FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES (FILM)

* FILM 021a / AMST 021a, Sports and Media  Charles Musser
This course develops critical thinking about sports in contemporary media culture. The social aspect of playing, watching, and talking about sports has always involved media; media likewise reflect the meaning of athletic events. "Media" here designates cinema, television, radio, print, and social media. We analyze the ways mass media and sports have shaped identity: gender, race, class, age, geography, and ideology. The background for considering these social phenomena is a general understanding of the commercial and civic nature of major sports, although some attention is also paid to amateur media and alternative sports. Our scope extends from the U.S. toward the globe, observing how international networks (Olympics, World Cup) act in specific national cultures. Principal readings are drawn from recent scholarship on sports and media, and criticism of films. Historically significant and contemporary films introduce the history of sports in media culture, from the Corbett–Courtney Fight (1894) to Rocky, Paper Lion, The Armstrong Lie, Invictus, Venus and Serena, and Chariots of Fire. Classroom activities include mini-lectures, discussion, group analysis of texts, and brief student presentations.  WR, HU

FILM 150a, Introduction to Film Studies  John MacKay
A survey of film studies concentrating on theory, analysis, and criticism. Students learn the critical and technical vocabulary of the subject and study important films in weekly screenings. Prerequisite for the major.  WR, HU

FILM 160b / ENGL 196b, Introduction to Media  John Peters
Introduction to the long history of media as understood in classical and foundational (and even more recent experimental) theories. Topics involve the technologies of media as understood in reproduction, and commodity, as well as questions regarding knowledge, representation, public spheres, and spectatorship. Special attention given to philosophies of language, visibility, and the environment, including how digital culture continues to shape these realms.  WR, HU

* FILM 161a / ART 241a, Introductory Film Writing and Directing  Jonathan Andrews
Problems and aesthetics of film studied in practice as well as in theory. In addition to exploring movement, image, montage, point of view, and narrative structure, students photograph and edit their own short videotapes. Emphasis on the writing and production of short dramatic scenes. Priority to majors in Art and in Film & Media Studies. This course is a curricular collaboration with The Center for Collaborative Arts and Media at Yale (CCAM). Course fee charged per term.  RP

* FILM 162a or b / ART 142a or b, Introductory Documentary Filmmaking  A.L. Steiner
The art and craft of documentary filmmaking. Basic technological and creative tools for capturing and editing moving images. The processes of research, planning, interviewing, writing, and gathering of visual elements to tell a compelling story with integrity and responsibility toward the subject. The creation of nonfiction narratives. Issues include creative discipline, ethical questions, space, the recreation of time, and how to represent "the truth." Course fee charged per term.  RP

FILM 232b, Classical Hollywood Narrative 1920–1960  Camille Thomasson
Survey of Classical Hollywood films. Topics include history of the studio system; origin and development of genres; the film classics of the Classical Hollywood period, and the producers, screenwriters, directors, and cinematographers who created them.  WR, HU

* FILM 240a / AFAM 240a / THST 240a, Introduction to African American Cinema  Nicholas Forster
This course examines the history of African American cinema from the turn of the twentieth century through the present. In recent years, there has been a growing sense that, after decades of unequal hiring practices, black filmmakers have carved a space for artistic creation within Hollywood. This feeling was embodied when Ryan Coogler's Black Panther became the highest grossing film of the 2018, seemingly heralding a new age of black-authored and black-focused cinema. This course examines the long history of black cinema that led to the financial and critical success of filmmakers like Coogler, Ava DuVernay, and Jordan Peele. In this course, we survey the expansive work of black American cinema and ask: is there such a category as black film? If so, is that category based on the director, the actor, the subject matter or ideology of the film? What political, aesthetic, social, and personal value does the category of black film off? Some of the filmmakers include Barry Jenkins, Kathleen Collins, Spike Lee, Julie Dash, Oscar Micheaux, Ava DuVernay, and Charles Burnett.  HU

