

FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES

FMS 150 Introduction to Film and Media Studies (4 Credits)

This course introduces students to FMS through units that pair four scholarly approaches with four influential media forms: the Aesthetics of Film, the History of Television, the Ideologies of Video Games, and the Technologies of Internet Media. Through these units, students will ask: what human desires animate our relationship with media? For what purposes have people invented and evolved these technologies? How do makers use them, and what are audiences seeking in them? These questions will help students see the fundamental forces that unite film, television, video games and Internet media alongside the elements that distinguish them from each other. Enrollment limited to 30. (E) {A} **Fall**

FMS 237 The Documentary Impulse (4 Credits)

The drive to represent reality has animated media makers throughout history. In the service of this urgent, impossible ambition, documentarians have used myriad forms of media and produced some of each form's most complex works. This course examines how they have done so, concentrating on different approaches to documentary (observational, ethnographic, essayistic, autobiographical) and considering work in photography, film, television, radio/podcasts, websites and virtual reality. Throughout the semester, students interrogate the boundaries of the documentary mode, the unique ethical considerations of doing documentary work and the social, cultural and technological factors that shape documentary's history and current practice. Enrollment limited to 28. {A}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FMS 239 The Curious Case of Online Streaming: Online Streaming, Sharing, and Piracy in the Digital Age (4 Credits)

By providing viewers from different parts of the world easier access, new online streaming services also familiarize global audiences with quality programming. Emerging local streaming services mimic this model and aim to produce such shows to attract viewers to their platforms by applying the same standards to their originals. A close look at these new online streaming models reveals the complicated relationship between online sharing, piracy and online streaming. While moving between theory and case studies, this class explores this complicated relationship. (E) {A}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FMS 242 Pop Docs: Documentary Influence in Popular Media (4 Credits)

Pop Docs examines how documentary techniques that originated in art house and experimental film have migrated into mainstream entertainment media. We'll study popular forms of non-fiction media: true crime streaming series and podcasts, reality TV, YouTube vlogs, and other social media content. In doing so, we'll ask: what core tenets of documentary work do these forms discard and retain? How do these evolutions impact the ethics of recording real people and their lives? Why are audiences drawn to "reality" content, and how savvy are they about the distance between what appears on screen and the lived experience of those recorded? Prerequisites: FMS 150 or 237. {A}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FMS 247 American Film and Culture from the Depression to the Sixties (4 Credits)

This course explores the relationship between film and culture during some of the most crucial decades of "The American Century." It looks at the evolving connection between films and their audiences, the extent to which films are symptomatic of as well as influential on historical periods, major events and social movements, and the ways in which film genres evolve in relation to both cultural change and the rise and fall of the Hollywood studio system. Among the questions we'll consider: How did the Depression have an impact on Hollywood film style and form? How were evolving ideas about American motherhood puzzled out in American cinema of the period? What were some of the important differences between the way mainstream U.S. cinema and European film represented World War II? How did Civil Rights and the Red Scare become appropriate topics for Westerns? Did the lighthearted veneer of the fluffy sex comedies of the sixties actually hide some serious questions about labor, independent female subjectivity and heteronormativity? Particular and sustained attention will be paid to relations among gender, genre, race and class. {A}{L}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FMS 248 Women and American Cinema: Representation, Spectatorship, Authorship (4 Credits)

A survey of women in American films from the silent period to the present, examining: 1) how women are represented on film, and how those images relate to actual contemporaneous American society, culture and politics; 2) how theoretical formulations, expectations and realities of female spectatorship relate to genre, the star and studio systems (and other production and distribution modes), dominant and alternative codes of narration and developments in digital and new media modes; and 3) how women as stars, writers, producers and directors shape and respond to, work within and against, dominant considerations of how women look (in every sense). {A}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FMS 250 Global Cinema After World War II (4 Credits)

The post-war period was a time of increasing globalization, which brought about a more interconnected and international film culture. But it was also a time during which certain key national cinemas defined, or redefined, themselves. This course examines both trends, as well as focuses on the work and influence of significant directors and landmark films, emphasizing not only cinematic and cultural specificity, but also cross-cultural, and transhistorical concerns. What makes a film Italian or Brazilian or British? How does national identity help shape any country's cinema, and how do films help shape national identity? How do films circulate through other cultures and what kinds of conversations do films from one nation or culture have with others? How and when is the idea of nation a counterproductive way to think about cinema? How do ideas of history and self inform cinema, and vice versa? How do we need to adjust our own spectatorship as we engage with films from other places and times? We examine films, filmmakers, and film movements including: Italian Neo-realism, French New Wave, New German Cinema, Brazilian Cinema Novo, Chinese Fifth Generation, Hong Kong Action Cinema, and the films of Ousmane Sembene, Thomas Gutierrez Aléa, Satyajit Ray, Akira Kurosawa, Julie Dash and Spike Lee. Satisfies the mediahistories requirement for the film and media studies major. {A}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FMS 251 A Global History of Television (4 Credits)

