

FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES (FMS)

Courses and Descriptions

FMS 250 Global Film History: Origins to 1960 3 Credits

Examines major technological and aesthetic developments in both American and international cinema of the period, with an emphasis on global cinema. From silent comedy and melodrama to German Expressionism and Soviet activist cinema; from French poetic realism and Italian Neo-realism to Hollywood sound cinema, this course will survey and assess the impact of influential movements, major film artists, and groundbreaking films of the period. FMS 250 is cross-listed with ENG 281 and fulfills the general education global perspectives requirement.

FMS 251 Global Film History: 1961 to Present 3 Credits

Examines major technological, industrial, and aesthetic developments in both American and international cinema of the period, with an emphasis on global cinema. From the decline of the studio system and the emergence of the “New Hollywood” to the digital revolution; from the renaissance in Western and Eastern European cinemas to Latin American, Asian, and Middle Eastern cinema, this course will survey and assess the impact of influential movements, major film artists, and groundbreaking films of the period. FMS 251 is cross-listed with ENG 282 and fulfills the general education global perspectives requirement.

FMS 252 American Film History: Origins to 1960 3 Credits

Examines major technological and aesthetic developments in American cinema as it grew from the days of one-reel silent shorts exhibited in storefront theaters through the days of studio productions exhibited in lavish picture palaces and featuring iconic stars the system manufactured and promoted. From the inception of sound and color, to the later development of lightweight equipment that freed filmmakers from the confines of the studio, from the “golden age” to the gradual decline of the Hollywood studio system in the 1950s, we will study the lasting genres that grew out of the system, the filmmakers who flourished and those who rebelled against the system, and the ground-breaking films that established the American film industry as a dominant force within the world. FMS 252 is cross-listed with ENG 285.

FMS 253 American Film History: 1961 to Present 3 Credits

Examines the transitions of Hollywood in the post-studio era— the rise of the 1960s-1970s New Hollywood and its ground-breaking films, the rise of the blockbuster as an industry standard; the responses of independent filmmakers and the avant-garde to blockbuster dominance; the transition from the Production Code to the ratings system, the move back to studio-owned theaters, and the emergence of digital cinema and CGI. We will look at how genres are being redefined, how major filmmakers are re-shaping their work to fit 21st century demands, how “gaming,” YouTube, and other media sources are altering the very definition of cinema. FMS 253 is cross-listed with ENG 286.

FMS 260 Great Performances in Film 3 Credits

Examines major accomplishments in film acting from the silent era to the present day. Students will acquire knowledge of the historical and critical contexts and the artistic vocabulary necessary to understanding, appreciating and assessing screen performances in a range of genres— from comedy and the musical, to the melodrama, psychological thriller, and “hard-boiled” film noir. Students will be asked to read, evaluate, and analyze film performance texts, as well as to research and write about performances in numerous films.

FMS 284 Language of Film Analysis 3 Credits

Provides students with the fundamentals necessary for achieving beginning proficiency in methods of cinema studies scholarship. The course provides an in-depth introduction to concepts of film analysis, theory, and history, as well as to the field of cinema studies as an academic discipline. Through close analysis of selected films and readings, students will examine the various and complex ways in which formal elements shape meaning. Students also will study key concepts in film theory, applying these concepts as a further means of understanding the ways in which film positions viewers and mediates ideology. Required of all Film and Media Studies minors. FMS 284 is cross-listed with ENG 284.

FMS 286 Writing Short Screenplays for Digital Cinema 3 Credits

Writing Short Screenplays for Digital Cinema will focus solely on the creation of a short screenplay for digital film. The course will ask that students conceive of and execute a viably producible screenplay, shooting script, and industry pitch for the modern market.

FMS 300 Special Topics in Film and Media Studies 3 Credits

Courses in specialized and interdisciplinary areas of Film and Media Studies explore all three phases of the media experience: the industry that produces, distributes and exhibits; the textual products themselves; and audience reception of these products. FMS 300 Special Topics in Film and Media Studies courses will focus on each of the phases individually and/or on intersections of all three phases. Special topics courses will devote attention to the relationship of film to both traditional as well as new media; the relationship of film to the other arts; the relationship of film to the ancillary products and industries it both creates and depends upon for financial profit; and the relationship of film as an industry and institution to the various cultural institutions film and media texts routinely represent.

FMS 340 Film and Media Audiences 3 Credits

Provides students with the fundamentals necessary for understanding media audiences and reception within the interdisciplinary framework of film and media studies. The course introduces students to the field of audience and reception studies, including theory, empirical scholarship and history. Students will learn about who composed audiences, how they behaved, how they responded to the medium and the texts it delivered, how they interpreted what it meant to be an audience, how audiences were defined and treated by others, both today and historically. This will include audiences of movies, radio, television and news media.

