

Introduction to film studies

Course strength – Entry level I
Course duration – 36 sessions (term II, 2020)
Medium of instruction: Mandarin / English if needed
Lecture time – 16:10 - 19:00 (10, 11, 12), Tuesday
Venue: Pending
Course mode – Theory
Responsible teacher – Dr. CHANG, Shih-Chien
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Course description and specifications

Course description

This course introduces film production process, including the fundamental concepts of cinematography, editing, sound & music, script writing, directing, etc. it also covers cinema's genres, languages and narrative structures. After studying related concepts and watching the representative movies under each subject, the student should know how to analyze, appreciate, and study a film. And s/he shall have a solid base for advanced training in audiovisual production.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILO):

- CILO 1: The students will understand the divisions of film production and their required skills.
- CILO 2: The students will learn the fundamental film business elements.
- CILO 3: The students will know movie genres and appreciate the best movies of them.
- CILO 4: The students will do film criticism with their learned film theories.

Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

- Lecture - 50%
 - The lecturer elaborates the related disciplines, concepts, rules, theories, cases, and operational procedures.
- Seminar - 25%
 - The students are divided into groups to study award-winning films under each subject. Each group will present their study outcome in-class in 30 mins for advanced learning and reflexive thinking.
- Tutorial - 25%
 - The preparation for each group's presentation above will be completed step by step. The group shall follow the scheduled steps, meaning to complete all the study components respectively, and present their study outcome to the mentor, who gives further suggestions or directives for improvement, during tutorial session.

Assessment

Attendance 5%

Participation: 5%

Seminar presentation (in group): 20%

Final project (in group): 40%

Final exam: 30%

- Attendance (5%)

- This item is based on the individual's roll call record. Roll call will be done in the beginning of each session. A student will have 1 point if s/he enters classroom before the roll call finishes and 0.5 points after it. S/he shall have 0 due to absence. The sum of the points a student has in the semester represents his/her attendance marks. The student's absence record can be written off when s/he presents acceptable certificate for sick leave or compassionate leave.

- Participation (5%)

- The participation is based on the student's performance in and after class. The more a student delivers feedback to the teaching topics, including asking relevant questions and engaging in discussion, the more marks in this part s/he gets.
- Students are welcomed to have discussions with the lecturer during the office hours when they need further clarification of concepts presented in class, or assistance about the homework assigned. An appointment beforehand via email is necessary for the discussion.
 - Assessment criteria
 - Frequency 70%
 - Relevance 30%

- Seminar presentation (in group) 50%

- Each group has to choose two (at least) award-winning films for study under each subject. Based on the learning from textbook, they firstly collect and organize relevant film critiques, which provide strong reasons of the award. After that, the summarized points shall be mapped to clips of the chosen film properly for better elaboration.
- The study outcome shall be presented in PPT format in 30 mins in class.
- Assessment criteria
 - Performance in tutorial session 40%
 - Organization 40%
 - Presentation expression 10%
 - Reflexive thinking 10%

- Final exam (40%)

- Remote exam via eCourse with limited time. You can refer to your notes and learning materials when answering.
- The exam questions are based on the lecture and seminar materials.

Required and optional texts

- Required books

Giannetti, L. (2010). 認識電影 (焦雄屏, Trans. 10th ed.). 台北: 遠流. (Chinese)

Giannetti, L. (2013). *Understanding Movies* (13th ed.). New York: Prentice Hall.

Barsam, R., & Monahan, D. (2016). *Looking at Movies* (5th ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Bordwell, D., Thompson, K., & Smith, J. (2017). *Film Art: An Introduction*. New York: McGraw Hill Education.

- Optional books

Sikov, E. (2009). *Film Studies: An Introduction*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Nelmes, J. (Ed.) (2012). *Introduction to Film Studies* (5th ed.). London: Routledge.

Villarejo, A. (2013). *Film Studies: The Basics* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Davis, G., Dickinson, K., Patti, L., & Villarejo, A. (2015). *Film Studies: A Global Introduction*. London: Routledge.

Ascher, S., & Pincus, E. (2012). *The Filmmaker's Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide for the Digital Age*. New York: Penguin.

