
MODERN FILMS & THEIR MEANINGS in Spring 2021 (FM1010B)

Course Code	FM1010B	Professor(s)	Elise Domenach
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-L12
Class Schedule	F: 10:35-11:55 in G-L21 T: 15:20-16:40 in G-L21	Office Hours	By appointment by mail
Credits	4	Email	edomenach@aup.edu
Semester	Spring 2021	Office Tel. Ext.	N/A

Course Description

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

How do 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 and focusing on international films from the last 20 years, we will 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. Together with readings and screenings, there will be individual and group assignments that will help students discuss the content of each lecture, and familiarize with new critical skills and concepts related to the cinema.

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

GLACC:

This course can be used to fulfill the following requirement and as such has the following learning objectives:

- **CCI LO1:** 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 LO2:** 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 LO3:** 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.

Course Outline

COURSE SCHEDULE:

January

Week 1 – 18th – 22nd

Tuesday : **Introduction: what is film?**

Screenings from early cinema:

Me'lie`s, *L'homme à la tête en caoutchouc*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yK7XpRe9ZGE&list=PL7kODaJm5g_v0CSYacJdRDZ_0FV_OkjfaL

Lumie`re, *Arrival of a train at the station* "La ciotat" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dgLEDdFddk>

By friday : watch *La la land* (vod)

Friday :

Chapter 1 (pp. 2-29) In class presentation Rebecca

Screenings from *La la land*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMNMBdYj5EU>

Assignment by next week: Write a blog entry about a film that made an impression on you. Be sure to detail where you were, what the larger climate of the times was, what kind of venue you were in, a shot you remember distinctly and a new (surprising) fact you learned about the film in doing some research. Upload your post on the Film Journal

Watch *Citizen Kane* : [Citizen.Kane.1941.720p.BrRip.x264.BOKUTOX.YIFY.mp4](#)

Week II – 25th – 29th

Recognizing form

Tuesday :

Classical Hollywood and film form

Chapter 12 (p.454-464 and 476-478) in class presentation Davy

Screenings from *The Great Train Robbery*, *The Jazz Singer*, *The Band Wagon*.

Friday :

Narrative form : *Citizen Kane*

Chapter 3 (p.72-111) In class presentation : presentation : film analysis of *Citizen Kane*

Assignment by next week: Watch any movie you want (online). Create a new Journal entry that discusses this film. You must include the following observations: the historical and cultural contexts (why was this film made where and when it was made and what does that tell us?), the implicit and the explicit meaning of the film, an example of how three shots were edited together and finally how this film has relevance at this point in your life. What about being here now makes you receive the film as you receive it ?

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

February

Week III – 1st – 5th

Tuesday :

Individual feed back on your Film Journal

More on *Citizen Kane* and narrative form

Film Genres : comedies and melodramas

Friday :

In class presentation Charles on seq 3 *Citizen Kane*

Chapter 9 In class presentation Donnard

Week IV –8th – 12th

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

Friday :

Film genres : remarriage comedies and melodrama of the unknown woman

Screenings from *The Philadelphia Story* and *Letter from an unknown woman*

Assignment by next week: As your new Journal entry, write two paragraphs about a genre film

you've already seen – how does it fit its particular genre expectation? Begin to create a glossary of terms from the readings and lectures (reviewing your past readings).

Week V – 15th – 19th

Tuesday :

Film genres : remarriage comedies and melodrama of the unknown woman

Screenings from *The Philadelphia Story* and *Letter from an unknown woman*

Watch *Letter from an Unknown Woman* online :
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0R2STZUUNQ>

Friday :

Mise en scene

Chapter 4 (p.112-133) In class presentation Sophia

Screenings from *Rosetta*.

Week VI – 22nd – 26th

Tuesday :

Voices : in, off, over

Screenings from the Dardenne's documentary films and Rosetta's monologue

Review of previous readings and in class questions

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

March

Week VII – 1st – 5th

Tuesday : reviews for midterm exam

Friday : midterm exam

Week VIII – 8th – 12th

Tuesday : **Documentary Film I**

Chapter 10 (p.352-357)

Screenings from Ogawa Shinsuke, Narita series

Assignment for next week: Watch a documentary outside of class. Discuss in a Journal entry how the form of the film influences the reception of its content, with three concrete examples.

Week IX – 15th – 19th

Tuesday :

Documentary Film II

Screenings from Wiseman *Domestic Violence*

Friday

Idem

March 17th, Mid-semester

March 19th, Mid-semester grades due

Week X – 22nd – 26th

Tuesday:

Malick *The New World* : Sound and music

Friday:

Week XI-29th – 2nd

Tuesday

Contemporary Filmmakers I

Friday

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

Last day to choose the CR/NC grading option.

April

Week XII – 5th – 9th

Tuesday

Contemporary Filmmakers II

Friday

April 5th, Easter Monday (no classes)

April 6th, Faculty retreat (no classes)

Week XIII – 12th – 16th

Reviews for finals

Week XIV – 19th – 23rd

Final Paper Due

Week XV – 26th – 30th

Discussion of your final papers

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

Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN	Required
FILM ART, 12TH EDITION	BORDWELL, THOMPSON & SMITH	MCGRAW HILL UK	9781260565669	Yes

Attendance Policy

AUP 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.

Covid-19 temporary amendments:

Students studying at The American University of Paris are still expected to attend ALL

scheduled classes. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students will have the option of attending classes remotely when special circumstances apply. For example, when students are placed under quarantine by the French authorities or by their doctor, or when students present symptoms of Covid-19 and are directed, by their doctor or the AUP Health Office, to remain home. It is still the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that their professor might have set in the course syllabus. In particular, Students attending remotely from distant Time Zones should check with their professors about the specific attendance policy for remote learners.

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 also 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

GRADING POLICY:

Attendance, participation : 10%

Film journal: 15%

In class presentation of readings : 25%

Midterm: 25%

Final exam: 25%

Other
