Department of English

Spring 2018

Undergraduate Film & Media Studies Courses

Updated November 2, 2017
Information subject to change.

Pittsburgh Filmmakers Courses
Pittsburgh Filmmakers and Carnegie Mellon University have offered classes cooperatively since 1985. Students may enroll in Pittsburgh Filmmakers' courses for elective credit. Some Pittsburgh Filmmakers course offerings fulfill a requirement for a Film Minor in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Pittsburgh Filmmakers classes are open to CMU students, university-wide. All students must register through the College of Fine Arts. Contact: Svenja Drouven, CFA Dean’s Office, 412-268-2348 or sdrouven@andrew.cmu.edu.

For a complete list of Spring 2018 courses at Pittsburgh Filmmakers, please visit: http://filmmakers.pfpca.org/school/classes

Carnegie Mellon University Home Courses

53-372 Writing for Television
Home Department: Entertainment Technology Pittsburgh
Instructors: Jane Bernstein & Chris (Gerard) Klug
Meetings: TR 3:00-4:20 p.m.
Units: 9
Prerequisites: none
Open to: Undergraduate Students (by permission of instructor only)

Through teaching the fundamentals of television writing, students in this course will create a full Spec Script for a one-hour television drama as a final project. We begin by examining how one-hour television works, how it emotionally manipulates the audience, how genre functions in television and why certain genres dominate. We culminate our analysis in how a show is written, what goals need to be met when a writer crafts a spec script, and how to position the script to acquire representation as well as potential production interest. The course also works as an introduction to dramatic writing for students who don't have TV writing experience. This course is not a survey but rather a workshop; we don't talk about writing but rather, we write. Assignments are frequent and pointed. Writing exercises are assigned to stretch the students writing muscles as they work towards completing their final script. Entrance in the course is by permission of the instructor only. Students desiring entry will be placed on the wait list and be interviewed by the instructor to gain entry.
Alfred Hitchcock and His Films

Home Department: Drama
Cross-List: 93-765
Instructor: Richard Rauh
Meetings: F 9:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m.
Units: 6
Prerequisites: none
Open to: Undergraduate Students

This course is open to all university undergraduate students. This course will examine Hitchcock's life and his many films beginning with his first American film REBECCA in 1940 and ending with FRENZY in 1972. We will examine his notions of pure cinema and his distinction between suspense and surprise, which dominates his many films. We will analyze the psychological, moral, and social aspects of his films and to understand how amazingly audience-centered his films are, and to see the high degree of audience manipulation he sustains in his film. Among the films we will watch are: REBECCA, SHADOW OF A DOUBT, ROPE, REAR WINDOW, VERTIGO, PSYCHO, THE BIRDS. There will be one required text: TRUFFAUT/HITCHCOCK ed. by Francois Truffaut.

Film Festival

Home Department: Dietrich College Interdisciplinary
Cross-List: none
Instructor: Jolanta Lion
Meetings: F 5:00-6:20 p.m.
Units: 3-9
Prerequisites: none
Open to: Undergraduate Students

Students will take on the project of planning and managing a film festival that draws a college- and city-wide audience. Students will collaborate on all aspects of the festival: selecting films, generating and distributing marketing materials, designing and scheduling events, arranging facilities and general logistics, coordinating internal and external public relations, organizing fundraisers, rallying the local communities - in short, all the aspects involved in making the event a spectacular/sensational success! A unique feature of this course-cum-festival will be several directors' participation as guest speakers on the festival theme and other issues informing their films. Previous Film Festivals have covered such topics as: Democracy, Mechanization, Realism, Globalization, Migration, Media and Work. This course is also designed to supplement the study of film with the historical, political and sociological background that students need for critically analyzing the images and ideologies they see on the screen and understand how those images effect our views of the past and present time.

