CMM 262G
European Cinema: Present, Past and Future Trends

Number of ECTS credits: 6

Course Prerequisite
No course prerequisites

Course Description
This course reveals Europe at its edgiest. It is impossible to understand European culture without experiencing its cinema. Groundbreaking and thought-provoking films from Europe pioneered genre-filmmaking (drama, fantasy, comedy, epic, horror, thriller, cult, documentary and animation), and defined aesthetic concepts such as ‘realism’, and ‘surrealism’ that have become key inspirations for cultural production around the world.

This course contains thirteen in-class sessions. Each session departs from a recent development (a genre, a style, a politics, …), and uses a contemporary or (post)modernist film to trace its origins and tentacles into the past, thereby uncovering the intrinsic inter-connections between all of Europe’s filmmaking traditions.

The course will use hands-on examples from films, productions, screenplays, video and digital aesthetics, museums, screenings, and on-site visits to illustrate what it means to ‘make a movie’ in Europe.

Each session showcases key filmmakers (like Alfred Hitchcock, Jean-Luc Godard, Federico Fellini, Werner Herzog, Lars von Trier, Claire Denis, Michael Haneke, Danny Boyle, Ken Loach, the Dardenne brothers, or young female filmmakers like Fien Troch and Céline Sciamma) and interrogate their inspirations by linking them to social and cultural contexts of their times, to offer a broad overview of European film art, with the intent to unlock the core of the ‘European Imagination’.
**Course Learning Objectives**

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

**Acquired Knowledge:**

- A profound understanding of European film culture and its function in today's European society.
- A sharpened ability to critically assess various forms of European film and art, historically and contemporary in the light of its social and political contexts.
- Insight into the most common methodological principles and conceptual tools for researching art and culture.

**Applying Knowledge:**

- Excellence in the accurate assessment, and advising on, the value and roles of cinematic art and culture.
- Augmented skills to participate successfully and persuasively in cultural debates and discussions.
- Advanced capacity to use visual materials and technology for the critical interpretation and evaluation of screen culture.
- Increased competence in the independent design, composition and delivery of original reports and research papers in various formats.
- Competence in using information from archives and research sources (including online sources), and the accurate referencing of those sources.
- Enhanced ability to employ interpretive, discursive and rhetorical strategies effectively in written and oral assignments.

**Attitude:**

- Develop critical and historical writing skills, as well as time management skills.
- Have trust in one’s own competence and performance, as well as acknowledgment of one’s own limitations.
- Be conversant and develop expertise in sensitively addressing cultural diversity.
- Be open but critical towards one’s own domain specific background.
**Main Course Materials**

The course material consists of powerpoint presentations, lecture notes, and the required readings. The readings comprise both textbook chapters and articles. Powerpoint presentations will be made available after the respective classes have taken place.

**Textbook:**

**Films:**
Films listed as ‘opening’ films for sessions will be made available to students via the Vesalius office (it remains to be determined if these films can be loaned, or viewed on-site). It is recommended students watch these films prior to the class sessions.

**Course Assessment**

Students will be evaluated on the basis of their performance in the following assessments and activities:

- Mid-term home assignment: 40%
- In-class participation: 10%
- Final exam: 50%
- TOTAL: 100%

**Grading Scale of Vesalius College**

Vesalius College grading policy follows the American system of letter grades, which correspond to a point scale from 0 – 100. **All assignments (including exams) must be graded on the scale of 0-100.** To comply with the Flemish Educational norms, professors should on request also provide the conversion of the grade on the Flemish scale of 0-20. The conversion table below outlines the grade equivalents.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>Scale of 20</th>
<th>Scale of 100</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>17.0-20.0</td>
<td>85-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>16.1-16.9</td>
<td>81-84</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>15.3-16.0</td>
<td>77-80</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>14.5-15.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>13.7-14.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>10.7-11.4</td>
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Academic Honesty Statement

Academic dishonesty is NOT tolerated in this course. Academic honesty is not only an ethical issue but also the foundation of scholarship. Cheating and plagiarism are therefore serious breaches of academic integrity. Following the College policy, cheating and plagiarism cases will be communicated in writing to the Associate Dean for Students and submitted to the Student Conduct Committee for disciplinary action.

If you refer to someone else’s work, appropriate references and citations must be provided. Grammar, spelling and punctuation count, so use the tools necessary to correct before handing in assignments.

Course Schedule (Summer semester)

The summer semester comprises 7 weeks
(6 weeks x 2 sessions of 4 hours, and one exam week)

WEEK 1: French Cinema, Fantasy and Revolutionary Aesthetics

WEEK 2: Italian Cinema, Urbanity, and Cinema of Excess

WEEK 3: European Cinema & Taboo (Scandinavian Film) / European Small Nations Cinema (Belgian Film)

WEEK 4: British Cinema, Politics, Class and Imagination

WEEK 5: European Experimental and Cult Cinema

WEEK 6: German Cinema and Hollywood- Western/Eastern Europe

WEEK 7: FINAL EXAM WEEK