

Film Studies

AIMS OF COURSE

- To introduce students to the key areas of Film Studies: Text, Industry, Audience;
- To provide students with a set of critical tools with which to analyse and appreciate film texts in more depth;
- To look at the historical development of film within the context of an entertainment industry, and appreciate how this has shaped film form;
- To look at alternative approaches to film form – both historical and contemporary.

Week One: How to Read a Film

Students will be introduced to the concept of Film Language, exploring the ‘micro-components’ of film through a number of key film extracts. Analysis assignments encourage them to appreciate the contribution made by cinematography, editing and sound in generating meaning for an audience.

Week Two: Narrative and Genre

Students will look at the macro features of a film, exploring how the organisation principles of genre and narrative contribute to the audience’s experience of a film. In-class case studies will form the basis of homework analysis assignments.

Week Three: The Film Industry

Beginning with an overview of how film emerged as a medium of communication, students will consider how the film is a commodity within a wider entertainment industry. Students will look at the chain of production, distribution and exhibition with case studies of mainstream and independent productions.

Week Four: The Variety of Film Form

An introduction to the various ways in which film has been used throughout its history, and how these ways continue to shape and influence contemporary cinema. In addition to looking at various notable film styles and movements - such as German Expressionism and the French New Wave – students will explore various ‘non-narrative’ film forms such as documentary and the avant-garde.

Suggested Reading

MacKendrick, Alexander *On Film-Making* London: Faber & Faber, 2006

Goldman, William *Adventures in the Screen Trade* Warner Books, 1983