Monaco, J., & Lindroth, D. (2009). *How To Read a Film: Movies, Media, and Beyond* (4th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Donald, J., & Renov, M. (Eds.). (2008). *The SAGE Handbook of Film Studies*. London: Sage.

Hayward, S. (2018). *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts* (5th ed.). London: Routledge.

McDonald, P. (2013). *Hollywood Stardom*. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

Foster, T. C. (2017). *教你看懂電影的20堂課：好電影如何好？* (郭麗娟, Trans.). 台北: 本事出版社.

Teaching schedule

1. Introduction: How to study a film

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. The course's aims and proceedings, including teaching methods, learning activities, learning materials, assessments, and in-class disciplines.
 2. The approaches to study a film
3. Learning activities:
 1. Presentation (individual)
 2. Key question(s):
 1. The movies you read/watch/listen?
 2. The most impressive one?
 3. Grouping
4. Learning materials (overview)
 1. Please refer to the section "Required and optional texts" above.

2. Cinema is an art of entertaining

1. Teaching method: Lecture & tutorial
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. The artistic elements
 2. The entertaining purposes
 3. How to balance them? The debate from the classic cultural industry thinking.
3. Learning activities:
 1. Tutorial (in group)
 1. The award-winning movies under a subject you choose for study
 2. The reasons behind your decision.
 3. Your rough review of it.
4. Learning materials

Barsam, R., & Monahan, D. (2016). *Looking at Movies* (5th ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. Ch. 2.

3. The industrialized film production

1. Teaching method: Lecture & tutorial
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. How a movie is made
 2. The studio system
 3. Financing and marketing
3. Learning activities
 1. Tutorial (in group)
 2. Key question(s):
 1. The summarized points in the related chapter of textbook.
 2. The possible reasons of award of your first chose movie.
 3. The related clips.
4. Learning materials

Nelmes, J. (Ed.) (2012). *Introduction to Film Studies* (5th ed.). London: Routledge. Ch.1.

Barsam, R., & Monahan, D. (2016). *Looking at Movies* (5th ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. Ch. 11.

4. Types of movies

1. Teaching method: Lecture & tutorial
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. Types of movies
 2. Genres and their evolution
3. Learning activities
 1. Tutorial (in group)
 2. Key question(s):
 1. The relevant film critiques (at least three from leading media) about your first chosen movie.
 2. The summarized reasons of award.
 3. The related clips.
4. Learning materials

Barsam, R., & Monahan, D. (2016). *Looking at Movies* (5th ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. Ch. 4.

5. The story and narratives

1. Teaching method: Lecture & tutorial
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. Story structure
 2. Elements of narrative
3. Learning activities
 1. Tutorial (in group)
 2. Key question(s):
 1. The relevant film critiques (at least three from leading media) about your second chosen movie.

2. The summarized reasons of award from the critiques and the textbook lesson.

3. The related clips.

4. Learning materials

Barsam, R., & Monahan, D. (2016). *Looking at Movies* (5th ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. Ch. 3.

Giannetti, L. (2010). 認識電影 (焦雄屏, Trans. 10th ed.). 台北: 遠流. (Chinese) Ch. 8.

6. Film theories

1. Teaching method: Lecture & tutorial

2. Key topics and concepts:

1. Auteur theory

2. Structuralism

3. Symbolism

4. Historicalism

3. Learning activities

1. -

4. Learning materials

Giannetti, L. (2010). 認識電影 (焦雄屏, Trans. 10th ed.). 台北: 遠流. (Chinese) Ch. 11.

7. Scriptwriter

1. Teaching method: Lecture & tutorial

2. Key topics and concepts:

1. Story structure

2. Elements of narrative

3. Learning activities

1. Tutorial (in group)

2. Key question(s):

1. Demonstrate your draft version of PPT.

4. Learning materials

Barsam, R., & Monahan, D. (2016). *Looking at Movies* (5th ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. Ch. 3.

Giannetti, L. (2010). 認識電影 (焦雄屏, Trans. 10th ed.). 台北: 遠流. (Chinese) Ch. 9.

