

## **FILM STUDIES**

Reimagining Europe, Prague, Czech Republic

**Suggested US semester credit hours:** 4

**Contact hours:** 60

**Course level:** 300

**IFSA course code:** CCM380-35

**Course length:** Semester

**Delivery method:** Face to Face

**Language of instruction:** English

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is designed to develop learners' abilities in critical analysis techniques and methods, using theoretical models of film analysis. It addresses how meaning is created in film and how interpretations of meaning can be articulated through the application of those techniques and methods. Learners must investigate how films are perceived by audiences as well as how they themselves respond to films.

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

1. Understand how meaning is constructed in film through visual and technical signification
2. Understand theoretical models of film analysis
3. Be able to apply critical analysis to a chosen field of film studies.
4. Become familiar with resources available for further research on film studies.
5. Make cognitive connections between learning in this course and other learning experiences in the IFSA-Butler Reimagining Europe Semester Program in Prague.

### **PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE**

1. Basic understanding of film art
2. Basic understanding of film meaning
3. An appreciation of different film languages and styles

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Possible Modes of Delivery			Content Delivery
Summer (3 weeks)	Fall (12 weeks)	Spring (15 weeks)	
1	1 - 4	1 - 4	<p><b>Construction of meaning in film through visual and technical signification</b></p> <p>This topic will be divided essentially into two parts that are interconnected and they build on each other. In the first part, we will be looking at the language of film, aesthetics, representation, decoding, symbolism, as well as iconography. In addition to that, students will explore genre theory and main elements of mise-en-scène.</p> <p>In the second part we will focus on camera narration applied in film narrative, montage techniques, sound, and different film forms and styles. Visual and technical significations will be analyzed from Soviet pioneers in montage, Lev Kuleshov, Sergei Eisenstein, and Dziga Vertov to Bela Tarr's narrative beats and lack of montage. Number of examples will be used in film analysis from Robert Wiene's 'The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari', Ingmar Bergman's 'The Seventh Seal', 'Pan's Labyrinth' by Guillermo del Toro, Jane Campion's Piano, and many others.</p> <p>Written Essay</p>
2	5 - 8	5 - 8	<p><b>Theoretical models of film analysis</b></p> <p>This part of the course will be focused on exploration of major theoretical frameworks in film. Special attention will be given to auteur, feminist, formalist, psychoanalytic, Marxist, and structuralist film theory.</p> <p>Students will research, among other subjects, basic concepts of gaze introduced by Laura Mulvey as well as cinematic auteur theory of André Bazin, Jacques Lacan's psychoanalysis, and Christian Metz's application of semiology to film.</p> <p>We will also look at audience theory through perspective of film genre as well as different forms of film narrative.</p>

3	9 - 12	9 - 15	<p><b>Application of critical analysis to a chosen field of film studies</b></p> <p>This topic will cover basis of research field from personal response to film text, audience responses to other forms of research (e.g. questionnaires, focus groups, literature review, journals, reviews, press, internet).</p> <p>Based on previous topics on film elements, formal techniques, and theoretical frameworks, students will apply different film theories on concrete film analysis along with visual and technical signification</p> <p>Group Assignment: Short Film</p>

#### EVALUATION METHODS

Assignment Number	Type of Assignment	Description and Areas Assessed
1	Written Essay	Material covered during weeks 1 to 4
2	Group Assignment: Short Film	Material covered during weeks 5 - 14

#### **Assignment details:**

**Assignment 1 – Usage of formal techniques in representation and symbolic construction of meaning in narrative film**

### Rationale

Today one of the most important criteria for success in different industries including film industry is to think and to analyse critically. Critical thinking is extremely important in developing a successful career. Therefore, this assignment offers student a chance to develop critical thinking skills.

### Overview

You are to write an Essay with critical analysis of a chosen film. Select a feature-length narrative film (fictional film) that you want to analyze. Feature film runs for 70 minutes or longer. Your critical analysis should contain issues raised by the film, it has to go deeper into the analysis of the content, its representation, film language, aesthetic, symbolism and any other aspects visible or hidden within the narrative structure.

## **Assignment 2 - Film theory and research in action (Team Work)**

### Rationale

Many of the world's great problems require an interdisciplinary approach in order to be discussed further and resolved. By using interdisciplinary approach students develop skills to work between different disciplines but also to develop creative thinking finding relations and links between culture and identity, symbolism and meaning, context and research. This assignment provides space to students to work and develop interdisciplinary skills and creative thinking.

### Overview

This Assignment involves team work. The team work will include production of video. Students will produce a video aimed for web for visitors and readers interested in film. Video will contain a talking heads and relevant video clips or stills. The video will show how theoretical models and fields of film studies can be applied to a film. This will be supported by relevant film clips or stills. Teams will be made up of students from different backgrounds and with different experience in order to provide space to each of the students to participate and contribute to the video.

## **READING LIST**

Proferes, Nicholas. (3rd Edition, 2001). Film Directing Fundamentals. Oxford: Focal Press.

Nelmes, Jill. (2012). Introduction to Film Studies. New York: Routledge.

Mackendrick, Alexander. (2004). On Film-making: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Arijon, Daniel. (1976). Grammar of the Film Language. Los Angeles: Silman-James Pr.

Grant, Keith. (1977). Film Genre: From Iconography to Ideology. Columbia University Press: Wallflower Press.

Dudley, Andrew. (1984). Concepts in Film Theory. Oxford University Press.

### **TIMELY SUBMISSIONS**

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be accepted at the discretion of the course instructor and generally only in the event of a documented illness or emergency.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Any academic endeavor must be based upon a foundation of honesty and integrity. Students are expected to abide by principles of academic integrity and must be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work while studying abroad. Any academic work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student's original work. Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating, fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will subject a student to disciplinary action.

IFSA-Butler takes academic integrity very seriously. Students must not accept outside assistance without permission from the instructor. Additionally, students must document all sources according to the instructions of the professor. Should your instructor suspect you of plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty, you may receive a failing grade for the course and disciplinary action may result. The incident will be reported to the IFSA-Butler resident director as well as your home institution.