

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

Subject Code	CBS1C38
Subject Title	Understanding French Culture and Society through Cinema
Credit Value	3
Level	1
Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion	Exclusion GEC1C50 Understanding French Culture and Society through Cinema
Objectives	<p>This course seeks to provide students with some basic knowledge of French society and culture as viewed from the French cinema tradition. French cinema constituted a unique sense of “Frenchness” in the past till nowadays under various challenges in the contemporary world dominated by Hollywood cinema. Special emphasis will be laid on the conceptual and methodological tools to analyze and interpret mainstream feature films from or about France, in a cultural, intra-cultural and inter-cultural manner. By the cultural approach, we mean to look deep into the French cultural tradition to understand how the French people look at themselves in the past and at the present. By intra-cultural approach, we mean to understand the inner tension between Paris as the centre (e.g. white culture) and its <i>banlieue</i> (e.g. 2nd and 3rd generation immigrant culture) as the periphery; between city culture (e.g. Paris) and village culture (e.g. Provence); between France as the colonizer and her colonies (e.g. Vietnam/ <i>IndoChine</i>) in the past; between the southern and the northern parts of France at the present. By inter-cultural approach, we mean to reflect critically the relationship between French and other (e.g. American) cultures; how they understand and misunderstand each other in intercultural mis/communications. We try to go beyond stereotypes in the touristic understanding of France and to examine French culture and society in reality ranging from food and wine in daily life to love and hate among French people. Some major gender, ethnic, social and political issues shown in contemporary French cinema will also be discussed.</p>
Intended Learning Outcomes <i>(Note 1)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Understand the unique sense of “Frenchness” in the French tradition of cinema culture from both national and transnational dimensions; (b) Analyze French short and feature film from cultural, intra-cultural and inter-cultural perspectives. (c) Demonstrate some basic knowledge of French society and French people by discussing some current issues revealed in the French film culture. (d) Improve English language proficiency.
Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus <i>(Note 2)</i>	<p>Class 1 Introduction: French or Hollywood?</p> <p>Class 2 Early silent film: documentaries (<i>le réalisme</i>) Vs the magical lens (<i>le fantastique</i>)</p>

	<p>Class 3 The Classical Era: nature Vs (capitalist) culture</p> <p>Class 4 Post-war French cinema: invasion of American consumerism Vs French traditional society</p> <p>Class 5 The French New Wave (<i>La Nouvelle Vague</i>): youth issues in French society through the lens</p> <p>Class 6 French film in Hollywood: spectacle Vs story telling in <i>Le Cinéma du look</i></p> <p>Class 7 Cultural approach: self-understanding of French history and tradition Quiz 1</p> <p>Class 8 Intra-cultural approach: Parisian unity (symbolized by Tour Eiffel) Vs regional diversities</p> <p>Class 9 Inter-cultural approach: French-American mis/communications in the contemporary world</p> <p>Class 10 Ethnic and youth issues in contemporary French film: <i>Le Cinéma du banlieue</i></p> <p>Class 11 Women and society in contemporary French film</p> <p>Class 12 Body and love in contemporary French film: <i>Le Cinéma du corps</i></p> <p>Class 13 Quiz 2</p>
<p>Teaching/Learning Methodology (Note 3)</p>	<p>Lectures</p> <p>This subject will be mainly taught in the lecture format with audio-visual examples and video-based images. In each lecture, time will be reserved for question and answer session. Such an interactive environment will allow participating students to reflect in real time upon some of the material, bringing up their questions which require further explanation, as well as giving valuable feedback to the lecturer.</p> <p>Seminar</p> <p>Students are required to report and reflect on the reading materials of 200 pages to fulfill the “English Reading” requirement. They will be asked to discuss in teams the assigned material in each seminar, and then present to the other teams their interpretation and questions for that piece of reading. The basic approach will be peer teaching in which each study team in turn will facilitate discussion of the assigned reading through a series of questions posed to the other teams.</p> <p>Assessment Feedback</p> <p>Grading in this subject is based entirely on continuous assessment components, including participations in class seminar, two quizzes and one essay of 2500 words.</p>

