



Shanghai University of Finance & Economics

2020 Summer Program

ENG 105 Introduction to Film and Film Theory

Course Outline

Term: June 1 – June 26, 2020

Class Hours: 16:00-17:50 (Monday through Friday)

Course Code: ENG 105

Instructor: Dr. Flavio Rizzo

Home Institution: Champlain College

Office Hours:TBA

Email: frizzo@champlain.edu

Credit: 4

Class Hours: This course will have 52 class hours, including 32 lecture hours, professor 8 office hours, 8-hour TA discussion sessions, 4-hour review sessions.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This session we will take a dynamic and hopefully inspiring journey into Film Theory in the larger context of filmmaking. Our approach will be transnational and will aim at creating an intellectual dialogue across decades of moving images. While we sink into the most intense image-oriented society known in human history, we will try to make sense of the nuances of film while decoding and unpacking meanings. We will dance around several questions: what are the implications of theorizing film? Does the moving image shape notions of self? How about a collective identity? How does film impact and change other arts? Is there a language of film? Does it abide by a grammar or, perhaps, the opposite, does it revolutionize attempts to create a proper language? Is film a normative tool or a propulsive force of change? How does film impact postcolonial, race and gender discourses? We will play with these and more questions not necessarily always looking for answers but we will probably generate more questions. From the observant eye of Ken Loach, to the short-circuits of a camera revealed in Panahi's work, all the way to the social and political implications of film narratives, our course will try to tear down invisible walls and connect dots across genres and nations- we will tackle films from Russia, Iran, Mauritania, Senegal, India, Japan, United States, England, Italy, and France.



The class is conceived as a Socratic circle, active participation is required. Be ready to share ideas and thoughts. All reading assignments can be found on Canvas.

REQUIRED READINGS AND FILMS

The Mirror (1997), Jafar Panahi
Umberto D. (1948), Vittorio De Sica
Blow Up (1966), Michelangelo Antonioni
La Jetee (1962), Chris Marker
Raining Stones (1993), Ken Loach
Late Spring (1953), Yasujirō Ozu
Water (2005), Deepa Mehta
Timbuktu (2014), Abderrahmane Sissako

“On the Impression of Reality in Cinema”, Christian Metz
“Italian Neorealism in the Light of Greek Tragedy”, Robert Pirro On Photography, Chapter 1, Susan Sontag
“Marxism, Film and Theory: from the Barricades to Postmodernism”, Scott Forsyth
“Space and Narratives in the Films of Ozu”, Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell Ros
“Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema”, Laura Malvey

LEARNING GOALS

In this course you will:

- Learn to critically engage films and clearly express those interpretations orally and in writing.
- Place film in its historical development and cultural impact of film as an art form.
- Understand film as collaborative process through which films are constructed. This includes several aspects (directing, writing, photography, acting, staging, costumes, set-design and more)
- Engage with questions emerging from cultural dynamics within the films.
- Work on a range of cinematic visual styles, narrative conventions, and generic trends.

COURSE POLICIES and ASSIGNMENTS

Student lead roundtable discussion (20%) – Details will be provided during the first day of classes.

Online (or Printed) Responses (short writing responses to readings, films) (20%)

Class participation, attendance, effort (30%) – Your contribution, questions, acknowledgment, and respect for the work of others and active participation in discussions are a vital part of your work during the semester.

Final Exam (30%)



GRADING SCALE

A	94-100	C	74-76
A-	90-93	C-	70-73
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	84-86	D	64-66
B-	80-83	D-	60-63
C+	77-79	F	0-59

GENERAL COURSE GUIDELINES

For any writing in this class please use Times New Roman, Font 12, Double Space. Don't forget to write your name and class days and time. Please note that no handwritten assignments will be accepted.

Attendance: You are expected to be present, prepared, and on time for all class sessions. Three unexcused absences will result in a one-letter final grade deduction (e.g. a B+ will be lowered to a C+). Four absences will result in a failing grade.

Lateness: To be late once or twice during the semester can happen to anybody and it is not a problem, but tardiness and/or leaving class for extended amounts of time will count as an unexcused absence.

Use of electronic devices: phones, tablets, computers are NOT allowed in class UNLESS otherwise instructed.

Emails: I am available via email. Feel free to write with any questions you may have

Screenings: You will need to watch films outside of class-time

Readings: All the reading will be provided in a PDF file.

Emails: I am available via email. Feel free to write with any questions you may have.

Every course is a mini journey; let's enjoy our ride!

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

Films:

The Mirror (1997), Jafar Panahi

Umberto D. (1948), Vittorio De Sica

Readings:

"On the Impression of Reality in Cinema" (1974) Christian Metz

"Italian Neorealism in the Light of Greek Tragedy" (2009) Robert Pirro



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Week 2

Films:

Blow Up (1966), Michelangelo Antonioni *La Jetee* (1962), Chris Marker

Reading:

On Photography (1977) Chapter 1 - Susan Sontag

Week 3

Raining Stones (1993), Ken Loach

Late Spring (1953), Yasujirō Ozu

Readings:

“Marxism, Film and Theory: from the Barricades to Postmodernism”, Scott Forsyth

“Space and Narratives in the Films of Ozu”, Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell

Ros

Week 4

Water (2005) Deepa Mehta

Timbuktu (2014) Abderrahmane Sissako

Reading:

“Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” (1999) Laura Mulvey

Final exam