* FILM 289a / ENGL 299a, Nineteenth-Century Media (as/and Literature)  John Peters
In the nineteenth century it is as if someone poured Miracle-Gro on the technological world. This class studies nineteenth-century media and their imaginative consequences. It follows a broad definition of media as material apparatuses that record, transmit, and process the world. Steam, photography, telegraphy, sound-recording, and cinema were only some of the ways people found their worlds disrupted, both excitingly and distressingly. Literature is, of course, itself a medium, and as a first-rate archive of media history it serves as our chief, but not exclusive, entry-point. Readings include works of literature, recent scholarship, and primary documents or artifacts from the arts and sciences. We may look at paintings, pianos, and weather reports as well as telegrams, photographs, and séances. We work within a long nineteenth century (1780-1914) though mostly focus on the 1830s to 1890s. Our geographical center of gravity is the U.K and US, with occasional side trips to the continent. Questions of empire of course take us elsewhere, and final essays on areas beyond the Anglophone world are welcome. Helpful but not required prerequisites for the class include ENGL 126, 127, 128, and FILM 160.  WR, HU
* FILM 304a / EALL 281a, Japanese Cinema and Its Others  Aaron Gerow
Critical inquiry into the myth of a homogeneous Japan through analysis of how Japanese film and media historically represents “others” of different races, ethnicities, nationalities, genders, and sexualities, including women, black residents, ethnic Koreans, Okinawans, Ainu, undocumented immigrants, LGBTQ minorities, the disabled, youth, and monstrous others like ghosts.  HU

* FILM 305a / LITR 361a, Animation: Disney and Beyond  Aaron Gerow
Survey of the history of animation, considering both its aesthetics and its social potentials. The focus is on Disney and its many alternatives, with examples from around the world, from various traditions, and from different periods.  HU

* FILM 319a / GMAN 273a / LITR 368a, The Third Reich in Postwar German Film, 1945 to Present  Jan Hagens
Close study of the intersection of aesthetics and ethics with regard to how German films, since 1945, have dealt with Nazi history. Through the study of German-language films (with subtitles), produced in postwar East, West, and unified Germany, students consider and challenge perspectives on the Third Reich and postwar Germany, while learning basic categories of film studies.  HU

* FILM 320b / HSAR 490b, Close Analysis of Film  Oksana Chefranova
Close study of a range of major films from different countries and periods. Apart from developing tools for the close analysis of film, we consider such topics as genre and mode; the role of sound; cinema as a structure of gazes; remakes and adaptations; approaches to realism; narration and resistance to narration; film in relation to other moving image media; and the relationship of close analysis to historical contextualization and interpretation more generally. Prerequisite: FILM 150.  HU

* FILM 322a, Machines of Modern Gender from the Spindle to Siri  Staff
While awaiting a phone call, the telephone operator heroine of Geraldine Bonner’s *The Girl at Central* (1915) finds a fitting metaphor for her mind: “It seemed to be made of steel springs going swift and sure like an engine.” The year Bonner’s novel was published, this metaphor evoked the recent feminization of a range of machine-operating roles, from industrial weaving to telegraphy and typing from a Dictaphone. But it also evoked a longer cultural tradition: for 200 years, artists and writers have used machines as conceptual tools to pick apart and reconstruct womanhood in an increasingly mechanized, feminized world. This seminar explores the origins and implications of this phenomenon by bringing together fictional representations of machine-women (dolls, androids, automata) and women at machines (readers, viewers, workers). While focusing primarily on European and North American examples, it also analyzes the gears of patriarchal, racial capitalism on a global scale, revealing how coalitions of women workers have disrupted capitalist and colonial infrastructure by causing delay, creating noise, and re-coding history. The machine-women we study in the cultural sphere (often authored by men) are accompanied by work from feminist anthropologists, techno-scientists, film and media theorists, Marxists, and experimental filmmakers.  WR, HU

* FILM 329a / AFAM 331a / THST 332a, Black Film and Theatre  Nicholas Forster
This course examines the numerous connections, networks, and associations between black film and black theatre across the latter half of the twentieth century. While there has been a resurgence of interest in black theatre on and off Broadway in recent years, we look at critical works created by black writers who created spaces, slid into the cracks, and opened wide the chasms of possibility between cinema and drama. We ask: how have black artists used these two mediums to articulate a political consciousness? How have black writers built, ruptured, and amended the demands required by cultural institutions like Broadway and Hollywood? We investigate the tensions between ideas of the universal and the specific, all the while attending to the complex and complicated possibilities across two different mediums: cinema and the stage. The question of authorship in the move from stage to screen will be omnipresent as we ask what kinds of performances are possible and what new worlds can be created in those transitions?  WR, HU