FMS 342 Artists of the Cinema 3 Credits

Provides the opportunity to delve into the work of an individual film artist (whether a director, producer, screenwriter, cinematographer, costume designer, art director, musical composer, actor) or to examine a creative team (various combinations of a director, actor, cinematographer, screenwriter) that has collaborated in producing a series of films together. The course will pose the daunting question: Who is the author of the film? Even when studying individual artists, we will explore the influences and the working relationships that have shaped their work, and we will look outward to the way in which they have influenced other artists of their own generation and beyond.

FMS 380 Women in Film 3 Credits

Examines the work of women filmmakers from the silent to the contemporary eras. Drawing from different periods, genres, and contexts of film production, this course will explore questions including: How does a focus on women filmmakers reframe our understanding of film history and production? How are feminist theoretical approaches to film challenged or reinforced in films made by women? Does a "female gaze" exist, and what would this idea mean for understanding and analyzing audiovisual narrative? The exploration of these questions will enable greater historical and theoretical awareness of cinematic contexts and hone skills in film analysis.

FMS 381 Studies in Film Genre 3 Credits

Provides an in-depth examination of a variety of film genres (such as the gangster film, the western, the musical, the screwball comedy, the science fiction film, and the horror film, among others), to be examined through the perspective of film genre theory. Through close analysis of selected films and readings, students will define the aesthetic and thematic patterns characterizing specific genres, and will trace the development of those genres within the dual contexts of the film industry and cultural ideology. Note: This course is cross-listed as ENG 381. Although students may not get credit for both ENG 383 and FMS 383 in a single semester, they may repeat this course in future semesters, given that genres studied will rotate.

FMS 382 Comparative Film Directors 3 Credits

Provides an in-depth comparative study of major American, international, independent and avant-garde filmmakers. Through close analysis of selected films and readings, students will define the aesthetic and thematic patterns characterizing the work of individual directors and will draw meaningful comparisons among directors sharing similar aesthetic and thematic approaches. Students will trace the artistic development of directors through their careers, assessing individual works in the context of film criticism and theory, and in the context of multi-layered intertextual influences. Note: This course is cross-listed as ENG 382. Although students may not get credit for both ENG 383 and FMS 383 in a single semester, they may repeat this course in future semesters, given that directors studied will rotate.

FMS 383 Global Cinemas 3 Credits

Provides an in-depth study of the history and defining characteristics of national cinemas. Through close analysis of selected films and readings, students will examine the general movements within the history and development of various national cinemas, with attention to film historiography when considering how patterns are to be viewed in light of the culture, politics, and history of a particular producing nation. Further, students will trace and evaluate the influence of selected film movements and issues upon both cinematic and critical practice. Note: This course is cross-listed as ENG 383. Although students may not get credit for both ENG 383 and FMS 383 in a single semester, they may repeat this course in future semesters, given that national cinemas studied will rotate.

FMS 384 Film Adaptation 3 Credits

Provides an in-depth study of intertextual influence, as film enters into "dialogue" with various literary forms. Through close analysis of selected films and various forms of literature-including novels, graphic novels, short stories, plays, poetry, and journalism-students will study the aesthetic specificity of both film and literary genres and will analyze the transformative qualities at play when a work is adapted from page or stage to screen. Note: This course is cross-listed as ENG 384. Students may not get credit for both ENG 384 and FMS 384.

FMS 484 Seminar in Cinema Studies 3 Credits

Provides an in-depth study of areas central to discussion and debate in the field of cinema studies (such as film violence, cinema censorship, feminism and film, post-colonial cinema, African-American cinema, blaxploitation, The French New Wave, and Italian Neorealism, among others). Through close analysis of selected films and readings, students will examine the impact of specialized influential movements in film history and in film theory and criticism. Further, students will trace and evaluate the influence of selected film movements and issues upon both cinematic and critical practice. Note: This course is cross-listed as ENG 484. Although students may not get credit for both ENG 484 and FMS 484 in a single semester, they may repeat this course in future semesters, given that topics in the field of cinema studies will rotate.

FMS 490 Independent Study: Research and Creative Expression 1-4 Credits

Allows Film and Media Studies minors to pursue specialized areas of study, research and/or creative work relevant to the field. Approval of the faculty sponsor, department chair, and CAS dean's office is required. Only one project may be scheduled in a semester and up to 12 semester hours of independent study may count toward graduation.

Prerequisite(s): A minimum of 45 credits and 3.0 GPA; FMS 284 with a minimum grade of "C".

FMS 491 Internship in Film and Media Studies 1-4 Credits

Provides Film and Media Studies students with the opportunity to gain practical experience through work in various outside film and media-related publications, businesses, organizations, and production companies. Available to minors only. One internship may be scheduled in a semester, and up to 8 credits of internship may count toward graduation. Approval of the faculty sponsor, department chair, and CAS dean's office is required.

Prerequisite(s): A minimum of 45 credits and 2.5 GPA; FMS 284 with a minimum grade of "C".