

FILM STUDIES

Students may complete a minor in Film Studies.

Film Studies is an interdisciplinary program of inquiry bringing a range of analytical methods to bear upon films, film audiences, and the social and industrial contexts of film and media production, distribution and exhibition. The courses that comprise the minor in film studies reflect the diversity of approaches in the academic study of cinema. The minor is anchored by core courses in formal analysis, history and theory. Elective courses in particular film styles, directors, national cinemas, genres, areas of theory and criticism, video production, and issues in film and media culture add both breadth and depth to this program of study.

Film Studies is a Bryn Mawr College minor. Students must take a majority of courses on the Bryn Mawr campus; however, minors are encouraged to consider courses offered in the Tri-College consortium and at the University of Pennsylvania. Students should work with the director of the Film Studies Program to develop a minor work plan when declaring the minor.

Minor Requirements

In consultation with the program director, students design a program of study that includes a range of film genres, styles, national cinemas, eras and disciplinary and methodological approaches. Students are strongly encouraged to take at least one course addressing topics in global or non-western cinema. The minor consists of a total of six courses and must include the following:

1. One introductory course in the formal analysis of film
2. One course in film history or an area of film history
3. One course in film theory or an area of film theory
4. Three electives.

At least one of the six courses must be at the 300 level. Courses that fall into two or more of the above categories may fulfill the requirement of the student's choosing, but may not fulfill more than one requirement simultaneously. Students should consult with their advisers to determine which courses, if any, may count simultaneously for multiple credentials. Final approval is at the discretion of the program director.

EALC B240 Topics in Chinese Film (1 Unit)

This is a topics course. Course content varies.

EALC B315 Spirits, Saints, Snakes, Swords: Women in East Asian Literature & Film (1 Unit)

This interdisciplinary course focuses on a critical survey of literary and visual texts by and about Chinese women. We will begin by focusing on the cultural norms that defined women's lives beginning in early China, and consider how those tropes are reflected and rejected over time and geographical borders (in Japan, Hong Kong and the United States). No prior knowledge of Chinese culture or language necessary.

ENGL B105 Hollywood on Hollywood (1 Unit)

How did Hollywood become a global powerhouse of cultural production? How have Hollywood films responded to technological and political change? What, frankly, does Hollywood think about itself? This class will provide an introduction to the history of Hollywood film production through the stories Hollywood has told about itself, from the golden age of the studio system, to the trailblazing directors of New Hollywood, to the contemporary world of franchises and streaming. By watching movies about movies, we will consider Hollywood as a land of both enchanting dreams and deadly nightmares, populated with forgotten film stars, maniacal directors, aspiring outsiders, and insufferable studio executives. In so doing, students will learn how to watch movies critically, considering their thematic content and their historical conditions of production, and gain an understanding of and appreciation for Hollywood's history and its connection to American and global politics. Likely films include *Singin' in the Rain*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *The Player*, and *Mulholland Dr.*

ENGL B205 Introduction to Film (1 Unit)

This course is intended to provide students with the tools of critical film analysis. Through readings of images and sounds, sections of films and entire narratives, students will cultivate the habits of critical viewing and establish a foundation for focused work in film studies. The course introduces formal and technical units of cinematic meaning and categories of genre and history that add up to the experiences and meanings we call cinema. Although much of the course material will focus on the Hollywood style of film, examples will be drawn from the history of cinema. Attendance at weekly screenings is mandatory.

ENGL B213 Global Cinema (1 Unit)

This course introduces students to one possible history of global cinema. We will discuss and analyze a variety of filmmakers and film movements from around the world. Students will be exposed to the discipline of film studies as it is specifically related to the cinema of East Asia, South Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East. We will study these works with special emphasis on film language, aesthetics, and politics, as well as film style and genre. Along the way, we will explore a number of key terms and concepts, including colonialism, postcolonialism, form, realism, surrealism, futurism, orientalism, modernity, postmodernity, hegemony, the subaltern, and globalization. Filmmakers will include, among others, Wong Kar-wai, Satyajit Ray, Shirin Neshat, Fernando Mereilles, Agnès Varda, and Werner Herzog.

