

## COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

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| <b>Academic School/Department:</b> | Psychology   |
| <b>Programme:</b>                  | Psychology<br>Film Studies<br>Film and Photography   |
| <b>FHEQ Level:</b>                 | 5  |
| <b>Course Title:</b>               | Psychology & Cinema                                  |
| <b>Course Code:</b>                | PSY 5415   |
| <b>Student Engagement Hours:</b>   | 120  |
| Lectures:                          | 40   |
| Seminar / Tutorials:               | 15   |
| Independent / Guided Learning:     | 65   |
| <b>Semester:</b>                   | Spring   |
| <b>Credits:</b>                    | 12 UK CATS credits<br>6 ECTS credits<br>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:**

PSY 3100

### **Aims 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:**

PSY: 5A (i), 5C (ii), 5C (iii), 5D (ii)

FLM: A5(i), B5(ii), B5(iii), C5(ii), C5(iii), D5(ii)

FLMPHT: A5(i), A5(iii), C5(ii), C5(iii), D5(ii), D5(iii)

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:

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

