

COURSE SPECIFICATION
DOCUMENT

Academic School/Department:	Communications and The Arts
Programme:	Art History & Visual Culture Communications: Media Studies Film & Photography Film Studies American Studies International History
FHEQ Level:	5
Course Title:	Mainstream Cinema: Studies in Genre
Course Code:	FLM 5200
Student Engagement Hours:	120
Lectures:	22.5
Seminar / Tutorials:	22.5
Independent / Guided Learning:	75
Credits:	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

Course Description:

This course investigates the development of genre films over a historical period. Students examine issues critical to genre studies, which can include iconography, key themes, authorship, and stardom. Specifically, through a study of film criticism and theory, students examine distinct genres from the 1920s to the present. The course also explores the idea that genre films necessarily retain basic similarities to reflect cultural concerns and to keep audience interest. In addition, the course provides an opportunity for students to examine and compare the perspectives of Hollywood and non-Hollywood genre films.

Prerequisites:

GEP 4180 Research and Writing 2

Aims and Objectives:

This course aims to explore central questions in the study of mainstream cinema such as: How do genres develop? What do genre films reveal about society's identities, ideologies, and fears? What are approaches to analyse the form and grammar of mainstream genres? By the end of the semester, successful students will have:

- A critical understanding of the theoretical approaches to the study of mainstream cinema.
- Further developed a range of skills to research and assess varying source

materials as they relate to genre films, synthesize available information, and develop academic arguments and reasoned judgments, and appreciate genre films in their cultural contexts.

- The ability to critically analyse a range of mainstream genres.
- Further developed a range of practical skills in relations to critical writing and clear communication, the ability to link theory, evidence and social issues, and effectively manage time and independent study.

Programme Outcomes:

Communications – Media Studies: A5iii, A5iv, B5iii, C5i, D5ii

Art History and Visual Culture: A5iii, A5iv, B5iii, C5i, C5ii

Film and Photography: A5iii, B5iii, C5i, C5ii

Film Studies: A5iii, A5iv, B5iii, C5i, D5ii

International History: A5ii, B5ii, C5i, D5ii

American Studies: B5ii, C5i, D5ii

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:

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Develop a detailed understanding of major distinctive genres as well as engage with the major thinkers, debates and paradigms involved in the study of genres.
- Develop a detailed understanding of how genres are consumed and are embedded in everyday life.
- Demonstrate the ability to formulate and synthesize arguments cogently regarding mainstream cinema and express them effectively in writing.
- Demonstrate the ability to deliver work with limited direction and supervision, whilst considering and evaluating the work using justifiable criteria.

Indicative Content:

- Key definitions and terms in the study of mainstream cinema
- Origins of genres
- Genre Ideologies
- Semantic/syntactic approach to examining genres
- Genre films in the age of globalization
- Rhetoric of the remake
- Hollywood studios versus independents

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 includes screenings of extracts from feature films as well as short films. These will be followed by weekly lecture and class discussion. There will be additional assigned films to watch outside of class time. For some assignments in particular, students will be asked to seek out and analyse films of their own choosing as active researchers. Students should complete all the set reading for each week beforehand to participate fully in class discussion.

Student work is assessed through a variety of ways using both formative and summative approaches. Feedback is intended to help improve student approach to learning and achieve better results.

See syllabus for complete reading list.

Indicative Texts:

Abrams, Nathan and Gregory Frame. *New Wave, New Hollywood*, (Bloomsbury 2021)
Cook, Pam and Bernink, Meike. *The Cinema Book*. 3rd edition. London: BFI, 2007.
Grant, Barry Keith, ed. *Film Genre Reader IV*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012. Print.
Silver, Alain and James Ursini, eds. *Film Noir Reader 4*. New Jersey: Limelight, 2004. Print.

Journals:

Cinema Journal
Film Comment
Screen
Senses of
Cinema Sight &
Sound

Web Sites:

British Academy of Film and Television Arts
Internet Movie Database
Rotten Tomatoes
Rouge
Total Film
Variety

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 (School or LTPC)	Change Actioned by Academic Registry
Various updates as part of the UG programme review	AB Jan 2022	
Revision – annual update	May 2023	