ENGL B228 Post-Nuclear Literature and Film (1 Unit)

Since the first nuclear explosions rocked the world in 1945, from the Indigenous lands of New Mexico to the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, literature and film have had to reckon with the fact that the potential destructions of the literary archive—not to mention the world itself—no longer required divine intervention or literary speculation: apocalypse had moved from the realm of fiction to the realm of fact. Since that day, fiction and film have explored the impact these weapons have had on politics, the environment, and billions of lifeforms, human and nonhuman alike. By reading such works, we'll consider the nuclear not only as an isolated event but as a continuous process, from the extraction of uranium on Indigenous lands, to production and testing, to the accumulation of nuclear materials and waste. We'll also explore how novels and films have had to contort their forms to properly represent the time-bending reality of the bomb, by looking at Indigenous novels from both the Americas and the Pacific, Japanese historical fiction and monster movies, major Hollywood productions, Soviet cinema, and postmodern fiction. Students will leave the class with a sense of the nuclear issue's past and ongoing importance while practicing and learning literary and film analysis. Likely authors include Masuji Ibuse, Thomas Pynchon, Leslie Marmon Silko, and Albert Wendt, and likely films include *Godzilla*, *Hiroshima mon amour*, *Oppenheimer*, *Stalker*, and footage of nuclear testing itself.

ENGL B231 Horror Film (1 Unit)

How has cinema visualized monsters, death, spectral presences, and all that is beyond human comprehension? How (and why) has it sought to elicit fear, revulsion, and horror from its viewers? In this class, we'll explore these and other questions through a broad survey of the horror film across cinematic history. We'll consider a wide range of films and subgenres, including gothic silent films, "golden age" monster movies, 80s slasher films, and found footage horror. We'll also watch contemporary examples of how filmmakers like Jordan Peele, Ana Lily Amirpour, and Matt Farley have used the horror genre to produce independent, original, and critically acclaimed movies in an era dominated by franchises and high budgets. We'll pay particular attention to how the vampires, zombies, killers, and victims of horror are racialized, gendered, and classed, showing us how horror seeks (and often fails) to contain societal fears and anxieties within the realm of the fantastic. Likely films will include *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, *The Night of the Living Dead*, *Get Out*, and *A Girl Walks Home at Night*, among others. This course presumes no prior knowledge of film studies, and we'll read film criticism and scholarship to learn how to think, talk, and write about movies generally and horror films specifically. CW: Given the subject of the course, we will be watching a number of films that include disturbing or frightening imagery or themes. That said, the professor will happily provide content warnings on specific topics or themes if desired.

ENGL B232 Race on Film: From Student Movements to BLM (1 Unit)

This course will introduce students to cinematic representations of and engagements with race since the late 1960s. In the years following the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the student movements of the late 1960s, struggles for racial justice evolved in response to the development of new "colorblind" forms of oppression and the persistence of racial and economic inequality in spite of the Civil Rights movement's significant political victories. Filmmakers of color experimented with how best to represent and intervene in this struggle while Hollywood production companies sought to incorporate racial difference into their market share. We will watch a large variety of films, with a particular focus on Black cinema, from documentaries of the 1960s social movements, to early Blaxploitation films, to the L.A. Rebellion, to contemporary responses to the Black Lives Matter movement, alongside examples of Asian-American cinema, Chicana cinema, New Queer Cinema, and Indigenous science fiction. We will ask questions about the importance and limitations of representation, the relationship between political movements and art, and the intersections of race with gender, sexuality, and economic class. We will pair short theoretical and critical readings with films by, among others, Charles Burnett, Julie Dash, Cheryl Dunye, Spike Lee, Gregory Nava, and Wayne Wang.

ENGL B267 Theories of the Image (1 Unit)

Our contemporary world contains a seemingly endless amount of images, from television and cinema to the jpegs, gifs, and memes of social media and the internet, but this was not always the case. This class will consider how theorists and philosophers reckoned with the rise of the image and the birth of "image culture." What exactly is an image? What happens when an image can be reproduced and disseminated at unimagined speeds? What happens when that image moves? What sort of gazes does the image produce, and what are the social and political power of such gazes? We will pay particular attention to how the invention of cinema changed the meaning of the image at the end of the 19th century and how, in turn, the end of World War II (with the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the discovery of the Nazi's extermination camps) challenged the meaning of cinema, undermining its supposed ability to show us what was "real." In asking these and related questions, this course will provide students with a robust understanding of film theory and of different theoretical and historical approaches to the image. We will consider a wide range of methods—including Marxism, critical race theory, feminist theory, and psychoanalysis—and view a number of photographic, cinematic, and digital images against which we can test these theories. Fulfills Film Studies Theory course requirement

ENGL B294 Iranian Cinema: Before and After the Revolution (1 Unit)

One of the most celebrated global cinemas to date, Iranian cinema has been recognized in film festivals around the world for its unique aesthetic vision, political complexities, and social import. This course will expose students to major masterpieces of Iranian cinema both prior to and after the Islamic Revolution of 1979. Along the way, students will learn to meaningfully engage topics such as film form, colonialism, imperialism, labor migration, realism, expressionism, and issues concerning the politics of gender, race, ethnicity, and religion.

