

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of English  
with effect from Semester A 2016 / 17**

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**Part I Course Overview**

**Introduction to English Film Studies**

**Course Title:**

**EN2808**

**Course Code:**

**1 semester**

**Course Duration:**

**3**

**Credit Units:**

**B3**

**Level:**

- Arts and Humanities  
 Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations  
 Science and Technology

**Proposed Area:**

*(for GE courses only)*

**English**

**Medium of Instruction:**

**English**

**Medium of Assessment:**

**Nil**

**Prerequisites:**

*(Course Code and Title)*

**Nil**

**Precursors:**

*(Course Code and Title)*

**Nil**

**Equivalent Courses:**

*(Course Code and Title)*

**GE3401 Exploring English Cinema**

**Exclusive Courses:**

*(Course Code and Title)*

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

(A 150-word description about the course)

This course will introduce students to the fundamental concepts and terminology needed to analyze English-language films. Beginning with a focus on the technical aspects of filmmaking, the course provides students with the basic vocabulary to discuss films in speaking and writing. Building upon this formal foundation, it then guides students to “read” the meaning of films as texts situated in their social, political, and cultural contexts. Through close analyses of films in writing and oral discussions, students have many opportunities in this course to sharpen their critical thinking.

### 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1	Correctly and effectively recognize and use film terminology and apply basic film concepts to the analysis and evaluation of a given English language film or scene from an English language film.		X		
2	Examine multiple interpretive possibilities of and formulate arguments about English language films.			X	X
3	Apply analytical and critical skills when viewing and writing analyses of English language films.		X	X	X
4	Appreciate the art of filmmaking and discover individual creativity through the production of group video project		X	X	X
		100%			

\* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

### 3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4			
1	The instructor delivers interactive multimedia lectures in which the use of film terminology and analysis techniques are explained and illustrated.	X	X					
2	Students watch film and film excerpts and discuss these using the appropriate terminology and concepts.	X	X	X				
3	Students discuss various interpretations of films and the implications of these interpretations, including their social, cultural and historical contexts.	X	X	X				
4	Students write in-class quizzes asking them to analyse film scenes using the concepts learned in class	X	X					
5	Students participate in-class writing workshops. The structure and content of each writing activity will be discussed in detail, together with sample papers for each assignment (i.e., scene analysis and film analysis).	X	X	X	X			

#### 4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting*	Remarks
	1	2	3	4				
Continuous Assessment: 100_%								
<b>Essay (1)</b> Students will write a scene analysis paper, applying the skills of close film analysis and essay writing learned in class. Students will be asked to workshop a 1-page draft of their scene analysis paper in advance, which will be worth 5 % of the grade.	X	X	X				25 %	
<b>Quizzes and In-class discussion:</b> Students will in-class quizzes that will measure students' understanding of the material presented in the readings, lectures, or class discussions. Each quiz will consist of one essay question and a set of short answer questions. Students will also be assessed on the basis of their contributions to in-class discussions.	X	X	X				40 %	
<b>Group Video Project (1):</b> In groups, students will create a 5-minute video in English, seeking to apply the basic concepts of film form learned in the course, and will present the video in class (15 %). Additionally, students will be asked to submit a screenplay (5 %) and a page personal reflection paper (10 %).	X	X	X	X			35 %	
Examination: ____% (duration: _____, if applicable)								
							100%	

\* The weightings should add up to 100%.

## 5. Assessment Rubrics

*(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)*

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Adequate (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Scene Analysis Paper	Content and Style	Critically and accurately analyzes the most relevant aspects of the scene in question using appropriate terminology, presenting a clear argument supported with ample and detailed evidence. Provides a strong thesis statement and introduction that identifies the significance of the scene in relation to a broader theme in the film as a	Accurately analyzes the most relevant aspects of the scene in question using appropriate terminology, supported with sufficient and relevant evidence. Provides a good thesis statement and introduction that identifies the significance of the scene in relation to a broader theme in the film as a whole. Engages in some	Analyzes aspects of the scene in question using some relevant terminology and supported by some evidence. Provides a weak thesis statement and introduction. No attempt to identify the significance of the scene in the context of the film as a whole. Engages primarily in description and plot summary rather than analysis. Some problems with structure/organization and paragraph development. A moderate to large	Only partially fulfills the requirements of the assignment. Basic user of English.	Does not fulfill the requirements of the assignment. Basic user of English.

		<p>whole. Goes beyond description to explore the full implications of the material. Excellent organization and paragraph development. Hardly any errors. Writing style is appropriate and rhetorically effective. Proficient user of English.</p>	<p>description without exploring the full implications of the material. Effective organization and good paragraph development. A few minor errors. Writing style is appropriate. Proficient or independent user of English.</p>	<p>number of errors. Writing style may be inappropriate at times. Independent or basic user of English.</p>		
1. Group Video	<b>Content and Form</b>	<p><b>Theme, Story and Plot:</b> The film accurately and creatively captures, the assigned theme. The story is clearly represented such</p>	<p><b>Theme, Story and Plot:</b> The film captures, broadly, the assigned theme. The story is clearly represented such that the viewer</p>	<p><b>Theme, Story and Plot:</b> The film captures, broadly, the assigned theme. The story is not clearly represented. The plot is sometimes illogical and hard to follow. The</p>	Only partially fulfills the requirements of the assignment.	Does not fulfill the requirements of the assignment.

