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Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Submission Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Action-Date: \_\_\_\_\_

UWUCC USE Only  
Number: 96-23  
Submission Date: 3-18-97  
Action-Date: 4-1-97

**CURRICULUM PROPOSAL COVER SHEET**  
University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

**I. CONTACT**

Contact Person Jim Cahalan Phone X2262  
Department English Email: Jim\_Cahalan or JCAHALAN

**II. PROPOSAL TYPE (Check All Appropriate Lines)**

**COURSE** Film Theory  
Suggested 20 character title

**New Course \*** EN 356 Film Theory  
Course Number and Full Title

**Course Revision** \_\_\_\_\_  
Course Number and Full Title

**Liberal Studies Approval +** \_\_\_\_\_  
**for new or existing course** Course Number and Full Title

**Course Deletion** \_\_\_\_\_  
Course Number and Full Title

**Number and/or Title Change** \_\_\_\_\_  
Old Number and/or Full Old Title  
\_\_\_\_\_  
New Number and/or Full New Title

**Course or Catalog Description Change** \_\_\_\_\_  
Course Number and Full Title

**PROGRAM:**  Major  Minor  Track

**New Program \*** \_\_\_\_\_  
Program Name

**Program Revision \*** \_\_\_\_\_  
Program Name

**Program Deletion \*** \_\_\_\_\_  
Program Name

**Title Change** \_\_\_\_\_  
Old Program Name  
\_\_\_\_\_  
New Program Name

**III. Approvals (signatures and date)**

Virginia Pendue Mar 6 1996 D. S. W. Pluse 5/10/96  
Department Curriculum Committee Department Chair

[Signature] 10/24/96 [Signature] 10/30/96  
College Curriculum Committee College Dean

Mark Slagter 11/1/96 Mark Slagter 11/1/96  
+ Director of Liberal Studies (where applicable) \*Provost (where applicable)

## Course Syllabus

### I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

EN 356 Film Theory

3 credits  
3 lecture hours  
0 lab hours  
(3c-0l-3sh)

Prerequisite: EN 101, 208

An introduction to major film theories, studied in relation to representative films. Details the complex relationship between film production and film theory: i.e., how theorists have attempted to explain what appears on the screen, its impact, and its relation to "reality," and how filmmakers have responded to the works of theorists (with the two sometimes being the same). Goes far deeper into understanding film than EN 208, which focuses mainly on how film is constructed through aesthetic and institutional processes.

### II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

As a result of course activities, students will be able to:

1. analyze on a much deeper level what film reveals about our world and about ourselves.
2. determine what perspectives on film are most valuable, and why certain perspectives have been rejected.
3. express why understanding our perspectives on film provides a framework for political, economic, and social attitudes.

### III. COURSE OUTLINE

Topic I: Classic Film Theory: This section of the course will consider the perspectives of such theorists as Siegfried Kracauer, Andre Bazin, Rudolf Arnheim, Sergei Eisenstein, and V. F. Perkins as well as criticism of their works by Noel Carroll.

Representative films to be considered will include Robert Wiene's The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1920), Eisenstein's Battleship Potemkin (1925), and Vittorio de Sica's The Bicycle Thief (1948). 35%

Topic II: Auteur and Genre Theory: This section of the

course will consider artistic, institutional, and narrative forces that shape the classical Hollywood film. A number of significant contemporary readings might be used which focus on the importance of the director, writer, performers, and production companies while others might focus on genres such as westerns, musicals, detective films, or family melodramas.

Representative films to be considered could include John Ford's Stagecoach (1939), Vincente Minnelli's Meet Me in St. Louis (1944), Douglas Sirk's Written on the Wind (1957), or Roman Polanski's Chinatown (1974). 30%

Topic III: Contemporary Perspectives: Psychology, society, and ideology. Though this section of the course may reach into the past for some of its readings, most of the material will come from more recent theorists such as Jean-Louis Baudry, Christian Metz, Laura Mulvey, Mary Ann Doane, Gaylyn Studlar, and (once again) Noel Carroll. The function of the cinematic apparatus, the nature of semiotics, the psychology of spectating, the ideological nature of the cinema, and feminist perspectives are all possible topics for this section of the course.

Representative films to be considered could include Ingmar Bergman's Persona (1961), Jean-Luc Godard's Contempt (1963), A Woman is a Woman (1961), or Hail, Mary (1988), Claudia Weil's Girl Friends (1978), or avant-garde films from the collection We Are Not Sugar and Spice and Everything Nice (various years). 35%

#### IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will demonstrate mastery of course objectives through successful completion of the following course requirements:

Completion of assigned readings in textbooks.

Participation in class discussion and activities.

Develop skills in watching and analyzing film presentations.

Timely completion of critical papers.

Thorough investigation of library sources for research paper approved by instructor with full bibliography.

#### V. EVALUATION METHODS

A. Summarizing Essays. For each section of the course, students will be required to write a five-page essay based on their choice of topics to be selected by the instructor.

