

## 61658 - Film genres

### Información del Plan Docente

<b>Academic Year</b>	2016/17
<b>Academic center</b>	103 - Facultad de Filosofía y Letras
<b>Degree</b>	552 - Master's in Advanced Studies in English-language Literature and Cinema
<b>ECTS</b>	7.5
<b>Course</b>	1
<b>Period</b>	First semester
<b>Subject Type</b>	Optional
<b>Module</b>	---

### **1.Basic info**

#### **1.1.Recommendations to take this course**

The main aim of this course is to provide students with in-depth knowledge of the most relevant approaches to the study of film genre. Due to the advanced nature of the study of genre, this objective cannot be pursued in the undergraduate film courses. It is therefore advisable that the students should be familiarized with film literature and with the basic concepts of film theory before taking up the course. Likewise, students are expected to have a general knowledge of the history and the culture of English-speaking countries. Students are also expected to read the assigned readings before each session and contribute actively to class discussions.

#### **1.2.Activities and key dates for the course**

- 1) Presentation and discussion of the theoretical approaches included in the programme.
- 2) Application of the main tenets of these approaches to the analysis of various types of films (see course planning).
- 3) Group analysis of a selection of films from the perspective of the critical approaches to genre presented in the theory sessions (see course planning).
- 4) Writing of several short critical essays and of a 3,000-word essay. Deadline for the submission of the essays: as per exam schedule of the Faculty.

### **2.Initiation**

#### **2.1.Learning outcomes that define the subject**

The student, in order to pass the course, will have to show her/his competence in the following skills:

Identify, understand and carry out a critical analysis of the social and cultural reality of English-speaking countries through their cinematographies

Develop and apply original ideas in the research context of British and U.S. film studies

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Interrelate knowledge of different topics and apply the appropriate methodology and theoretical approaches for the interpretation of a corpus of English-language films

Carry out an autonomous research project in the field of film studies in English

Know the different film genre theories from a formal and cultural perspective as they apply to British and U.S. films

Understand the dynamics of film genre conventions from British and U.S. cinema and their connection with cultural issues

Apply the appropriate methodology to the study of film narrative

Analyse British and U.S. films from formal and cultural perspectives

Assess questions regarding film narrative and select the critical perspective that allows understanding

### 2.2.Introduction

Brief presentation of the course

The main objective of this course is to provide students with an introduction to some of the generic approaches to the study of cinema.

### 3.Context and competences

#### 3.1.Goals

The expected results of the course respond to the following general aims

The main objective of this course is to provide an introduction to some of the genre approaches of film analysis, testing their explanatory potential through close analysis of a selection of film texts. The specific aims of the course are: i) to provide basic critical tools to understand and analyse genre films, ii) to familiarize students with genre as critical approach, iii) to test the explanatory power of this approach through its application to film texts, iv) to improve the students' skills in the use of English in a scholarly and critical environment, v) to reinforce the students' critical response to film texts.

#### 3.2.Context and meaning of the subject in the degree

Together with the courses "Working with Film in English" and "Cinema, Culture and Society" it introduces students to relevant critical approaches to the analysis of texts in English, and seeks to develop students' critical response to these texts. Together with "Issues in Representation", it introduces students to the basic critical tools in the understanding and analysis of texts in English, as well as to the development of skills in the use of English in a scholarly and critical environment.

#### 3.3.Competences

After completing the course, the student will be competent in the following skills:

CG4: Develop and apply original ideas in the research context of English Studies, and more particularly in the fields of literature and film

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CG5: Establish connections between different types of knowledge about literature and film in English while applying the methodology and theoretical approaches relevant to their interpretation

CE1: Mobilize knowledge about film genre theory in British and US cinema from both a formal and cultural viewpoint

CE2: Develop awareness about the operations of British and US film genre conventions and their connections with cultural movements

CE3: Apply the relevant methodology to the study of film genre

CE4: Analyse British and US film texts from a formal and cultural perspective

CE5: Combine notions from different fields in order to elaborate critical analyses about British and US genre cinema

CE6: Evaluate problems about film genre and choose the relevant critical perspective to understand them

### 3.4.Importance of learning outcomes

The proposed aims of this course are crucial to provide students with a sound theoretical and methodological background that will allow them to conduct research in English successfully. Similarly, the specific aims of this subject are essential skills to carry out the research process (i.e. using critical tools for understanding and analysing generic film texts in English, applying critical approaches to a corpus of film texts and developing a critical response to these texts). The ability to develop and apply original ideas in an academic and research context is a fundamental skill to conduct successful research in the field of Film Studies. The same applies to the ability to interrelate knowledge from different fields, handle complex information, apply the proper methodology and framework, express critical views and provide conclusions in clear and appropriate English for both specialized and non-specialized audiences, and the ability to conduct research autonomously.

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### 4.Evaluation

The student will prove that he/she has achieved the expected learning results by means of the following assessment tasks:

#### I. First Official Announcement

- a) Ongoing assessment (if applicable)
- b) Global examination (to be determined in the academic calendar)

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**Assessment Task 1: Prepare and write brief critical essays on the required readings and films that have been set during the course.** Students will be assessed on their capacity to understand theoretical concepts and to apply them to the texts to be analysed, as well as on their correct use of academic English (at a C1 level). These activities are directed towards achieving learning objectives 1, 2, and 3 = 10%.

