshop on the Cannes research project; definition of individual topics and research questions; collecting and organizing sources and bibliography.

Assignment: See the attached file with final paper prompt and instructions.

April 5th, Easter Monday (no classes)

April 6th, Faculty retreat (no classes)

Week XIII – 12th – 16th

- In-class quiz

Week XIV – 19th – 23rd

Screening: Alain Resnais, *Je t'aime, je t'aime* (France, 1968)

Assignment: - Build a collaborative folder with primary and secondary sources on the 1968 Cannes film festival through documents found at the Cinémathèque française and in online archives.

Review of initial paper outline.

Week XV – 26th – 30th

REVIEW + PRESENTATIONS

April 28th, Last day of classes,

April 29th, – May 2nd, Reading days (May 1st, holiday)

May 3rd – 12th, Final Exam

May 26th, all grades due

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

The breakdown of the final grade is as follows:

- Attendance and participation: 10%
- Midterm quiz: 20%
- Final quiz: 20%
- Final paper: 20%
- Presentation at the final conference: 20%
- Short presentation (5-minute slides assignment): 10%

Other
