

COURSE SYLLABUS

Department of Global Cultures and Languages

Course no. FR 375

Title of Course: French Cinema

Revision: _____

New: X

I. Catalog Description and Credit Hours:

A study of major French films and filmmakers in the context of French culture.
In French. 3 cr.

II. Prerequisites:

FR 220 or consent of instructor.

III. Purposes or Objectives of the Course:

- A. To develop a basic knowledge of the elements of film analysis.
- B. To acquaint students with the origins and development of French cinema.
- C. To introduce students to French film genres and to the contributions of major French directors.
- D. To examine the representation of French society in film.
- E. To improve French language skills through viewing and analysis of French films.

IV. Expectations of Students:

- A. To complete readings from the textbook and supplementary sources.
- B. To view essential films, including those required of the entire class and additional films of the student's choosing for an in-depth paper.
- C. To complete synopses and analytical assignments for all films and a study of a major director of the student's choosing.
- D. To attend class regularly and to participate in class discussions.
- E. To pass a midterm and a final exam.
- F. To complete the work in advanced-level French.

V. Course Outline: [Films included below are examples; not all will be viewed in one semester.]

- A. Introduction and Background 3 hours
 - 1. Invention of the cinema.
 - 2. Formalism and Realism.
 - 3. Film as an art form; basics of film criticism.
 - 4. Film in France during the silent era: *Napoléon* (Abel Gance, 1927).

- B. The elements of film language 3 hours
 - 1. Mise-en-scène (composition) and its role in film:
lighting, decor, camera angle.

2. Scenario and script:
 - Film contrasted with theater and novel
 - Role of narrative and dialogue
 - The silent and sound cinema (image and language).
 3. Elements of montage (editing):
 - Visual effects, sound effects, pacing, continuity
 - Editor's cut and director's cut.
- C. Pre-war World War II and wartime French cinema 6 hours
1. Competition from Hollywood and Germany.
 2. Effects of World War II on French film production.
 3. Ideology and occupation: *Grande Illusion* (Jean Renoir, 1937).
Le Crime de Monsieur Lange (Jean Renoir, 1936).
 4. Fantasy: *La Belle et la Bête* (Jean Cocteau, 1945).
- D. Post-War France: The New Wave 6 hours
1. Auteur cinema developed by *Les Cahiers du Cinéma*.
 2. Autobiography and childhood in the New Wave:
Les 400 Coups (François Truffaut, 1958).
 3. New Wave and the myth of Hollywood:
À bout de souffle (Jean-Luc Godard, 1960).
 4. New Wave realism:
Jules et Jim (François Truffaut, 1961)
Un Homme et une femme (Claude Lelouch, 1966)
Les Diaboliques (H.G. Clouzot, 1955)
Ma nuit chez Maude (Eric Rohmer, 1969).
- E. French feminism in film 6 hours
1. Agnès Varda: *Cléo de 5 à 7* (1961)
 2. Claire Denis: *Chocolat* (1989).
- F. Contemporary genres and films 15 hours
1. Film adaptations of literature
Balzac's *Colonel Chabert* (Yves Angelo, 1995)
Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* (Claude Chabrol, 1990)
Pagnol's *Jean de Florette* (Claude Berri, 1987)
Hugo's *Les Misérables* (Claude Lelouch, 1995).
 2. Reconsidering World War II
Au revoir les enfants (Louis Malle, 1987)
Le Dernier Métro (François Truffaut, 1980)
Un Monde presque paisible (Michel Deville, 2002)
Je m'appelle Sarah (Gilles Paquet-Brenner, 2010).
 3. Social issues
La Haine (Mathieu Kassowitz, 2004)
Chacun cherche son chat (Cédric Klapisch, 1997)
Entre les murs (Laurent Cantet, 2009)
La Vie rêvée des anges (Erick Zonca, 1998).

4. Thrillers/suspense
 - Harry, Un Ami qui vous veut du bien* (Dominik Moll, 2000)
 - Betty Fisher* (Claude Miller, 2001)
 - Caché* (Michael Haneke, 2006)
 - Ne le dis à personne* (Guillaume Canet, 2009).
5. Comedy/ Romantic comedy
 - La Chèvre* (Francis Weber, 1981)
 - Bienvenue chez les ch'tis* (Danny Boon, 2008)
 - Roman de gare* (Claude Lelouch, 2007)
 - L'Ami de mon amie* (Éric Rohmer, 1999)
 - Le Fabuleux Destin d'Amélie Poulain* (Jean-Pierre Jeunet, 2001).
6. Biography
 - La Vie en rose* (Olivier Dahan, 2007)
 - Le Scaphandre et le papillon*, (Julian Schnabel, 2008).
7. Documentary
 - Les Glaneurs et la glaneuse* (Agnès Varda, 2000)
 - Être et avoir* (Nicholas Philibert, 2004).

G. International aspects

6 hours

1. French remakes in the United States
 - Le Retour de Martin Guerre* (Daniel Vigne, 1982) /
Sommersby (Jon Amiel, 1993)
 - La Cage aux folles* (Edouard Molinaro, 1978) /
The Birdcage (Mike Nichols, 1996)
 - La Femme Nikita* (Luc Besson, 1990) /
Point of No Return (John Badham, 1993).
2. Francophone cinema outside France
 - La Rue Case-Nègres* (Martinique: Euzhan Palcy, 1984)
 - Rouge* (Switzerland: Krzysztof Kieslowski, 1994)
 - Faat Kine* (Sénégal: Sembène Ousmane, 2000)
 - Incendies* (Canada: Denis Villeneuve, 2010).

VI. Textbook and other materials:

Kreuger, Cheryl, Elizabeth Weber and Brigitte Martin. *Mise en scène: cinéma et lecture*. Prentice Hall, 2006.

Required films on DVD available on reserve.

VII. Basis of Student Evaluation:

A. Weekly assignments	40%
B. Midterm exam	20%
C. Final paper	20%
D. Final Exam	<u>20%</u>
	100%