These essays must show a strong understanding of the concepts presented during that particular section of the course, incorporating both some of the readings and some of the films studied. Each essay will be worth 20% of the final grade, making them 60% of the grade altogether. 60%

B. Major Research Essay. For this essay, the student will conduct an independent study of a specific theorist or theoretical perspective. This paper might seek to answer questions raised in consultation with the professor, develop and answer its own questions, or perhaps work through some of the material in order to raise a whole new series of questions. These papers will be worth 20% of the final grade. 20%

C. Daily Assignments. These will most likely consist of film viewings, class discussions, response papers, and occasional quizzes. They will also be worth 20% of the final grade. This percentage might even be increased, since I believe that the purpose of this course should be to help students become comfortable with exploring theoretical issues and will thus require constant attendance and a lot of discussion. 20%

Grading scale:      A 92-100 total points  
                          B 83-91 total points  
                          C 74-82 total points  
                          D 65-73 total points  
                          F 0-64 total points

#### VI. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

This course proposal has been built around the fourth edition of Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings, edited by Gerald Mast, Marshall Cohen, and Leo Braudy (New York: Oxford U P, 1992). This text is simply the most excellent, concise introduction to the field in existence. It will provide students an introduction to the primary elements in many areas of the field and lead them on to further texts in our library that they can use to continue their study. These texts (listed in the bibliography below) I would put on reserve to make certain that they would be available to my students during the semester.

#### VII. SPECIAL RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

Only the listed texts and materials for writing/note taking and video equipment in the department are required. No special resources will be needed.

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arnheim, Rudolf. Film as Art. Berkeley: U. of California P, 1957.
- Bazin, Andre. What is Cinema?, vols. 1 & 2. Berkeley: U. of California P, 1967.
- Braudy, Leo. The World in a Frame. Doubleday, 1976.
- Carroll, Noel. Mystifying Movies. Columbia U P, 1988.
- . Philosophical Problems of Classical Film Theory. Princeton U P, 1988.
- Corrigan, Timothy. A Cinema Without Walls: Movies and Culture After Vietnam. Rutgers U P, 1991.
- Eisenstein, Sergei M. Film Form. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1949.
- . Film Sense. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1947.
- Hansen, Miriam. Babel & Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film. Harvard U P, 1991.
- Hedges, Inez. Breaking the Frame: Film Language and the Experience of Limits. Indiana U P, 1991.
- Kracauer, Siegfried. From Caligari to Hitler. Princeton U P, 1947.
- Mast, Gerald. Film/Cinema/Movie: A Theory of Experience. Harper & Row, 1977.
- Mellencamp, Patricia. Indiscretions: Avant-Garde Film, Video, & Feminism. Indiana U P, 1990.
- Metz, Christian. The Imaginary Signifier. Oxford U P, 1974.
- Penley, Constance. Feminism and Film Theory. Routledge, 1988.
- Rosen, Philip. Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology: A Film Theory Reader. Columbia U P, 1986.
- Silverman, Kaja. The Subject of Semiotics. Oxford U P, 1983.
- Smith, Joseph H. Images in Our Souls: Cavell, Psychoanalysis, and Cinema. Johns Hopkins U P, 1987.
- Stam, Robert. Reflexivity in Film and Literature: From Don

Quixote to Jean-Luc Godard. Columbia U P, 1992.

Tyler, Parker. Magic and Myth of the Movies. Simon & Schuster, 1970.

Wollen, Peter. Signs and Meaning in the Cinema. Indiana U P, 1972.

## 356 Course Analysis Questionnaire

### Section A: Details of the Course

- A1 This course is intended for B.A. English majors. It is one of the courses that can be taken as a free elective (category G) within the BA program. It is not currently being proposed as a Liberal Studies elective.
- A2 This course does not require changes in content of any other existing courses or programs in the department.
- A3 This course has not been offered at IUP before.
- A4 This course is not intended to be a dual-level course and will accommodate only undergraduates.
- A5 This course may not be taken for variable credit.
- A6 Other higher education institutions currently offering a similar course include these ones:
- UCLA: Film Criticism  
Univ. of CA--Irvine: Classic Film Theory  
Univ. of Southern CA.: Film Theories  
Univ. of CA--Berkeley: History of Film Theory
- A7 Relevant accrediting agencies (such as the Association of Departments of English) recommend but do not require this course.
- A8 The content and skills of this course are not required by a professional society, accrediting authority, law, or other external agency. No other existing course focuses on the material covered in this course.

### Section B: Interdisciplinary Implications

- B1 This course will be taught by one instructor.
- B2 This course does not overlap with any course in any other department in the university.
- B3 One or more seats will be reserved in this course for students from the School of Continuing Education.

### Section C: Implementation

- C1 No additional faculty resources are required to teach this course.
- C2 Current resources are adequate to teach this course.

- C3 No resources for this course are funded by a grant.
- C4 This course will be offered in our rotation so that at least one (or more than one) section in the category of courses into which this course fits (see summary table at the beginning of our program revision document) will be offered every semester, making sure that students can get the courses they need.
- C5 One section of the course is anticipated each semester the course is offered.
- C6 We plan to accommodate a maximum of twenty-five students in a section of this course (though twenty would be a better size). This number is not limited by the availability of resources but by the nature and complexity of the material, which will require quite a bit of class discussion, writing, and conferencing.
- C7 ADE Guidelines for Class Size and Work Load for College and University Teachers of English: A Statement of Policy of the Association of Departments of English (1993): "College English teachers should teach no more than thirty-five students in a literature course and no more than twenty-five in a writing-intensive course" (2).