Survey of Forms: Screenwriting

Home Department: English
Cross-List: none
Instructor: Sharon Dilworth
Meetings: TR 10:30-11:50 a.m.
Units: 9
It is not so difficult to learn the format or even to master the style of the screenplay—the challenge lies in writing image-driven stories with believable dialogue, vivid characters, and a coherent, well-structured plot. To that end, students will view short and feature-length films, paying special attention to such fundamentals as character development and story structure. Students will read screenplays to see how scripts provide the blueprints for the final product, and write analytical papers. To gain experience and confidence, students will work on a number of exercises that will lead them toward producing a polished short screenplay by the end of the semester.

**76-339 Advanced Film Studies**

**Prerequisites:**
76-101 Interpretation & Argument OR 76-102 Advanced First-Year Writing

**Open to:**
Undergraduate Students

This course is designed as a companion to 76-239, "Introduction to Film Studies." It utilizes a narrower focus on several key technical components of filmmaking and the ways they function within the film text, as well as the ways they can be read as an indication of the underlying ideology of a work. Individual units of the course will concentrate on performance, production design, photography, editing and music. Films will be drawn from a variety of national cinemas from around the world. A secondary goal of the course is the development of practical and research skills particular to film studies. Students will engage in a number of focused research and filmmaking assignments as well as a final paper based on original research.

**76-374 IDeATe - Dietrich College Cuban Interactive Documentary Project**

**Prerequisites:**
76-101 Interpretation and Argument OR 76-102 Advanced First-Year Writing

**Open to:**
Undergraduate Students

In this project-based course students will create a computer-based interactive documentary about contemporary Cuban society, which will be filmed in Cuba during the Spring break week of 2018. The class will explore different styles and techniques of storytelling with the flexibility of form offered by the computer through the practice of digression, multiple points of view, disruptions of time and of storyline, etc. Students will work within interdisciplinary teams in the creative areas of English and creative writing, video production, interactive media, data visualization and programming. Students will be encouraged to think about digital
interactive media not just in terms of technology but also considering broader issues such as verbal and visual language, design, information architecture, communication and community.

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<td>76-439</td>
<td>The Rise of the Art Film</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Jeff Hinkelman</td>
<td>MW 12:00-1:20 p.m.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>76-101 Interpretation and Argument or 76-102 Advanced First-Year Writing</td>
<td>Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors</td>
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The years between 1945 and 1970 saw an explosion of filmmaking talent around the world. Directors such as Vittorio De Sica, Jean-Luc Godard, Agnes Varda, Akira Kurosawa, Ingmar Bergman and Satyajit Ray completely changed the way narratives looked on screen. Just as important, however, was the fact that American audiences used to the standards and storytelling strategies of the Hollywood studio system were suddenly presented with a variety of international cinemas which collectively came to be known as "art films." This class will examine a broad cross section of such films while also scrutinizing the impact of the "art film" on Hollywood narrative strategies, domestic distribution networks, film criticism and American culture.

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<td>76-448</td>
<td>Shakespeare on Film</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>76-848</td>
<td>Stephen Wittek</td>
<td>MW 3:00-4:20 p.m. (lecture); W 6:30-9:20 p.m. (screening)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>76-101 Interpretation and Argument or 76-102 Advanced First-Year Writing</td>
<td>Juniors, Seniors</td>
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The dramatic works of William Shakespeare have inspired an extraordinarily rich and varied cinematic legacy that began in the era of silent films and now boasts masterpieces by directors such as Akira Kurosawa, Roman Polanski, Peter Greenaway, and Orson Welles, not to mention history-making performances by icons including Marlon Brando, Elizabeth Taylor, Laurence Olivier, Al Pacino, Leonardo DiCaprio, and Ian McKellen (among many others).

This course will consider a selection of key Shakespeare films alongside critical readings centered on questions of adaptation and performance. As we watch and read together, we will work toward a broader understanding of what Shakespearean drama means in a 21st century context, and how film has helped to shape the author's massive cultural impact.

