

Film Culture
Cinema 180.301
Fall 2016

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Donovan

Film Culture Affiliated Faculty: Professor Philippe Met, Professor Lance Wahlert

Film Culture Managers: Jack O'Neil, Weslee Sixkiller, Breanna Himschoot, Allesandro Consuelos

Description

Designed for the participants of Gregory College House's Film Culture residential program, this course provides a flexible, immersive cinema studies experience, intended to introduce students to a wide range of films and to provide practice both speaking and writing about the art form. There are a number of weekly screening series (generally Sunday through Thursday, with some weekend events); the majority of these screenings are followed by moderated discussions. The screenings/discussions, which take place evenings in the Gregory College House cinema on the first floor of Van Pelt Manor, serve as the coursework for the class; there is no regular weekly meeting time, but rather a quota of screening attendance.

To fully engage with contemporary cinema, there are also a minimum of six excursions per semester to area theatres to see and analyze contemporary releases; some past trips have included "12 Years a Slave," "The Social Network," "The Artist," "Black Swan," "The Martian," "Gravity," "Hugo," "Argo," "Drive," "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows," "Ex Machina," "Amour," "Foxcatcher," "Lincoln," "The Skin I Live In," "Gone Girl," "Interstellar," "Spotlight," "The Descendants," "Holy Motors," "Life of Pi," "It Follows," "Inherent Vice," "Inside Llewyn Davis," "The White Ribbon," "Everybody Wants Some!," "The Hunger Games" and "The Hunger Games: Catching Fire," "Room," "A Separation," "Blue is the Warmest Color," "Zero Dark Thirty," "Anomalisa," "The Hurt Locker," "The Grand Budapest Hotel," "The King's Speech," "Dallas Buyers Club" and many more. These trips are announced in advance on the listserve; most take place on weekend afternoons, *so having weekend afternoons free over the course of the semester is a must*. Generally, the House will cover transportation costs as well as half the ticket price; we will also supply food for the discussions, which take place in Gregory once we get back.

Note that Cinema 180 is a half-credit per semester course; participants may do a second semester for the full credit, though this is not required. **ONLY GREGORY RESIDENTS ARE PERMITTED TO ENROLL FOR CREDIT.** The only exceptions are students who are completing their second semester of cine 180.301.

Attendance Requirements

The requirements for credit participation include:

1. Attendance at a minimum of ten (10) in-House screenings followed by moderated discussion. *Active participation in discussion is mandatory.* Signup sheets are provided at each discussion. Note that there will be at least 50 for-credit discussions from which to choose.
2. At least three of those films must be drawn from a subset of cinematic classics
3. Attendance on a minimum of three (3) film excursions, *including active participation in discussion.* There will be at least 6 trips, so you need to find time for half, including *at least one of the first three.*

Assignments

Credit requirements include a choice of Capstone Projects:

Option A: Add your own film to our semester schedule! We will be holding some Sunday evenings free for enrolled students to screen a film (which must be approved by Dr. Donovan) and lead a discussion following the film. More details to come, but choosing dates/titles early is a must as slots are limited.

Option B: An “anatomy of a scene” presentation on a scene and film of your choosing from our semester schedule. This is close reading of a scene that touches on both technical attributes and thematic significance. Presentations take place in the final weeks of the semester, with a choice of several nights.

Option C: Create your own original short film inspired by some of the films you have watched over the course of the semester. Include a written discussion of what threads for our assigned films you followed in crafting your opus.

More details on these requirements will be provided in advance.

Guidelines for participation

Simply signing the attendance sheet is not enough to get full credit for screenings. Our expectations include:

- Being *on-time* for the start of the film and remaining until the conclusion of the discussion.
- **Giving your full attention: *no texting, surfing, chatting (whether out loud or online), sleeping or working on assignments for other classes. You cannot leave a screening to take a phone call and expect to receive credit.***
- Speaking up: *taking part in the discussions, not just observing.* **We should never have to pry comments out of enrolled students; you should watch the films at full intellectual engagement and be prepared to discuss what you find most interesting, intriguing, perplexing or moving.**
- Posting comments on the films on our canvas site. This will allow students to add thoughts that are not only immediate reactions, but considered over time, and potentially including links to other discussions. This also allows space for students

less comfortable about speaking up in a public venue the opportunity to share their thoughts in more detail.

Communications

Semester schedules will be handed out at the introductory meeting in the Film Lounge during the first week of classes. The schedule will also be posted on canvas and the FCP website: http://gregory.house.upenn.edu/film_culture

In addition, there is a facebook group for the program where we regularly add trailers for our screenings, info on our trips, and any changes in schedule or other relevant notes: [http:// www.facebook.com/filmcultureprogram](http://www.facebook.com/filmcultureprogram).

Lastly, there is a listserve designated for both credit and non-credit program participants, used to announce time changes, additions, and especially trips, for which we usually require RSVPs. If you are not receiving emails, please contact EJ Hunter (ejhunter@upenn.edu) to make sure you have been added to the listserve.