* FILM 330a, The Screenwriter’s Craft  Camille Thomasson
A rigorous writer’s workshop. Students conjure, write, rewrite, and study films. Read screenplays, view movie clips, parse films, and develop characters and a scenario for a feature length screenplay. By the end of term, each student will have created a story outline and written a minimum of fifteen pages of an original script. All majors welcome. Application required. Please find the link to the application form on the syllabus.

* FILM 336a / MMES 311a / RLST 256a, Social Change in Middle East Cinemas  Staff
This course invites students to explore how modern aesthetic forms such as cinemas from the Middle East and North Africa critique rigid social realities and imagine modern social experiences, thereby pushing boundaries towards social change. By chronologically examining Arabic, Turkish, Hebrew, and Persian films in different historical periods, we will explore how film as art reveals the nature of social myth and the role public intellectuals play in perpetuating or challenging that myth. In addition to weekly film screenings (with English subtitles), course material includes short readings on the modern history of the region, history of film production, and analysis of film as art. By the end of this course, students will learn about the history of filmmaking in the MENA region, the different questions (religion, class, language, gender, ethnicity, race, nationalism and colonialism) influencing the production and reception of film, the challenges facing the filmmaker as an artist and producer and more importantly how these challenges impact the imagination of social change on the screen.

* FILM 338a, The International Movie Musical  John MacKay
A seminar devoted to movie musicals from around the world and across nearly a century of cinema history. We watch films from France, the USSR, Mexico, Senegal, India, Egypt, the PRC, the USA and other countries, and by such directors as King Vidor, Jacques Demy, Youssef Chahine, Carlos Saura, and Agnès Varda. Topics to be discussed include the relationship of the musical to earlier musical theatrical forms like opera and vaudeville; the formal problems of integrating narrative with musical and choreographed spectacle; and the relationship of the musical to questions of gender, ethnicity, race and nationhood. Weekly film screenings.  HU
* FILM 341a / MGRK 238a / WGSS 233a, Weird Greek Wave Cinema  George Syrimis
The course examines the cinematic production of Greece in the last fifteen years or so and looks critically at the popular term "weird Greek wave" applied to it. Noted for their absurd tropes, bizarre narratives, and quirky characters, the films question and disturb traditional gender and social roles, as well as international viewers' expectations of national stereotypes of classical luminosity—the proverbial "Greek light" #Dionysian exuberance, or touristic leisure. Instead, these works frustrate not only a wholistic reading of Greece as a unified and coherent social construct, but also the physical or aesthetic pleasure of its landscape and its 'quaint' people with their insistence on grotesque, violent, or otherwise disturbing images or themes (incest, sexual otherness and violence, aggression, corporeality, and xenophobia). The course also pays particular attention on the economic and political climate of the Greek financial crisis during which these films are produced and consumed and to which they partake. None  HU

* FILM 348b / ART 382b / THST 400b, Performance and the Moving Image  Emily Coates and Joan MacIntosh
The boundaries between live and mediated performance explored through the creation of an original work that draws on methods in experimental theater, dance, and video art. Questions concerning live versus mediated bodies, the multiplication of time, space, and perspective through technology, and the development of moving images. The final production includes both a live performance and an art video. Contact the instructors for more information. Open to students of all levels and majors.  WR, HU

* FILM 349b / HMRT 369 / LAST 369b / LITR 369b, Gender Politics in Latin American Cinema  Moira Fradinger
Introduction to the contemporary politics of gender in Latin American cinema, with review of films from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Peru, Paraguay, Guatemala, Cuba, Venezuela and Mexico, and emphasis on how gender has been represented in a region with massive gender debates developing from the 1980s onwards. Topics include: discourses of human rights; representations of gay, transgender and intersex questions; social and economic status of women and feminized bodies; migration and indigenous peoples. Seminar is conducted in Spanish. Prerequisite: Level of L4. 15, HU

* FILM 350a or b, Screenwriting  Marc Lapadula
A beginning course in screenplay writing. Foundations of the craft introduced through the reading of professional scripts and the analysis of classic films. A series of classroom exercises culminates in intensive scene work. Prerequisite: FILM 150. Not open to freshmen.

