

# FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES

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

This course introduces students to FMS through units that pair scholarly approaches with influential media forms: the Aesthetics of Film, the History of Television, and the Technologies of Digital Media. Through these units, students ask: what human desires animate a 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 help students see the fundamental forces that unite film, television, and digital media alongside the elements that distinguish them from each other. Enrollment limited to 30. {A}

**Fall**

## **FMS 220 Colloquium: Oral History and the Moving Image (4 Credits)**

Oral history is a method of documenting a person or community's memories through a recorded dialogue or interview in order to address absences in the historical record. This course investigates theories, histories and practices of oral history in relation to the moving image, from Zora Neal Hurston's fieldwork films (1927) to the present, examining 1) the relationship between oral history and non-fiction filmmaking; 2) the use of oral history methods in the writing of film and media histories, including institutional histories and counter-histories; and 3) the use of oral histories in the creation of works of art. Enrollment limited to 20. {H}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

## **FMS 232 Unruly Women: Trailblazers, Gamechangers and Showrunners in the History of American Television (4 Credits)**

While the #TimesUp and #MeToo movements have recently brought the problems of sexism, misogyny and the lack of representation to the forefront, the U.S. television industry has long struggled with providing space to women on and behind the screen. Despite the attempts to confine them in the roles ascribed by patriarchal society, women have challenged norms and changed television at the same time. This course explores the history of American television to understand how "unruly women" transformed television by challenging hierarchies of power. Restrictions: Not open to students who have taken FYS 135. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

## **FMS 237 The Documentary Impulse (4 Credits)**

The drive to represent reality has animated film makers throughout history. In the service of this urgent, impossible ambition, documentarians have produced some of film's most complex works. This course examines how they have done so, concentrating on different approaches to documentary—observational, ethnographic, autobiographical, historical and archivist. 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 238 Crime on Screen (4 Credits)**

By exploring crime films and crime shows, this course surveys how representations of crime on screen have changed since the beginning of the crime genre. While studying how culture affects the representations of crime on screen, the course raises critical questions regarding representation of gender and race. Selected readings and screenings move between films and TV shows and their socio-political context of production for a better and more comprehensive understanding of the evolution of crime genre.

**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. {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. The class studies popular forms of non-fiction media: blockbuster documentary films, true crime streaming series and podcasts, reality TV, and documentary content on social media. 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 FMS 237. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

## **FMS 245 Colloquium: Melodrama and Power: Genre, Gender and Race (4 Credits)**

Associated with female viewership, melodramas and soap operas are seen as low-quality content in the U.S. market. Melodramas and soaps originating from different parts of the world bear a similar mark of "non-quality." This coupling of geographical origin and genre hierarchies to emphasize the difference of "the West" from "the rest" is also relevant for the ways in which peripheral content is categorized as "soap operas" and "telenovelas." By exploring melodramatic films and TV shows, this course surveys the roots of melodrama as a genre and analyzes the power hierarchies around it with reference to gender and race. {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. Discussions include: 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 is 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 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. {A}

**Spring**

**FMS 252 A Global History of Silent Film (4 Credits)**

This course introduces students to the myths, contradictions, and beauty of global "silent" cinema, screening popular and canonical texts alongside more obscure films and fragments. The course begins with a two-second film known as Roundhay Garden Scene (UK/France, Louis Le Prince 1888), believed to be the earliest surviving motion picture, and concludes with the formation of The International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) in 1938. This course brings a feminist transnational perspective to global silent and early sound cinema, engaging contemporary historiographic, methodological, and theoretical debates about periodization, cultural memory, and thinking beyond national borders. (E) {A}{H}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

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

An estimated 65% of Americans 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}

**Spring, Alternate Years**

**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, this course helps students gain insight into the globalization of popular culture. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**FMS 265 Film in the Digital Age (4 Credits)**

Film, a dominant entertainment form in the twentieth century, has faced sweeping changes in the twenty-first. Digital technologies have widely replaced film cameras and projectors, theatrical exhibition continues to decline as audiences watch movies on ever-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 considers 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 271 Colloquium: Understanding Media Industries (4 Credits)**

Media studies approach media industries as sites of power struggles in which hierarchies of power in the modern world are reproduced. This course explores these power struggles and the scholars' on-going attempts to understand them by examining the economic, political and socio-cultural implications of industrialized media ecosystem. The aim is to understand the past and the present of this industrial system and to survey the future possibilities. In this context, students study theoretical approaches and research examples from the field of media industries studies to analyze the production, distribution and consumption processes. Enrollment limited to 20.

**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. Prerequisite: FMS 150 (may be concurrent) or its equivalent. Enrollment limited to 12. Application and instructor permission required. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Annually**

**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 and FMS 280 or ARS 162. Application and instructor permission required. Enrollment limited to 10. {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, Spring, Variable**

**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 310 Seminar: Whose Quality Is It? Quality TV After Digitalization (4 Credits)**

The notion of quality is neither objective nor global. The much disputed definition of quality programming is further complicated by the increase in transnational flows of formats and programs as well as the globalization of online streaming models associated with quality programming. This course explores the elusive definition of the Anglo-American quality programming in light of the following questions: Is it possible to talk about an ongoing globalization of that definition? What is the role of digital technologies in this transformation? What does this transformation mean for the pre-existing hierarchies of power in global TV market? Priority given to FMS majors and minors. Prerequisite: FMS 150. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**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. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {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. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Instructor permission required. (E) {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

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

This topic focuses on 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, the course explores 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 is difference visible 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 conventional understanding of those media? Prerequisite: FMS 150. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {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. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. 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. The course examines how film has moved from a marginal to a mainstream art form, while still maintaining a very active avant-garde practice. The course looks 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, students attend to the idea of "film" in relation to the larger category of "moving image." Does not fulfill ARH research seminar requirement. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**FMS 400 Special Studies (1-4 Credits)**

Instructor permission required.

**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. Department permission required.

**Fall, Spring**