<p>Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes (Note 4)</p>	<p>Assessment for this subject will be 100% coursework. They are composed of two quizzes and an essay. Details as followed:</p> <p><u>Class participation</u> (20%)</p> <p>Students have to attend lectures and seminar on a regular basis. They have to ask and answer questions after viewing the movies and reading the articles in each class. Some exercises may be distributed for them to do in class in case there are topics they feel difficult to manage.</p> <p><u>Quizzes</u> (40%)</p> <p>Two quizzes will be held in the middle and the end of the course. Unseen movie clips related to the course topics will be shown to students and they have to answer questions using examples from the clips instead of examples from the lecture. Key ideas extracted from the essential readings will be included in the quiz to fulfil the “English Reading” requirement.</p> <p><u>Essay</u> (40%):</p> <p>Students are required to submit a research essay of 2500 words in English to fulfil the “English Writing” requirement. This is the most important piece of coursework for this subject. It examines and develops student’s written presentation skills. 10% of this writing assessment will be conducted by ELC.</p> <p>In order to pass this subject, students must pass the writing component, i.e., attain a minimum grade “D” in the writing component. They are required to use one of the three approaches learned in class to examine French culture and society in a French movie of their own choice.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="454 1086 1401 1630"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Specific assessment methods/tasks</th> <th rowspan="2">% weighting</th> <th colspan="6">Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>a</th> <th>b</th> <th>c</th> <th>d</th> <th></th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Class participation</td> <td>20%</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Two Quizzes</td> <td>40%</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Essay (10% of the assessment will be conducted by ELC)</td> <td>40%</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100 %</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>							Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)						a	b	c	d			1. Class participation	20%	√	√	√	√			2. Two Quizzes	40%	√	√	√	√			3. Essay (10% of the assessment will be conducted by ELC)	40%	√	√	√	√			Total	100 %						
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<p>Reading List and References</p>	<p>Intensive Reading (200 pages of reading)</p> <p>“History,” pp. 3-53; “Writing,” pp. 93-162, in Powrie, Phil, and Keith Reader. (2002). <i>French Cinema: A Student’s Guide</i>. London: Arnold.</p> <p>“The Adventures of Mickey Mouse, Big Mac, and Coke in the Land of the Gauls,” pp. 151-208; “The French Way: Economy, Society, and Culture in the 1990s,” pp. 271-328, in Kuisel, Richard F. (2012) <i>The French Way: How France Embraced and Rejected American Values and Power</i>. Princeton, N.J. : Princeton UP.</p> <p>References</p> <p>Austin, Guy. (1996) <i>Contemporary French Cinema: An Introduction</i>. Manchester and NY: Manchester UP.</p> <p>Buss, Robin. (1988) <i>The French Through Their Films</i>. London: B.T. Batsford.</p> <p>Crisp, Colin. (1993) <i>The Classic French Cinema, 1930-1960</i>. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana UP.</p> <p>Hayward, Susan, and Ginette Vincendeau, (eds.) (2000) <i>French Film: Texts and Contexts</i>. (2nd ed.). London and NY: Routledge.</p> <p>Mazdon, Lucy, (ed.). (2001). <i>France on Film: Reflections on Popular French Cinema</i>. London: Wallflower.</p> <p>Palmer, Tim. (2011) <i>Brutal Intimacy: Analyzing Contemporary French Cinema</i>. Middletown, Conn: Westleyan University.</p> <p>Powrie, Phil, (ed). (1999) <i>French Cinema in the 1990s: Continuity and Difference</i>. Oxford: Oxford UP.</p> <p>Schwartz, Vanessa. (2007) <i>It’s So French!</i> Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.</p> <p>Vincendeau, Ginette. (2000) <i>Stars and Stardom in French Cinema</i>. London and NY: Continuum.</p> <p>Williams, Alan. (1992) <i>Republic of Images: A History of French Filmmaking</i>. Cambridge and London: Harvard UP.</p>
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Note 1: Intended Learning Outcomes

Intended learning outcomes should state what students should be able to do or attain upon completion of the subject. Subject outcomes are expected to contribute to the attainment of the overall programme outcomes.

Note 2: Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus

The syllabus should adequately address the intended learning outcomes. At the same time over-crowding of the syllabus should be avoided.

Note 3: Teaching/Learning Methodology

This section should include a brief description of the teaching and learning methods to be employed to facilitate learning, and a justification of how the methods are aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the subject.

Note 4: Assessment Method

This section should include the assessment method(s) to be used and its relative weighting, and indicate which of the subject intended learning outcomes that each method purports to assess. It should also provide a brief explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes.

Subject Offering Department	CBS
Cluster Area	<input type="checkbox"/> Human Nature, Relations and Development <input type="checkbox"/> Community, Organization and Globalisation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> History, Cultures and World Views <input type="checkbox"/> Science, Technology and Environment
Medium of Instruction	English
Requirements intended to fulfil	<input type="checkbox"/> China-Study Requirement (CSR) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English Reading (ER) and English Writing (EW) <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese Reading (CR) and Chinese Writing (CW)