FILM 355b / ART 341b, Intermediate Film Writing and Directing  Jonathan Andrews
In the first half of the term, students write three-scene short films and learn the tools and techniques of staging, lighting, and capturing and editing the dramatic scene. In the second half of the term, students work collaboratively to produce their films. Focus on using the tools of cinema to tell meaningful dramatic stories. This course is a curricular collaboration with The Center for Collaborative Arts and Media at Yale (CCAM). Course fee charged per term. Enrollment limited to 8. Priority to majors in Art and in Film & Media Studies. Prerequisites: ART 241.  RP

FILM 356b / ART 342b, Intermediate Documentary Filmmaking  Michel Auder
Students explore the storytelling potential of the film medium by making documentary art. The class concentrates on finding and capturing intriguing, complex scenarios in the world and then adapting them to the film form. Questions of truth, objectivity, style, and the filmmaker's ethics are considered using examples of students' work. Exercises in storytelling principles. Course fee charged per term. Limited enrollment. Priority to majors in Art and in Film & Media Studies. Prerequisites: ART 141 or 142, and FILM 150.  HU, RP

* FILM 360a / LITR 301a / RSEE 380a / RUSS 380a, Putin's Russia and Protest Culture  Marijeta Bozovic
Survey of Russian literature and culture since the fall of communism. The chaos of the 1990s; the solidification of power in Putin's Russia; the recent rise of protest culture. Sources include literature, film, and performances by art collectives. Readings and discussion in English; texts available in Russian.  WR

* FILM 361a / LITR 302a / MGRK 238a / WGSS 233a, Weird Greek Wave Cinema  George Syrimis
This seminar is conducted in Spanish. Prerequisite: Level of L4.

* FILM 362a / LAST 360a / LITR 360a, Radical Cinemas of Latin America  Moira Fradinger
Introduction to Latin American cinema, with an emphasis on post–World War II films produced in Cuba, Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. Examination of each film in its historical and aesthetic aspects, and in light of questions concerning national cinema and "third cinema." Examples from both pre-1945 and contemporary films. Conducted in English; knowledge of Spanish and Portuguese helpful but not required.  HU

* FILM 366a / ITAL 366a, Spotlight on Sicily in Literature and Film  Millicent Marcus
Sicily has always occupied a privileged position in the Italian imagination. The course focuses on a series of fictional works and films from the early 20th century until today which reveal how this island has served as a vital space for cinematic experimentation and artistic self-discovery. Topics range from unification history, the Mafia, the migrant crisis, environmental issues, gender, and social/sexual mores. The course is taught in English, but those who wish to enroll for credit towards the certificate in Italian, or the major, can make arrangements to do so.  WR, HU

* FILM 370a, Classical Hollywood from the Margins of Labor and Representation  Staff
In the last ten years, online movements like #Metoo and #OscarsSoWhite have shifted the way we think about Hollywood, exposing the gendered and racialized forces of exclusion and exploitation that have long shaped and continue to shape the US film industry. In the wake of these revelations, many have wondered what to do with “beloved” but horrifying classics like Gone with the Wind—do we suppress them? Contextualize and critique them? Or disrupt their coherence and dismantle their authors by re-appropriating them for art and other uses? This seminar uses novels, memoirs, essays, and experimental films about Hollywood to interrogate dominant film-historical narratives and explore alternative modes to critique, recuperate, cut up and re-activate classical Hollywood films. For the first half of the semester, we reframe the history of the dream factory by highlighting culturally invisible film workers on the margins of studio film production, from cutter girls and secretaries to extras and voice actors. For the second half of the semester, we examine film criticism
and experimental films by female, POC, and queer scholars and artists that propose subversive tools to change the way we view and interpret classical Hollywood films. Topics to be discussed include women's work, unscreen-able bodies, censorship and segregation, audience studies, star studies, queer spectatorship, black female spectatorship, and gossip as film history. HU

* FILM 39b, Intermediate Screenwriting  Marc Lapadula
A workshop in writing short screenplays. Frequent revisions of each student’s script focus on unifying narrative, well-delineated characters, dramatic action, tone, and dialogue into a polished final screenplay. Prerequisite: FILM 350. Priority to majors in Film & Media Studies.

