



**FILM 20A: INTRODUCTION TO FILM STUDIES
SUMMER 2016 – UC SANTA CRUZ**

Instructor: Francesca Romeo

Office Hours: Earth and Marine lobby W 12-1pm

Contact info: fromeo@ucsc.edu

Course website: ecommons Film 20A – 2016

Location: Earth and Marine B210

Lectures: M/W 1:30-4:00pm

Screenings: M 4:15-7:15pm

TA: Laimir Fano (lfano@ucsc.edu)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES: Film can be considered a language through which we can explore both the mechanics and the concepts that inform the *construction of cinematic space*. In this class you will learn the terminology that defines this space and to become aware of your own position as an analytical spectator. Each week we will examine a different aspect of film studies in order to develop a working vocabulary that will assist you in three main objectives:

- To strengthen your critical thinking skills
- To develop cogent arguments in your scholarly writing
- To understand the fundamentals of film scholarship

While film studies is a varied field, this class will introduce you to the key historical, technological, and conceptual shifts that have marked its development as a medium. Through weekly screenings we will interrogate the way in which each film is constructed through its formal elements, in order to understand its ideological implications. Lectures will shift between addressing key terminology and theoretical constructs, illuminated by numerous clips. In this way you will come to understand a range of images and ideas that will help you to identify both filmic conventions and experimentations. A strong emphasis will be placed on the examination of aesthetic choices and how these decisions can produce a variety of interpretations contingent upon the viewer's perceptual capacity and experiential knowledge. You are encouraged to contribute your own original thoughts to the debates integral to film studies and to assimilate the key terms, themes and analytic frameworks in both your writing and in discussion.

REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS:

The Film Experience: An Introduction 4th edition

Authors: Timothy Corrigan and Patricia White

Publisher: Bedford/St. Martin's

Aside from the course textbook, which is available at the Bay Tree Bookstore on campus, all other readings assigned in this course will be available on the e-commons course website under "resources" which you can access and download. *Readings should be completed prior to the date that they are listed on the syllabus.*

EXAMS, ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES:

Please note that all assignments are due in class (lecture) on the dates listed. Late assignments will be marked down half a grade per day (a B+ becomes a B) and can be turned in no later than 3 days after the assignment was due at the discretion of your TA. If extenuating circumstances prevent you from turning in an assignment or taking an exam (for example, a medical emergency) please contact myself and your TA immediately via e-mail so that we can assess the situation and provide you with an extended due date or alternate exam appointment if necessary.

Shot log (10%)

DUE DATE: JULY 20TH

You will be provided with a brief film clip and be asked to notes about the most salient aspects of the mise en scene, cinematography, editing and sound apparent in each individual shot. You will model your shot log upon a template that will be provided.

Sequence Analysis Paper (20%)

DUE DATE: JULY 20TH

Using your shot log as a guide, your paper will examine the way that cinematic techniques create meaning and develop an original thesis that explores one or more aspects of the selected film clip's construction. 1000-1200 words total.

Midterm Exam (20%)

IN CLASS ON: JULY 13TH

The midterm exam will cover the first four weeks of material (up to and including "sound") and will consist of one essay analyzing a film sequence and six short answer questions. The exam will test you on the material presented in your readings and the concepts introduced in lecture.

Final Paper (20%)

DUE DATE: AUGUST 8TH

You will select one of the feature films shown during the screenings and write an analytical film paper that highlights a significant aspect of the construction of cinematic space. It is not necessary to discuss all aspects of cinematic construction in this essay. The goal is to relate an element to the whole and show how a particular theme or idea is made aesthetically and conceptually visible through a particular technique. Minimum 1500 words.

Final Exam (20%)

IN CLASS ON: AUGUST 10TH

The final exam will be cumulative and cover material from the readings as well as lectures. You will be asked to write one analytical essay that compares and contrasts two different film concepts. Similar to the midterm you will also write 6 short answer responses to selected questions.

Attendance (10%)

It is expected that you will attend all lectures and screenings. Your grade will be penalized for any absence that is not accounted for with legitimate documentation. Because Summer Session courses are condensed, it is imperative that you attend every session because each one will cover an extensive amount of material. If you miss a lecture make sure to ask a classmate for notes and if you miss a screening make sure to view the film on your own. *Missing 2 classes (including screenings) unexcused will result in an attendance grade of zero. Missing 3 or more classes unexcused (including screenings) will result in a failing grade for the entire course.*

COURSE SCHEDULE

Readings should be completed prior to the date that they are listed on the syllabus.