Television has long been associated with domestic—both in terms of home and the nation—consumption. However, digital technologies have challenged this confinement. Following the lead of satellite technologies and the global wave of economic liberalization, television content has become more mobile, and spread of digital technologies has further contributed to this mobility. This course examines the global journey of television starting from its conception and ending in the current digital era. (E) {A}

Spring

FMS 261 Video Games and the Politics of Play (4 Credits)

An estimated 63% of U.S. households have members who play video games regularly, and game sales routinely exceed film box office figures. As this medium grows in cultural power, it is increasingly important to think about how games make meaning. This course serves as an introduction to Game Studies, equipping students with the vocabulary to analyze video games, surveying the medium's genres, and sampling this scholarly discipline's most influential theoretical writing. The particular focus, though, is on the ideology operating beneath the surface of these popular entertainment objects and on the ways in which video games enter political discourse. Enrollment limited to 25. {A}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FMS 262 Television Without Borders: TV Flows Across the World (4 Credits)

Desperate Housewives in Argentina? The O.C. in Turkey? Sherlock in the United States? Television defies national borders more than ever. Although TV has travelled around the world for a long time, the rules have changed since the early 2000s. The increasing popularity of format adaptations, new centers of production, new technologies of circulation—such as online streaming platforms—open up new waves of television flows. As television globalizes, content creators try new ways to export and adapt content. By providing exposure to a diverse television content "flowing" around the world, FMS 262 helps students gain insight into the globalization of popular culture. (E) {A}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FMS 265 Film in the Digital Age (4 Credits)

Film, a dominant entertainment form in the twentieth century, faces sweeping changes in the twenty-first. Digital technologies are widely replacing film cameras and projectors, theatrical exhibition continues to decline as audiences watch movies on smaller and smaller screens, and the list of other entertainment forms competing for the public's attention grows longer each year. Appropriating Peter Greenaway's provocation, "Cinema is dead, long live cinema," this course will consider the challenge digital media present to film's primacy, but also the ways in which film has survived and thrived during this and previous periods of dramatic technological change. Prerequisite: FMS 150. {A}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FMS 280 Introduction to Video Production (4 Credits)

This course provides a foundation in the principles, techniques and equipment involved in making short videos, including: development of a viable story idea or concept, aesthetics and mechanics of shooting video, the role of sound and successful audio recording and the conceptual and technical underpinnings of digital editing. Students make several short pieces through the semester, working towards a longer final piece. Along with projects and screenings, there are reading assignments and writing exercises. Prerequisite: FMS 150 (may be concurrent) or its equivalent. Enrollment limited to 12. Application and instructor permission required. {A}

Fall, Spring

FMS 281 Screenwriting Workshop (4 Credits)

This course provides an overview of the fundamentals of screenwriting. Combining lectures and script analyses, students focus on character development, story structure, conflict and dialogue featured in academy award-winning screenplays. Students begin with three creative story ideas, developing one concept into a full-length screenplay of their own. Through in-class read-throughs and rewrites, students are required to complete ~30 pages of a full-length screenplay with a detailed outline of the entire story. Cannot be taken S/U. Prerequisites: FMS 150 or ARS 162. FMS 150 strongly encouraged. Enrollment limited to 12. Application and instructor permission required. {A}

Fall, Spring, Annually

FMS 282ap Topics in Advanced Moving Image Production-Advanced Production (4 Credits)

Through conventional filmmaking aesthetics and techniques, this advanced course includes hands-on trainings and workshops geared toward creating a feature-length project. Developing a long-form narrative, experimental, documentary or episodic project, students write thirty pages of a full-length screenplay, while also producing, directing and editing a ten-minute sample clip. This course features DSLR digital video production, lighting and sound exercises, editing techniques and various distribution strategies. Prerequisites: FMS 150 & FMS 280 or ARS 162. Application and instructor permission required. {A}

Fall, Spring, Annually

FMS 283 Directing Actors (4 Credits)

This course approaches motion picture directing through conservatory-style studio practice with a focus on directing actors. Through structured in-class exercises, assigned readings and out-of-class assignments, students develop and practice working methods including script and scene analysis and annotation, rehearsal techniques and supporting performance through camera placement and movement. Through theatre games, scene-work and projects, students explore story, dramatic structure, emotional relationships and interpretation within the visual framework of the moving image. Prerequisite: FMS 280. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. (E) {A}