* FILM 397b / ENGL 423b / THST 228b, Writing about the Performing Arts  Margaret Spillane
Introduction to journalistic reporting on performances as current events, with attention to writing in newspapers, magazines, and the blogosphere. The idea of the audience explored in relation to both a live act or screening and a piece of writing about such an event. Students attend screenings and live professional performances of plays, music concerts, and dance events. Formerly ENGL 244. WR, HU

* FILM 401b / ENGL 462b / THST 453b, Writing Screenplay Adaptations  Donald Margulies
A workshop on the art of screenplay adaptation. Students read short stories, novels, and non-fiction; the screenplays based on that source material; and view and analyze the final product, the films themselves. Instruction focuses on the form, economy, and structure specific to screenwriting. Weekly writing exercises supplement the creation of a final project: a short screenplay based on source material of the student’s choosing. Previous experience in writing for film or stage would be advantageous but is not required. Restricted to juniors and seniors, or by permission of the instructor. HU

* FILM 402a / AMST 484a / ER&M 405a / HSAR 493a / WGSS 462a, Visual Kinship, Families, and Photography  Laura Wexler
Exploration of the history and practice of family photography from an interdisciplinary perspective. Study of family photographs from the analog to the digital era, from snapshots to portraits, and from instrumental images to art exhibitions. Particular attention to the ways in which family photographs have helped establish gendered and racial hierarchies and examination of recent ways of reconceiving these images. HU

* FILM 409a / GMAN 368a / LITR 382a, German New Waves in Cold War Europe  Katie Trumpener
Comparative study of New Wave cinema in East and West Germany, with a focus on aesthetic ferment, institutional barriers, and transformation. Berlin as the best place to follow Europe’s emerging cinematic New Waves before 1961. Distinctive approaches developed by young filmmakers in East and West Germany to political and documentary filmmaking, to the Nazi past and the Cold War, and to class, gender, and social transformation. Knowledge of German helpful but not necessary. WR, HU

* FILM 420a / LITR 466a / RUSS 465a, War in Literature and Film  Katerina Clark
Representations of war in literature and film; reasons for changes over time in portrayals of war. Texts by Stendahl, Tolstoy, Juenger, Remarque, Malraux, and Vonnegut; films by Eisenstein, Tarkovsky, Joris Ivens, Coppola, Spielberg, and Altman. HU

* FILM 433a, Family Narratives/Cultural Shifts  Thomas Harris
This course looks at films that are redefining ideas around family and family narratives in relation to larger social movements. We focus on personal films by filmmakers who consider themselves artists, activists, or agents of change but are united in their use of the nonfiction format to speak truth to power. In different ways, these films use media to build community and build family and ultimately, to build family albums and archives that future generations can use to build their own practices. Just as the family album seeks to unite people across time, space, and difference, the films and texts explored in this course are also journeys that culminate in linkages, helping us understand nuances of identity while illuminating personal relationships to larger cultural, social, and historical movements. HU

* FILM 434b / AFAM 220b, Archive Aesthetics and Community Storytelling  Thomas Harris
This production course explores strategies of archive aesthetics and community storytelling in film and media. It allows students to create projects that draw from archives—including news sources, personal narratives, and found archives—to produce collaborative community storytelling. Conducted as a production workshop, the course explores the use of archives in constructing real and fictive narratives across a variety of disciplines, such as—participants create and develop autobiographies, biographies, or fiction-based projects, tailored to their own work in film/new media around Natalie Goldberg’s concept that “our lives are at once ordinary and mythic.” HU

* FILM 435a / AFAM 401a / AMST 411a / ER&M 385a, Introduction to Documentary Studies  Matthew Jacobson
An introduction to documentary film, photography, and radio for students interested in doing documentary work, as well as for those who simply wish to study the history of the documentary as a cultural form. HU RP