ENGL B336 Topics in Film (1 Unit)

This is a topics course and description varies according to the topic.

ENGL B340 Iranian Cinema: Before and After the Revolution (1 Unit)

One of the most celebrated global cinemas to date, Iranian cinema has been recognized in film festivals around the world for its unique aesthetic vision, political complexities, and social import. This course will expose students to major masterpieces of Iranian cinema both prior to and after the Islamic Revolution of 1979. Along the way, students will learn to meaningfully engage topics such as film form, colonialism, imperialism, labor migration, realism, expressionism, and issues concerning the politics of gender, race, ethnicity, and religion.

ENGL B357 A Star is Born: Race, Gender, and Celebrity (1 Unit)

This course will explore the concept of celebrity in cinema and cinematic culture from the standpoint of race and gender. Focusing on, but not limiting ourselves to, the classical Hollywood cinema (about the 1910s to the 1960s), we will approach the topic of stardom from theoretical and institutional perspectives. We will quickly discover that the study of celebrity opens out onto broad questions about the distinction between art and reality. What is the distinction, for instance, between a person and a character? What is it about celebrities that makes this question especially salient? What are we doing, precisely, when we identify with a character on screen, and, moreover, when that character is played by someone extremely famous? What are the racial, sexual, and gendered performances that go into the construction of celebrity? What political operations are at work in the formal construction of identification? Under what circumstances is identification something to be complicated, challenged, or avoided altogether? Celebrity also seems to hold within it the promise of its own demise. The extremely famous, for instance, are susceptible to infamy—or worse, irrelevance. How do race, gender, and sexuality intersect with fame's fundamental fragility, the way that celebrity seems to court obsolescence? We will examine these and other questions by way of classical and contemporary stars such as Josephine Baker, Bette Davis, Marlene Dietrich, Greta Garbo, Judy Garland, Anna May Wong, Beyoncé, and Lady Gaga.

GEOL B112 Geology in Film (1 Unit)

Geologic processes make for great film storylines, but filmmakers take great liberty with how they depict scientific "facts" and scientists. We will explore how and why filmmakers choose to deviate from science reality. We will study and view one film per week and discuss its issues from a geologist's perspective.

GERM B217 Representing Diversity in German Cinema (1 Unit)

German society has undergone drastic changes as a result of immigration. Traditional notions of Germanness have been and are still being challenged and subverted. This course uses films and visual media to examine the experiences of various minority groups living in Germany. Students will learn about the history of immigration of different ethnic groups, including Turkish Germans, Afro-Germans, Asian Germans, Arab Germans, German Jews, and ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe. We will explore discourses on migration, racism, xenophobia, integration, and citizenship. We will seek to understand not only the historical and contemporary contexts for these films but also their relevance for reshaping German society. Students will be introduced to modern German cinema from the silent era to the present. They will acquire terminology and methods for reading films as fictional and aesthetic representations of history and politics, and analyze identity construction in the worlds of the real and the reel. This course is taught in English.

GERM B321 Advanced Topics in German Cultural Studies (1 Unit)

This is a topics course. Course content varies. Recent topic titles include: Asia and Germany through Film; The Letter, the Spirit, and Beyond: German-Jewish Writers and Jewish Culture in the 18th and 19th Century.

HART B110 Introduction to Medieval Art and Architecture (1 Unit)

This course takes a broad geographic and chronological scope, allowing for full exposure to the rich variety of objects and monuments that fall under the rubric of "medieval" art and architecture. We focus on the Latin and Byzantine Christian traditions, but also consider works of art and architecture from the Islamic and Jewish spheres. Topics to be discussed include: the role of religion in artistic development and expression; secular traditions of medieval art and culture; facture and materiality in the art of the middle ages; the use of objects and monuments to convey political power and social prestige; gender dynamics in medieval visual culture; and the contribution of medieval art and architecture to later artistic traditions. This course was formerly numbered HART B212; students who previously completed HART B212 may not repeat this course.

