

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School/Department: Communication and the Arts

Programme: Study Abroad

FHEQ Level: 5

Course Title: Psychology & Cinema

Course Code: PSYC FILM 5601

Total Hours: 120

Timetabled Hours: 45

Guided Learning Hours: 0

Independent Learning Hours: 75

Credits: 12 UK CATS credits
6 ECTS credits
3 US credits

Course Description:

This course examines psychological approaches to understanding films. Beginning with classical psychoanalytic interpretations of contemporary films, the course will evaluate the relevance of Freud's work on the uncanny, voyeurism, repetition, compulsion, and trauma. Students will also be introduced to Barthes' influential semiotic work on narrative codes and their use in the film industry, as well as Laura Mulvey's seminal feminist critique of Hollywood. Of special interest is the cinema's potential, as an art form, to capture contemporary psychological processes such as individuation, the fear of fragmentation and the search for a narrative identity. There is a special emphasis on Jungian approaches to film, the Symbolic cinema, critical analyses of narrative structures, and the application of existential-phenomenological categories of thought to reading films. The course is run as a seminar, so students are expected to read widely and participate with interest.

Prerequisites:

40 Credits

Students will not be able to take the four-credit version of this course if they had previously taken this three-credit course.

ims and Objectives:

The course introduces the student to the world of films and to psychological approaches to understanding films. Importantly, it aims to provide the student with the critical and analytical skills that will transform his or her psychological and artistic appreciation of films. The course explores narrative film structures and film genres, as well as discussions of important film directors and the controversy over film authorship; and critically examines six interpretive models for 'reading' films with a special emphasis on feminist film studies. We will be examining the relevance of films to our psychological development, our psychological involvement with imagery and the emotional relationship between the viewer and the image.

Programme Outcomes:

A5II

B5I

C5I, C5II

D5I

A detailed list of the programme outcomes is found in the Programme Specification. This is maintained by Registry and located at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

- Develop an understanding of psychological and semiotic approaches to film analysis.
- Develop an understanding of relevant psychoanalytic concepts and their feminist critiques.
- Develop an understanding of narrative film structures and aesthetic approaches.
- Gain insight into the deep structure and ideological functions of films.
- Gain an understanding of the evolution of filmic styles and techniques.
- Appreciate cultural differences in filmic representations of human relations.

Indicative Content:

- Psychoanalytic (Film) Concepts
- Basic Film Techniques
- Roland Barthes' Narrative Codes
- Laura Mulvey's Feminist Critique of the Male Gaze
- Kaja Silverman on the Female Voice
- Horror / the Monstrous Feminine
- Symbolism / Jungian Film Theory
- Film Realism & Minimalism

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and located at: <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/>

Teaching Methodology:

The course material will be covered in the following ways:

- Lectures on key topics
- Group discussions on the reading material
- Internet sites related to psychology
- Selected films and film excerpts

Bibliography:

See syllabus for complete reading list

IndicativeText(s):

Buckland, W. (2010) *Understand Film Studies*. London: Hodder & Stoughton (Teach- Yourself Series).
Chaudhuri, S. (2006) *Feminist Film Theorists*. London: Routledge Critical Thinkers.
Hamburger, A. (2024) *Film psychoanalysis relational approaches to film interpretation*. London: Routledge.
Mcdonald, K. (2022) *Film theory: the basics*. 2nd edn. London: Routledge.
Rollins, H. (2024) *Psychocinema*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
Woods, K.M. (2024) *Black film through a psychodynamic lens*. London: Routledge.

Please Note: The core and the reference texts will be reviewed at the time of designing the semester syllabus

Change Log for this CSD:

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body	Change Actioned by Academic Registry
First Edition	Nov 2024	