WEEK 1 JUNE 20TH MISE EN SCENE

1. introduction, early cinema history and technology, the cinema of attractions

Screening: *La Haine*, dir. Mathieu Kassovitz, 1995

2. elements of mise en scene, exploring the boundary between naturalism and theatricality
The Film Experience Chapter 2: Mise-en-Scene p.63-93

WEEK 2 JUNE 27TH CINEMATOGRAPHY AND CONTINUITY EDITING

1. framing and the mechanics of cinematography, realism vs. formalism, pov, apparatus theory
The Film Experience Chapter 3: Cinematography p.95-131

Screening: *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, dir. Julian Schnabel, 2007

2. continuity editing
The Film Experience Chapter 4: Editing p.133-165

WEEK 3 JULY 4TH DISJUNCTIVE EDITING

1. **NO CLASS – HOLIDAY**

INDEPENDENT VIEWING OF: *Vertigo*, dir. Alfred Hitchcock, 1958

Please note, since class is cancelled due to the holiday, you must watch this week's film independently. It is easily available online and a link is provided. It is also available via i-tunes, hulu, amazon and other "legitimate" platforms. It is essential that you watch it!

Vertigo link: (http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x26u8ex_vertigo-1958_shortfilms)

Also, check the “resources” section of ecommons this week for the following documents:
Midterm exam outline posted, Shot log template, sequence analysis outline and video clip posted

2. disjunctive editing, feminist film theory, the new wave, soviet montage, writing workshop #1

The Film Experience Chapter 4: Editing p.165-173

Viewing in class: *Battleship Potemkin*, dir. Sergei Eisenstein, 1925

WEEK 4 JULY 11TH SOUND

1. principle of inaudibility, sound continuity and discontinuity, sound concepts and techniques

The Film Experience Chapter 5: Film Sound p.175-209

Screening: *The Lives of Others*, dir. Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, 2006

2. **MIDTERM** – Bring bluebook(s) to class

WEEK 5 JULY 18TH NARRATIVE

1. narrative strategies, structures and elements

Viewing in class: *La Jetee*, dir. Chris Marker, 1962

The Film Experience Chapter 6: Narrative Films p.213-251

Screening: *Memento*, Christopher Nolan, 2000

2. Character analysis and narrative frameworks, French new wave

SHOT LOG AND SEQUENCE ANALYSIS PAPER DUE

WEEK 6 JULY 25TH DOCUMENTARY AND EXPERIMENTAL

1. *Final paper assignment outline posted*

documentary history, organizations, modes and categories, writing workshop #2

What Types of Documentary are there? Bill Nichols p. 99-137 – available on ecommons

Screening: *Stories We Tell*, dir. Sarah Polley, 2012

Meshes of the Afternoon, dir. Maya Deren, 1943

2. surrealism and experimental film, history, approaches, associations and organizations

The Film Experience Chapter 8: Experimental Film and New Media p.283-309

WEEK 7 AUGUST 1ST GENRE

1. *Final Exam outline posted*

formulas and audience expectations, film noir and the femme fatale throughout film history
The Film Experience Chapter 9: Movie Genres p.311-348

Screening: *A Touch of Evil*, dir. Orson Welles, 1958

2. Westerns, American ideology and national myths, musicals, melodramas

WEEK 8 AUGUST 8TH RACE AND REPRESENTATION

1. FINAL PAPER DUE IN CLASS

stereotypes, essentialism, representation, identity politics, intersectionality, auteur theory, post-blackness

The Spectacle of the Other, Stuart Hall p.225-290 – available on ecommons

Screening: *Do the Right Thing*, dir. Spike Lee, 1989

2. **FINAL EXAM** – Bring bluebook(s) to class

POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS:

Lateness/Attendance

Punctuality in respect to lectures and screenings is appreciated. While being late on rare occasion is excusable, consistently being late will adversely effect your grade for the course. Attendance in lectures and screenings is *mandatory*. Missing 3 or more sessions unexcused will result in ***a failing grade for the course***. If you have an emergency, please provide me with documentation via e-mail at your earliest convenience so that I can make sure to mark your absence as “excused”.

Laptops/Cell phones

Cell phones must be set to mute or turned off upon entering class. It is strictly prohibited to access your phone during a class lecture or screening. Laptop computers are *not* to be used in lectures or screenings. Exceptions will be granted for use of a computer to those with a documented need.