Deadline for the submission of the brief written essays: as per exams schedule of the Faculty.

**Assessment Task 2: Write an essay in English.** Students are required to write a 3,000 word essay on an aspect related to the contents of the course using correct English (at a C1 level). The topic of the essay will be previously agreed on with the teacher. This essay is expected to demonstrate that the students have achieved the course's global objectives (1, 2, 3, and 4). The essay will be graded 0-10, and will account for 90% of the student's final mark.

Deadline for the submission of the essay: as per exam schedule of the Faculty.

### Assessment criteria

- Definition of key concepts. Initial hypothesis. Use of a theoretical framework and methodology. Use of primary sources. Literature review. Well-argued discourse and relevant conclusions = 40%.

- Independence, originality and critical examination = 10%.

- Information structure and organization of the essay. Text layout. Correct use of English language and style appropriateness = 20%.

- Reasoning capacity to exemplify, illustrate, propose textual evidence and defend the student's own point of view critically = 30%.

## II. Second Official Announcement

**Assessment Task 1: Prepare and write brief critical essays on the required readings and films that have been set during the course.** Students will be assessed on their capacity to understand theoretical concepts and to apply them to the texts to be analysed, as well as on their correct use of academic English (at a C1 level). These activities are directed towards achieving learning objectives 1, 2, and 3 = 10%.

Deadline for the submission of the brief written essays: as per exams schedule of the Faculty.

**Assessment Task 2: Write an essay in English.** Students are required to write a 3,000 word essay on an aspect related to the contents of the course using correct English (at a C1 level). The topic of the essay will be previously agreed on with the teacher. This essay is expected to demonstrate that the students have achieved the course's global objectives (1, 2, 3, and 4). The essay will be graded 0-10, and will account for 90% of the student's final mark.

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### 5. Activities and resources

#### 5.1. General methodological presentation

The learning process that has been designed for this course is based on the following activities:

This course has been specifically designed to train researchers in criticism and theory in the field of British and US American Film Studies. For this reason, the proposed activities (the analysis of film texts by means of critical tools and the comments on, presentation of, and reflections on these analyses from a theoretical perspective) are aimed at the application of the fundamental principles of the critical and theoretical approach of genre to the analysis of representative British and US American film texts.

The course is organized in three stages: 1. Learning of the critical approaches and analytical tools; 2. Application of the learnt concepts through the analysis and collective discussion of the selected texts in English; and 3. Writing of an individual critical essay, applying the theoretical approaches and methods learnt, as well as the specific tools employed for the development of the selected topic of research.

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#### 5.2. Learning activities

The programme offered to the students to help them achieve the learning results includes the following activities :

1) Class activities:

-Lectures (30 hours/ 1,2 credits): theoretical classes in which lecturers will review the main concepts of film genre.

-Practical sessions (30 hours/ 1,2 credits): analytical classes in which lecturers and students will comment and analyse the compulsory readings. The analysis will be carried out in different ways: whole group discussion; small group work, in which students will discuss specific aspects of the texts that will be later shared with the rest of the class; individual reflection on questions posed by the lecturers, later shared with the class. Students should be familiar with the texts beforehand.

2) Guided Activities:

Essay writing: 45 hours/1,8 credits (online and off-campus)

3) Autonomous work:

Individual study: 82,5 study/ 3,3 credits (online and off-campus)

Syllabus

1. Genres and texts: narrative genre theory. Approaches to film genre.

2. The representation of love and sex. Romantic comedy.

3. Cinema of excess. Melodrama.

4. The representation of the 'I' and society. Crime cinema.

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5. Space and nation. The western.

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## 5.3.Program

### Syllabus

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## 5.4.Planning and scheduling

Calendar of actual sessions and presentation of works

In a typical ten-week-course, two weeks, i.e. four two-hour sessions, will be allotted to each of the five topics in the programme. Deadline for the submission of the essays: as per exam schedule of the Faculty.

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### 5.5. Bibliography and recommended resources

- Altman, Rick. *Film Genre* / Rick Altman . - 1st ed., repr. London : BFI Publishing, 2002 repr.
- Campbell, Neil. *The Rhizomatic West: Representing the American West in a Transnational, Global, Media Age* / Neil Campbell. Lincoln and London : University of Nebraska Press, cop.2008.
- *Film Genre Reader IV* / Barry Keith Grant (ed.). Austin : University of Texas Press, 2012.
- McDonald, Tamar Jeffers. *Romantic comedy : boy meets girl meets genre* / Tamar Jeffers McDonald London : Wallflower, 2007.
- Kitses, Jim. *Horizon West: Directing the Western from John Ford to Clint Eastwood* / Jim Kitses. London : BFI, 2004.
- Wright, Will. *The Wild West: The Mythical Cowboy and Social Theory* / Will Wright. London ; Thousand Oaks : SAGE, 2001.