Fall

FMS 290 Colloquium: Theories and Methods of Film and Media Studies (4 Credits)

This course is designed to give FMS majors and minors a solid grounding in the primary methods of the field. In other words, what are the broad approaches scholars have taken to the study of media, and what specific methodological strategies have proved most effective? The class begins with theory as one such method—one that zooms out to ask broad questions about the essential nature of a medium. The history unit shifts the focus to how media are impacted by and implicated in the progression of time and culture. Finally, the criticism unit features strategies for analyzing individual media objects. Priority given to FMS majors and minors. Prerequisite: FMS 150. Enrollment limited to 15. Instructor permission required. {A}

Spring

FMS 311 Seminar: Media Fandom, Participation and Fan Studies (4 Credits)

Trending their fandom's names on Twitter, funding the big screen adaptation of their favorite shows via Kickstarter, and in some cases, getting out on the streets for physical protests—Media fans and fandoms have become more visible in the digital age. However, fan practices pre-date the widespread use of the internet. This course explores the past and the present of media fandom alongside the ways in which fans have been represented and studied. While surveying the history of fandom and fan studies, the course studies the notions of participation, engagement and activism in connection with fan practices. Priority given to FMS majors and minors. Prerequisite: FMS 150. Enrollment limited to 12. Juniors and seniors only. Instructor permission required. (E) {A}

Fall, Spring, Annually

FMS 312 Seminar: Approaching Queer Media (4 Credits)

Approaching Queer Media considers the recent proliferation of LGBTQ + representations in popular culture from historical, technological, commercial, social and legal perspectives. Approaching queer media as a historically specific yet shifting and-relational object of study, the course uses a critical framework of trajectories to consider disparate movements of queer media across historical periods, national boundaries, physical spaces and ideological assumptions, asking: What counts as queer? Is there a queer canon? A queer gaze? How is queer media history done? This course asks students to critically engage with a wide variety of moving images and intertexts from pre-code silent cinema to TikTok. Prerequisite: FMS 150. Enrollment limited to 12. Juniors and seniors only. (E) {A}

Fall

FMS 340ip Seminar: New Research in Film and Media Studies-Identity, Representation and Media (4 Credits)

This topic focuses on the the latest models for thinking about the politics of representation in media, moving beyond the binary of positive and negative images and outmoded ways of measuring "diversity." With particular emphasis on critical race studies and queer and trans studies, we will explore three different approaches to designing a major research project: "Close-up: Practicing Detailed Analysis," "Wide Angle: Conceptualizing a Broad Study" and "Jump Cut: Disrupting Reader Expectations." In what ways can we see difference operating at a structural level in media forms, alongside its more traditional representations through characters and stories? How do concepts like race, gender and sexuality undergird the very systems of film, television and video games, and how do they challenge our conventional understanding of those media? Prerequisite: FMS 150. Juniors and Seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. {A}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FMS 345 Seminar: Violence, Mortality and the Moving Image (4 Credits)

If cinema is, as André Bazin writes, "change mummified," violence and death are among the most dramatic physical changes it can "mummify." This course studies the long, complex relationship between cinema and these bodily spectacles. How has censorship impacted the way violence has been screened? How can cameras make the internal processes of death externally visible? What are the ethics of filming "real" violence and death in a documentary mode? How are cultural attitudes toward violence and death reflected in and shaped by films? As a cautionary note, this course necessarily includes graphic representations of violence and death. Prerequisites: FMS 150. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FMS 350sd Seminar: Topics-Questions of Cinema-Film and Visual Culture from Surrealism to the Digital Age (4 Credits)

This class investigates the moving image and its relationship to the rest of 20th and 21st century art, especially visual culture. Working with the premise that film has been arguably the most influential, powerful and central creative medium of the age, the course examines how film has been influenced by, and how it has influenced, interacted with, critiqued, defined, and been defined by other media. Historically we examine how film has moved from a marginal to a mainstream art form, while still often maintaining a very active avant-garde practice. We'll look at how cinema and other moving images have consistently and trans-historically grappled with certain fundamental issues and themes, comparing the nature of cinematic investigations with those of other media. Over the course of the semester, we shall also attend to the idea of "film" in relation to the larger category of "moving image." Does not fulfill ARH research seminar requirement. Enrollment limited to 12. Juniors and seniors only. Instructor permission required. {A}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FMS 400 Special Studies (1-4 Credits)

Admission by permission of the department.

Fall, Spring

FMS 430D Honors Project (4 Credits)

A thesis on a film and media studies topic or a creative project. 8 credits for the full-year course.

Fall, Spring