Academic Integrity

Cheating and plagiarism are serious academic offences.

The consequence of committing an academic offence is an F in the course and a report filed with the College Provost who may enact further disciplinary measures.

The following measures are considered an offence and are excerpted from the UCSC Student Policies and Regulations Handbook:

- Committing fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in respect to an academic assignment.
- Using or attempting to use materials, or assisting others in using materials, which are prohibited or inappropriate in the context of the academic assignment in question.
- Providing answers to or receiving answers from others for any academic assignment.
- Using notes, information or other electronic devices during exams or for

assignments from which they have been expressly or implicitly prohibited.

- Improperly obtaining or using improperly obtained information about an exam or assignment in advance of its availability to other students, or assisting others in doing so.
- Putting one's name on another person's exam or assignment
- Altering previously graded work for purposes of seeking a grade appeal.
- Plagiarism is defined as the use of intellectual material produced by another person without acknowledging its source.
- Copying from the writings or works of others into one's academic assignment without attribution, or submitting such works as if it were one's own.
- Using the views, opinions, or insights of another without acknowledgment.
- Paraphrasing the characteristic or original phraseology, metaphor, or other literary device of another without proper attribution.

A personal reminder: Copying and pasting any information derived from an online source and inserting it into your own text without properly citing and acknowledging the author is considered plagiarism. This includes deriving your ideas for thesis statements, utilizing definitions or concepts, paraphrasing, swapping out words via a thesaurus in order to reorganize another author's work and using content featured in videos or text that are not explicitly cited according to regulation. Also, purchasing papers online is strictly prohibited.

Resources

If you would benefit from extended time during an exam or a particular accommodation in the classroom due to a disability or learning difference please inform me within the first few class sessions and we can work together to formulate circumstances that are the most conducive to your learning. Please make sure to also provide me with an *Accommodation Authorization* from the Disability Resource Center (DRC). For details on requirements and the process of obtaining authorization please visit their website at <http://drc.ucsc.edu> or visit their office on campus at 125 Hahn Student Services.

Email communication

Please feel free to contact me via e-mail concerning any questions about, or difficulties with the materials that may arise for you throughout the course. I kindly request that if you have questions about your grade(s) specifically that you contact myself and your TA *in person* (and not via e-mail) during either of our *office hours*. Please bring the assignment or exam in question to these appointments. I will respond to your e-mail(s) as promptly as possible, but please understand that it may take up to 48 hours to receive a response. It is not necessary to contact myself, or your TA if you are going to be absent due to a cold, the flu or family obligations. It is only necessary to inform us of your absence(s) via e-mail if an emergency arises that will cause you to miss more than 2 class sessions.

Standard Formatting and Bibliographic Requirements

- *Handwritten work will not be accepted*
- Essays should be double spaced
- Use 11 or 12 point in a legible type font for all assignments
- Use 1" margins all around
- Numerically paginate all essays
- Essays should be stapled in the upper left hand corner (no exceptions)
- All essays should include a cover page with the title of your paper, your name, the class number, the instructor's name and the date using the Chicago Manual of Style formatting

- If you use resources other than your own original work in your essays you must include either footnotes or endnotes according to Chicago Manual of Style formatting
- Please refer to the “resources” section of the class website on e-commons for further materials concerning writing, studying, thesis and bibliographic tips

Classroom Civility

Speaking to your peers, your instructor, your TA and administrative staff with respect is essential for creating a positive learning environment. Issues surrounding gender, race and class are integral to film analysis and appreciating that each of us maintains a different subject position in relation to these social elements is important. Respectfully engaging diverse ideas will create a sense of inclusion for all of us participating in the course.

Graphic/Explicit Materials

The material presented in this course may oftentimes pose challenging ideas, language or imagery. Overt and graphic depictions of violence and sexual content may be part of the screenings or clips shown in class. These materials are to serve as a point of inquiry and are meant to facilitate a critical understanding of the meanings inherent in their presentation. Challenging material asks us to interrogate its social relevance through a theoretical, historical or formal analysis and as such is included within the parameters of rigorous intellectual inquiry. I am always available to explain and clarify the pertinence of class materials in relation to your coursework and to provide greater context for its inclusion. *Please note that I will not be issuing specific trigger warnings before showing any of the materials in this class.*

Recordings/Circulation of Material

Please refrain from recording any lectures or discussions and please note that it is not only prohibited to distribute or sell any notes, exams, assignments or other related course materials to either an individual or a company, but that it is illegal.