		<p>that the viewer knows what the film is trying to say about the theme. The plot is logical and innovative to follow. The viewer understands what is happening when and why.</p> <p><b>Writing and Character:</b> The characters are original and have established motivations. The characters develop in some way through the film. The writing helps the viewers understand</p>	<p>knows what the film is trying to say about the theme. The plot is logical so that the viewer understands what is happening when and why.</p> <p><b>Writing and Character:</b> The characters have established motivations. The characters develop in some way through the film. The writing helps the viewers understand something about the beliefs, feelings or desires of the</p>	<p>viewer may be confused about what is happening when and why.</p> <p><b>Writing and Character:</b> The characters do not have established motivations. The characters do not develop in some way through the film. The writing does not always help the viewers understand something about the beliefs, feelings or desires of the characters. The dialogue is natural. The dialogue is mostly narrating what is happening. The film relies too much on visuals.</p> <p><b>Editing:</b> The film is not</p>		
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		<p>something about the beliefs, feelings or desires of the characters. The dialogue is natural. The dialogue is more than just narrating what is happening.</p> <p><b>Editing:</b> The film is edited in a way that is compelling and cohesive. The film makes use of different shot types to express particular messages (ie: using establishing shots when changing location, close-ups to indicate some importance). The</p>	<p>characters. The dialogue is natural. The dialogue is more than just narrating what is happening.</p> <p><b>Editing:</b> The film is edited in a cohesive way. The film makes use of different shot types to express particular messages. The film attempts to employ classical film editing techniques like movement matching. The film attempts to use transition techniques like graphic matching.</p>	<p>edited in a persuasive way. The film does not make use of different shot types to express particular messages. The film does not attempt to employ classical film editing techniques like movement matching. The film does not attempt to use transition techniques like graphic matching.</p> <p><b>Visual Design:</b> There is no obvious visual design through costume, settings or cinematography. Visual continuity is lacking. The props are not used effectively. The film does not have an opening title sequence and a closing credit sequence.</p>		
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		<p>film skillfully employs classical film editing techniques like movement matching. The film attempts to use transition techniques like graphic matching. The film attempts to use montage or other time/space bending editing.</p> <p><b>Visual Design:</b> There is an obvious visual design through costume, settings or cinematography. There is visual continuity. The use</p>	<p><b>Visual Design:</b> There is an obvious visual design through costume, settings or cinematography. There is visual continuity. The use of props effectively.</p> <p>The film has an opening title sequence and a closing credit sequence. The film has subtitles.</p> <p><b>Technical Prowess:</b> The film look good (ie: control of lighting, interesting composition). The film <i>sounds</i> good</p>	<p>The film has no subtitles.</p> <p><b>Technical Prowess:</b> The film does not look or sound good. The film does not attempt camera effects.</p> <p><b>Performance:</b> The performances do not support the story or plot. The performances are unnatural and unbelievable.</p>		
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		<p>props effectively.</p> <p>The film has an opening title sequence and a closing credit sequence. The film has subtitles.</p> <p><b>Technical Prowess:</b></p> <p>The film look good (ie: control of lighting, interesting composition). The film <i>sounds</i> good (ie: can we hear the characters, is the sound balanced correctly). The film attempts ambitious camera effects (ie: moving camera, dynamic use of angles).</p>	<p>(ie: can we hear the characters, is the sound balanced correctly). The film attempts some camera effects.</p> <p><b>Performance:</b> The performances support the story or plot. The performances natural and believable.</p>		
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		<p><b>Performance:</b> The performances strongly support the story or plot. The performances are memorable, natural and believable.</p>				
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**Part III Other Information** (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

**1. Keyword Syllabus**

(An indication of the key topics of the course.)

principles of film form; film genres; elements of narrative; mise-en-scène; cinematography; acting; editing; sound; film history

**2. Reading List**

**2.1 Compulsory Readings**

(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	Barsam, Richard and Dave Monahan. (2010). <i>Looking at movies: An introduction to film</i> (3rd edition). New York: Norton.
2.	
3.	
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**2.2 Additional Readings**

(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Desmond, John M. and Peter Hawkes. (2006). <i>Adaptation: Studying film and literature</i> . Boston: McGraw Hill.
2.	Geiger, Jeffrey and R. L. Rutsky (Eds.). (2005). <i>Film analysis: A reader</i> . New York: Norton.
3.	Giannetti, Louis. (2008). <i>Understanding movies</i> (11th edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
4.	Hill, John and Pamela Church Gibson (Eds.). (1998). <i>The Oxford guide to film studies</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press.