8. Mise-en-Scène

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar

2. Key topics and concepts:

1. Composition of a movie

2. Production designing

3. Learning activities

1. Seminar - Group presentation for **Best Picture**

2. Key question(s):

1. Why award these movies?

4. Learning materials

Barsam, R., & Monahan, D. (2016). *Looking at Movies* (5th ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. Ch. 5.

Giannetti, L. (2010). 認識電影 (焦雄屏, Trans. 10th ed.). 台北: 遠流. (Chinese) Ch. 2.

9. Cinematography I

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. Lens
 2. Angles
 3. Light
 4. Color
3. Learning activities
 1. Seminar - Group presentation for **Best Director**
 2. Key question(s):
 1. Why award these people of the movie?
4. Learning materials

Barsam, R., & Monahan, D. (2016). *Looking at Movies* (5th ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. Ch. 6.

Giannetti, L. (2010). 認識電影 (焦雄屏, Trans. 10th ed.). 台北: 遠流. (Chinese) Ch. 1.

10. Cinematography II: Camera movement

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. Pan/tilt/dolly shot
 2. Zoom
 3. Cinematographer
3. Learning activities
 1. Seminar - Group presentation for **Best Cinematography**
 2. Key question(s):
 1. Why award these people of the movie?
4. Learning materials

Barsam, R., & Monahan, D. (2016). *Looking at Movies* (5th ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. Ch. 6.

Giannetti, L. (2010). 認識電影 (焦雄屏, Trans. 10th ed.). 台北: 遠流. (Chinese) Ch. 3.

11. Editing

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. Continuity
 2. Transition
 3. Editor
3. Learning activities
 1. Seminar - Group presentation for **Best Film Editing**
 2. Key question(s):
 1. Why award these people of the movie?
4. Learning materials

Barsam, R., & Monahan, D. (2016). *Looking at Movies* (5th ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. Ch. 8.

Giannetti, L. (2010). 認識電影 (焦雄屏, Trans. 10th ed.). 台北: 遠流. (Chinese) Ch. 4.

12. Sound

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. Sound production
 2. Types of film sound
 3. Functions of film sound
3. Learning activities
 1. Seminar - Group presentation for **Best Sound Editing/Mixing/Original Score**
 2. Key question(s):
 1. Why award these people of the movie?
4. Learning materials

Barsam, R., & Monahan, D. (2016). *Looking at Movies* (5th ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. Ch. 9.

Giannetti, L. (2010). 認識電影 (焦雄屏, Trans. 10th ed.). 台北: 遠流. (Chinese) Ch. 5.

13. Acting

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. Casting
 2. Aspects of performance
 3. How filmmaking affects acting
3. Learning activities
 1. Seminar - Group presentation for **Best Actor/Actress**
 2. Key question(s):
 1. Why award these people of the movie?
4. Learning materials

Barsam, R., & Monahan, D. (2016). *Looking at Movies* (5th ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. Ch. 7.

Giannetti, L. (2010). 認識電影 (焦雄屏, Trans. 10th ed.). 台北: 遠流. (Chinese) Ch. 6.

14. Stardom

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. Screen icons
 2. Modes of stardom
 3. Three approaches to study stardom
3. Learning activities
 1. Seminar - Group presentation for **Best Supporting Actor/Actress**
 2. Key question(s):
 1. Why award these people of the movie?
4. Learning materials

Nelmes, J. (Ed.) (2012). *Introduction to Film Studies* (5th ed.). London: Routledge. ch. 7.

15. Movie in a new media age

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:

1. New distribution and consumption
2. New format and style
3. Case study: Netflix
3. Learning activities
 1. Seminar - Watching a movie for discussion
 2. Key question(s):
 1. Why Cannes rejected Netflix works in 2019?
4. Learning materials

Monaco, J., & Lindroth, D. (2009). *How To Read a Film: Movies, Media, and Beyond* (4th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. pp. 578-598

16. National vs. transnational cinema

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. Why national cinema?
 2. Transnational cinema rises.
 3. Case study: How to define/locate HK cinema?
3. Learning activities
 1. Seminar - Watching a movie for discussion
 2. Key question(s):
 1. Co-productions are transnational cinema?
4. Learning materials

Zhang, Y. (2004). *Chinese national cinema*. New York: Routledge. Ch. 1.

17. Final exam

Remote exam via eCourse