

Approved Cinema Studies Graduate Courses for Spring 2020

16:195:522 Film and Theory Grad Seminar (Williamson)

This course provides an introduction to film theory and criticism from the inception of cinema to the present, and exposes students to international film movements. The course helps students develop the vocabulary and analytical skills essential for teaching and research within cinema studies. We will focus on a variety of theoretical concerns, including the interrogation of realism, auteurism, spectatorship, genre, third cinema and transnational movements, and postcolonial, psychoanalytic, and feminist approaches. Each week students will view one or two films, which will be discussed in class together with the required readings. Readings and discussions will be in English. Students are encouraged to read theoretical texts in their original whenever possible. This course is required for completion of the Graduate Certificate in Cinema Studies. No experience in film studies is required.

16:470:670:01 Visions of Europe: The films of the Berlin School (Karl)

Coined the “German Nouvelle Vague” by critics, the “Berlin School”—a loose association of German filmmakers—has gained popularity over the last two decades not just in Germany, but also amongst the European and American arthouse community. Films by this informal collective share an aesthetics deeply concerned with formal aspects of filmmaking, yet they also betray a candid political realism.

While the films of the “Berlin School” are largely understood as a portrayal of Germany lacking an identity after 1989, this course will read a selection of films by Harun Farocki, Christoph Hochhäusler, Valeska Grisebach, Christian Petzold, and Angela Schanelec as indicative of a subtle engagement with the European Union in crisis. A close reading of basic cinematic strategies as well as a critical investigation of both the history of the European Union as well as the history of art house cinema, will allow us to reconsider recent developments in the European socio-political and cultural context. Readings include Béla Balázs, André Bazin, Miriam Hansen, Siegfried Kracauer, Anna Seghers, Yoko Tawada, and Jacques Rancière.

The seminar will be followed by a conference on the same topic in the fall of 2020, involving scholars, critics, and filmmakers. Students will have the opportunity to help conceptualize and actively participate in the conference.

Taught in English.