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<td>76-469</td>
<td>Screenwriting Workshop: Screenwriting/Television Writing</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>53-372</td>
<td>Jane Bernstein &amp; Chris Klug</td>
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Meetings: TR 3:00-4:20 p.m.
Units: 9
Prerequisites: (76-101 Interpretation and Argument OR 76-102 Advanced First-Year Writing) AND 76-269 Survey of Forms: Screenwriting
Open to: Undergraduate Students

This team-taught course is designed for students interested in writing for one-hour dramatic television and those who are interested in image-driven screenwriting. Students will choose one form or the other by end of the first week. Both television and film writing employ many of the same techniques and present many of the same problems. By teaching both forms together we believe writers will gain from each perspective. Assignments for TV writers include analysis of the chosen show, creation of show breakdowns, scene studies, and beat sheets. Screenwriters will work on creating a usable premise, dimensional characters, a detailed act structure, and a step outline. Lectures include fundamentals of dramatic structure, dialogue, and script format. Both groups will produce an interim and final draft; both will have their work critiqued in class.

The final project for students who choose TV writing is a "spec script" for a one-hour drama, broadcast in the US anytime during the last 30 years. Image-driven screenwriters will produce by semester's end an original 60-minute screenplay.

79-319 India through Film
Home Department: History
Cross-List: none
Instructor: Nico Slate
Meetings: TR 1:30-2:50 p.m. (lecture); W 6:30-9:20 p.m. (screening)
Units: 9
Prerequisites: none
Open to: Undergraduate Students

Bollywood films attract hundreds of millions of viewers, not just in India but throughout the world. The name "Bollywood" makes it seem that the Indian film industry is a junior partner, merely an echo of Hollywood. But more films are made in Mumbai every year than in Los Angeles. And Mumbai is only one of many film hubs in India. The rich diversity of Indian cinema speaks to the equally rich history of India itself. This course uses Indian movies to examine several key themes in India's history. We will focus on the twentieth century and on questions of democracy, diversity, and development. This course includes a mandatory film screening on Wednesday evenings beginning at 6:30pm.

82-215 Introduction to Modern Arabic Literature and Culture
Home Department: Modern Languages
Cross-List: none
Instructor: Nevine Abraham
Meetings: MWF 9:30-10:20 a.m.
Units: 9
Prerequisites: none
Open to: Undergraduate Students
This course introduces students to the diversity of Arab culture in the Middle East and North Africa through a variety of critically-acclaimed films and two novels. The course topics aim to challenge stereotypes and foster a better understanding of the social reality of Arab societies. The films and novels un-romanticize the portrayal of childhood and adulthood and offer insight into the hardships and concerns that face Arab youth. Topics covered are the role of religion vis-à-vis key social and family values in everyday life, childhood and education, masculinity, homo/sexuality, gender roles, challenges in conflict zones, and revolution music and art that emerged since the Arab uprising of 2011. Students will have the opportunity to engage in three video-conference dialogues with Saudi, Moroccan, and Egyptian students at universities in Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Egypt, respectively, to allow for live interaction, exchange, and learning, as well as interview one or two Arabic-native speakers to further their learning. There will be one cooking workshop on Arab cuisine.

99-421   Face of Identity (Mini A4)
Home Department: Carnegie Mellon University-Wide Studies
Cross-List: none
Instructors: Jolanta Lion & M. Shernell Smith
Meetings: TBD
Units: 3
Prerequisites: none
Open to: All University Students (Undergraduate and Graduate)

This course introduces students from all academic majors, both undergraduate and graduate, to the socio-political significance and artistic merits of film. Through screenings of acclaimed, international features and documentaries, through class discussions, and through workshops with award-winning filmmakers, students gain a basic foundation for film analysis. Through viewing the films and learning from the filmmakers' firsthand accounts, the students will hone their critical thinking skills and learn to read the mainstream media with a more discerning eye. Each student will translate the films' themes, featured identity topic, directors' perspectives, class discussions and their own cultural backgrounds and personal experiences into written reactions to the screenings and a final written analysis as part of the pass/fail component of the course.

For more information about the meeting days/times, please contact the instructors: jola@andrew.cmu.edu and mssmith@andrew.cmu.edu.