HART B170 History of Narrative Cinema, 1945 to the present (1 Unit)

This course surveys the history of narrative film from 1945 to the present. We will analyze a chronological series of styles and national cinemas, including Classical Hollywood, Italian Neorealism, the French New Wave, and other post-war movements and genres. Viewings of canonical films will be supplemented by more recent examples of global cinema. While historical in approach, this course emphasizes the theory and criticism of the sound film, and we will consider various methodological approaches to the aesthetic, socio-political, and psychological dimensions of cinema. Readings will provide historical context, and will introduce students to key concepts in film studies such as realism, formalism, spectatorship, the auteur theory, and genre studies. Fulfills the history requirement or the introductory course requirement for the Film Studies minor. This course was formerly numbered HART B299; students who previously completed HART B299 may not repeat this course.

HART B235 Critical Approaches to Visual Representation: Identification in the Cinema (1 Unit)

This course is writing intensive. An introduction to the analysis of film and other lensed, time-based media through particular attention to the role of the spectator. Why do moving images compel our fascination? How exactly do spectators relate to the people, objects, and places that appear on the screen? Wherein lies the power of images to move, attract, repel, persuade, or transform their viewers? Students will be introduced to film theory through the rich and complex topic of identification. We will explore how points of view are framed by the camera in still photography, film, television, video games, and other media. Prerequisite: one course in History of Art at the 100-level or permission of the instructor. Enrollment preference given to majors and minors in History of Art and Film Studies. Fulfills Film Studies Introductory or Theory course requirement. This course was formerly numbered HART B110; students who previously completed HART B110 may not repeat this course.

HART B380 Topics in Film Studies (1 Unit)

This is a topics course. Course content varies. Prerequisite: one course in History of Art at the 100- or 200-level or permission of the instructor. Enrollment preference given to majors and minors in History of Art and Film Studies. This course was formerly numbered HART B334.

HIST B284 Movies and America: The Past Lives Forever (1 Unit)

Movies are one of the most important means by which Americans come to know – or think they know—their own history. We look to old movies to tell us about a world we never knew but think we can access through film. And Hollywood often reaches into the past to tell a good story. How can we understand the impact of our love affair with movies on our understanding of what happened in this country? In this course we will examine the complex cultural relationship between film and American historical self-fashioning.

HIST B284 Movies and America: The Past Lives Forever (1 Unit)

Movies are one of the most important means by which Americans come to know – or think they know—their own history. We look to old movies to tell us about a world we never knew but think we can access through film. And Hollywood often reaches into the past to tell a good story. How can we understand the impact of our love affair with movies on our understanding of what happened in this country? In this course we will examine the complex cultural relationship between film and American historical self-fashioning.

RUSS B258 Soviet and Eastern European Cinema of the 1960s (1 Unit)

This course examines 1960s Soviet and Eastern European “New Wave” cinema, which won worldwide acclaim through its treatment of war, gender, and aesthetics. Films from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Russia, and Yugoslavia will be viewed and analyzed, accompanied by readings on film history and theory. All films shown with subtitles; no knowledge of Russian or previous study of film required.

RUSS B258 Soviet and Eastern European Cinema of the 1960s (1 Unit)

This course examines 1960s Soviet and Eastern European “New Wave” cinema, which won worldwide acclaim through its treatment of war, gender, and aesthetics. Films from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Russia, and Yugoslavia will be viewed and analyzed, accompanied by readings on film history and theory. All films shown with subtitles; no knowledge of Russian or previous study of film required.

RUSS B365 Russian and Soviet Film Culture (1 Unit)

This seminar explores the cultural and theoretical trends that have shaped Russian and Soviet cinema from the silent era to the present day. The focus will be on Russia's films and film theory, with discussion of the aesthetic, ideological, and historical issues underscoring Russia's cinematic culture. Taught in Russian. No previous study of cinema required, although RUSS 201 or the equivalent is required.

SPAN B252 Compassion, Indignation, and Anxiety in Latin American Film (1 Unit)

Stereotypically, Latin Americans are viewed as “emotional people”—often a euphemism to mean irrational, impulsive, wildly heroic, fickle. This course takes this expression at face value to ask: Are there particular emotions that identify Latin Americans? And, conversely, do these “people” become such because they share certain emotions? Can we find a correlation between emotions and political trajectories? To answer these questions, we will explore three types of films that seem to have, at different times, taken hold of the Latin American imagination and feelings: melodramas (1950s-1960s), documentaries (1970s-1990s), and “low-key” comedies (since 2000s.) This course is offered in both Spanish and English.

Prerequisite: SPAN 120 or permission of instructor