
MODERN FILMS & THEIR MEANINGS in Fall 2019 (FM1010)

Course Code	FM1010	Professor(s)	Alice Craven
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G110
Class Schedule	TF: 15:20-16:40 in G-L21	Office Hours	Tuesdays and Fridays 16:45-17:45 and by appointment
Credits	4	Email	acraven@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2019	Office Tel. Ext.	680

Course Description

The spectators cry out from their seats in the dark "Don't open that door!" They know what is behind that door even though the film's protagonist does not. Similarly, when films show images of an invasion of alien forces, the audience nods smugly, affirming that this intrusion was indeed ill-fated. The spectators have been warned in advance (by their own very real fears) that the fantastic events on the screen were bound to come to pass. In this course, students explore how cinema has long expressed the deepest fears and the long-standing dreams of multiple cultures. *In addition to an introduction to the basics of film language*, students also analyse how filmmakers convey emotions and ideas.

How do we, as spectators, make sense of films? This course is an introduction to cinema - its language, its techniques, and the social and cultural factors that have made it one of the most influential art forms of our time. With a firm grounding in history, we discuss the technological, economic and political aspects of the film industry. By analyzing the work of key directors, we will be able to observe how their movies work: we will focus both on the different components of film language, and on our experiences as spectators. One thematic which will unite the films used for specific analysis are the fears and fantasies of cinema and how those are expressed in the cinema language we study.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to trace the rise and development of contemporary cinema as an art form, industry and cultural product.

Students will be able to define key terms, recognize cinematic elements, differentiate between form and content and analyze how they work together to make meaning.

Students will have a deeper understanding of the work of some of the major directors in film history.

Coursework will strengthen the student's observational, analytical and writing skills.

Local and Global Perspectives: Students will enhance their intercultural understanding of languages, cultures, and histories of local societies and the global issues to which these relate.(CCI LO1)

Aesthetic Inquiry and Creative Expression: Students will engage with artistic or creative objects (e.g., visual art, theatrical works, film) in different media and from a range of cultural traditions.(CCI LO2)

Exploring and Engaging Difference: Students will think critically about cultural and social difference; they will identify and understand power structures that determine hierarchies and inequalities that can relate to race, ethnicity, gender, nationhood, religion, or class.(CCI LO3)

General Education

Course Outline

September

Week I – 3 Introduction to Course. Analyzing the Image. The Conversation.

6 From Text to Image. Scripting the Text. Red Rock West.

September 8th – last day to drop/add courses online

Week II – 10 – 13 Classes Cancelled. Make Ups: 1) October 4 18:00 Top Floor Quai Building-All Things James Baldwin with Yule Caise, Film and Television Director; October 11 Visit to the Vampire Exhibit at the Cinémathèque. Instructions for the visit will be given in class.

Week III –17 Film Art chapter I. Film as Entertainment, Art and Business. Lalaland and Creative Decision Making. We will return to chapter 12 and the Historical Periods at a later point in the semester.

20 Form and Meaning chapter 2. Discussion of Lalaland and form. Form in Singin' in the Rain. Expectations in Shutter Island Opening.

Week IV –24 Levels of Meaning in Relation to Form. Setting Expectations. Class analysis of Get Out clips. ASSIGNMENT: Using page 71 of the Film Art book and either Get Out or a film of your choice, write a short (1-2 page) analysis of the film and its form, using the questions provided by the text as a guide.

27 PRESENTATION TOPICS DISTRIBUTED. Narrative Form chapter 3. Overview of Citizen Kane and the Narrative Form of The Imaginarium of Dr. Parnassus.

October

Week V –1 SHORT ANALYSIS PAPERS DUE. Chapter 4 Mise-en-scène and the Shot. Mise-en-scène in Moonrise Kingdom

4 Chapters 5 and 6. Editing and Cinematography in Scott Pilgrim vs. the World.

Week VI –8 Chapter 9. Genres and the Hybrid Genre of Scott Pilgrim.

11 Chapter 9 Continued. The Genres of Beasts of the Southern Wild.

MAKE UP (See Instructions above).

Week VII 15 Chapter 8 and Summary. Selected clip analyses to review for the mid-term exam.

18 MID-TERM EXAM. In-Class

October 16th, Mid-semester

October 18th, Mid-semester grades due

Week VIII – 22 Presentations.

25 Chapter 7. Sound in Film. The Artist.

Week IX - 29 Sound in Film. Atilla Marcel

November 1 NO CLASS

October 30th – November 3rd, fall break (no classes)

November

Week X – 5 PRESENTATIONS

8 PRESENTATIONS

November 4th, last day to withdraw from a course /no credit option

Week XI – 12 NO CLASS

15 Genre Films and Their Hybrids Review. See You Yesterday and Back to the Future.

November 11th – 12th, Armistice Break (no classes)

Week XIII – 19 Chapter 10 Documentary and Abstract Forms. Fog of War; the Quiet One.

22 Chapter 10 Animation. The Triplettes of Belleville versus CGI Animation.

Week XIV – 26 Chapter 11. Film Criticism. The Caiman.

29 The Caiman Continued. ASSIGNMENT- Write a short review of the film The Caiman or a film of your choice. This will be graded as part of your participation grade and will guide our discussion during the review for the final.

December

Week XV – 3 FINAL PAPERS DUE. Clips from The Shape of Water and Discussion of all chapters using this film as example.

6 Review for Final. Review of short Reviews written by you. Overview of chapter 12

December 6th, last day of classes,

December 7th - 11th, reading days

December 12th – 18th, Final Exam

FINAL EXAM DECEMBER 13, 15:30-18:00.

January 2nd, all grades due

Textbooks

Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN	Required
Film Art, An Introduction	Bordwell, David and Thompson, Kristin	McGraw-Hill	9780071220576	Yes
Film Art, An Introduction	Bordwell, David and Thompson, Kristin	McGraw-Hill	9781259253317	Yes

Attendance Policy

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*.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STATEMENT: As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is strongly committed to effective English language mastery at the undergraduate level. Most courses require scholarly research and formal written and oral presentations in English, and AUP students are expected to strive to achieve excellence in these domains as part of their course work. To that end, professors include English proficiency among the criteria in student evaluation, often referring students to the university Writing Lab where they may obtain help on specific academic assignments. Proficiency in English is monitored at various points throughout the student's academic career, most notably during the admissions and advising processes, while the student is completing general education requirements, and during the accomplishment of degree program courses and senior theses.

Grading Policy

Attendance, participation, group presentations: 20%

Midterm: 25%

Final paper: 25%

Final exam: 30%

Other