* FILM 452a / AMST 463a / EVST 463a / THST 457a, Documentary Film Workshop  Charles Musser
A yearlong workshop designed primarily for majors in Film and Media Studies or American Studies who are making documentaries as senior projects. Seniors in other majors admitted as space permits. RP

* FILM 457b / ITAL 303b / LITR 393b, Italian Film from Postwar to Postmodern  Millicent Marcus
A study of important Italian films from World War II to the present. Consideration of works that typify major directors and trends. Topics include neorealism, self-reflexivity and metacinema, fascism and war, and postmodernism. Films by Fellini, Antonioni, Rossellini, De Sica, Visconti, Pasolini, Bertolucci, Wertmuller, Tornatore, and Moretti. Films in Italian with English subtitles. WR, HU
* FILM 470a, Women Filmmakers  Oksana Chefranova
The seminar surveys the extraordinary contributions that female filmmakers have made to cinema and to film theory, ranging from the beginning of cinema to the most recent examples, from narrative cinema to experimental practice. We examine films by Lois Weber, Alice Guy Blaché, Germaine Dulac, Leontine Sagan, Leni Riefenstahl, Dorothy Arzner, Ida Lupino, Maya Deren, Agnès Varda, Věra Chytilová, Barbara Hammer, Julie Dash, Claire Denis, Lucrecia Martel, Kelly Reichardt, Sofia Coppola, Alice Rohrwacher, Céline Sciamma, Ana Lily Amirpour, and Mati Diop. We read texts written by women writer, filmmakers, and critics such as Germaine Dulac, Maya Deren, Barbara Hammer, Julie Dash, Colette, Virginia Woolf, Laura Mulvey, and Manohla Dargis. The cinema is approached from a variety of historical and theoretical discourses such as production history, feminism, world cinema, and post-colonial studies among others. There will be an option for a practical component that might include a curatorial project, an interview with a filmmaker, or an audio-visual essay (in consultation with the instructor). WR, HU

* FILM 471a or b, Independent Directed Study  Staff
For students who wish to explore an aspect of film and media studies not covered by existing courses. The course may be used for research or directed readings and should include one lengthy essay or several short ones as well as regular meetings with the adviser. To apply, students should present a prospectus, a bibliography for the work proposed, and a letter of support from the adviser to the director of undergraduate studies. Term credit for independent research or reading may be granted and applied to any of the requisite areas upon application and approval by the director of undergraduate studies.

* FILM 483a and FILM 484b / ART 442a and ART 443b, Advanced Film Writing and Directing  Jonathan Andrews
A yearlong workshop designed primarily for majors in Art and in Film & Media Studies making senior projects. Each student writes and directs a short fiction film. The first term focuses on the screenplay, production schedule, storyboards, casting, budget, and locations. In the second term students rehearse, shoot, edit, and screen the film. This course is a curricular collaboration with The Center for Collaborative Arts and Media at Yale (CCAM). Course fee charged per term. Enrollment limited to 8. Priority to majors in Art and in Film & Media Studies. Prerequisite: ART 341.

* FILM 487a and FILM 488b, Advanced Screenwriting  Marc Lapadula
Students write a feature-length screenplay. Emphasis on multiple drafts and revision. Admission in the fall term based on acceptance of a complete step-sheet outline for the story to be written during the coming year. Primarily for Film & Media Studies majors working on senior projects. Prerequisite: FILM 395 or permission of instructor.

* FILM 491a and FILM 492b, The Senior Essay  Staff
An independent writing and research project. A prospectus signed by the student’s adviser must be submitted to the director of undergraduate studies by the end of the second week of the term in which the essay project is to commence. A rough draft must be submitted to the adviser and the director of undergraduate studies approximately one month before the final draft is due. Essays are normally thirty-five pages long (one term) or fifty pages (two terms).

* FILM 493a and FILM 494b, The Senior Project  Staff
For students making a film or video, either fiction or nonfiction, as their senior project. Senior projects require the approval of the Film and Media Studies Committee and are based on proposals submitted at the end of the junior year. An interim project review takes place at the end of the fall term, and permission to complete the senior project can be withdrawn if satisfactory progress has not been made. For guidelines, consult the director of undergraduate studies. Does not count toward the fourteen courses required for the major when taken in conjunction with FILM 455, 456 or FILM 483, 484.