



## CIEE Global Institute – Paris

<b>Course name:</b>	Contemporary French Cinema
<b>Course number:</b>	CINE 3001 PCFS (ENG)
<b>Programs offering course:</b>	Paris Open Campus
<b>Open Campus track:</b>	Communications, Journalism and New Media
<b>Language of instruction:</b>	English
<b>U.S. semester credits:</b>	3
<b>Contact hours:</b>	45
<b>Term:</b>	Spring 2019

### Course Description

This course focuses on contemporary French cinema, with an emphasis on film culture in Paris and its area. It also provides an introduction to the practice of film analysis as well as to the main figures and movements in the period considered. In addition, we will examine the importance of cinema in documenting and affecting the social, cultural, and political changes taking place in contemporary France.

### Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- master the terms that are essential for the analysis and interpretation of film, and as a spectator, sharpen their attention to the forms and meanings of images and sounds;
- become more attuned to the social and cultural forces that shape filmmaking, and which filmmaking informs in return, through a historical perspective on French cinema (artists, movements, state and private institutions, as well the practice of cinema-going);
- report on a personal, first-hand experience of film culture in Paris.

### Course Prerequisites

None.

### Methods of Instruction

The course will be articulated around the understanding of French cinema as a distinct film culture. A comparative approach with the U.S. film industry will occasionally be used to that effect.

The other key aspect of the course will involve *practice*—of film analysis through activities linked to cinephilia (the ciné-club discussion or debate) as well as more academic in nature (writing an essay on film). A particular focus here is the sometimes uneasy distinction between objective description, interpretation and opinion.

Also key in experiencing French cinema firsthand is *going out* to film or film-related events to observe a social ritual and perhaps even *take part* in it...).

Generally, student initiative and autonomy as well as collaboration will be encouraged in all



coursework.

### Assessment and Final Grade

<b>Participation</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Quizzes</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Film essay</b>	<b>30%</b>
(choice of <i>two</i> aspects for description and analysis with justification, 5%; final version, 25%)	
<b>Group presentation of field research</b>	
<b>on a film site/event</b>	<b>30%</b>
(100-word explanation of choice, 5%; slideshow or other supporting documents, 10%; delivery of presentation, 15%)	

### Course Requirements

#### **Course participation**

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

For this specific course, participation involves:

- contributions to class discussions showing preparation (mastering the terms for film description and analysis, articulating information learned from the readings)
- contributions to post-screening discussions showing attention to the film, from its details to the more general levels of its structure
- online discussions/posts concerning co-curricular activities, before or after they take place
- sharing information about French film discoveries, including films seen, events attended and places visited.

#### **Quizzes**

Following lectures on early cinema, the Second World War and the New Wave, respectively, three quizzes assess essential knowledge and understanding of the topics.

#### **Film essay: description, analysis, interpretation**

Drawing on the various terms and notions for description and analysis learned during the course as well as on the films viewed and discussed, each student writes about a French or French-speaking film chosen by the instructor, focusing more specifically on excerpts s/he chooses as representative of the whole work or as turning points in it. The objective is to



improve one's thinking about film as well as one's writing by going through important questions and stages, and to better appreciate the practice of the film essay or review.

The assignment progresses through several steps, all discussed in class (gathering and selecting information on the film, offering a synopsis and breaking down its narrative structure/explicating its discourse, identifying key moments for excerpts, choosing *two* aspects of the film for description and analysis, putting together an introduction and a conclusion).

Each student submits a 200-word proposal mentioning the two aspects of the film s/he has chosen for analysis, justifying his/her choices. The assignment culminates in a film essay carefully proofread before submission. The length ranges from 1,500 words to 2,000 words.

### **Group presentation of field research on a film(-related) event or place**

The group presentation is an oral account of an event involving film in any way (attending an exhibition on film, going to a screening in a movie theater or in a different venue, attending a concert of film scores, a film or video festival, attending a shoot, etc.). Each group initially submits a proposal which is subject to the instructor's approval.

If interested in interviewing or just meeting people to add primary material, students should feel free to do so, but it is by no means an obligation. The primary focus is on the following elements, which students should adapt, depending on the subject of their presentation:

- defining the institution, organization or theater they visited, especially through its location, the events it is in charge of, a brief history of its activity, its space(s) and architecture, its visual identity; it should be specific to Paris or another place students are visiting in France during their stay (including the study tour), *and something they could not find in the United States*;
- describing the specific moment or event students took part in (time of the day, day of the week, type of film) and the social/cultural background of other participants, as far as they could tell;
- telling about their own experience of it, and (if applicable) comparing what they noted to what a similar event would have been in the US, sharing it with other students in the group who did not get the chance to attend (and may still want to do so, in some cases).

A selection of events or places to check out in the Paris area or during the study tour will be provided by the instructor. On the day preceding the presentation, students should submit all accompanying documents through Canvas.

### **Course Attendance and Punctuality**

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all unexcused absences\* will result in a *lower participation grade* for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, unexcused absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

\*Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked



present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, *excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students will be marked absent. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event\*, as well as to Internship, Service Learning, or required field placement.*

*\*With the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.*

Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent and unexcused. *No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.*

An absence in a CIEE course will only be considered excused if:

- a doctor's note is provided
- a CIEE staff member verifies that the student was too ill to attend class
- satisfactory evidence is provided of a family emergency

Unexcused absences will lead to the following penalties:

<i>Percentage of Total Course Hours Missed</i>	<i>Equivalent Number of Open Campus Semester classes</i>	<i>Minimum Penalty</i>
Up to 10%	1	Reduction of participation grade
10 – 20%	2	Reduction of participation grade; written warning
More than 20%	3 content classes, or 4 language classes	Automatic course failure, and possible expulsion

A quick word on classroom etiquette: leaving the room during a film screening is no more appropriate than skipping pages in a novel in a literature class. Students should use regular breaks for anything that is not a health-related.

For the CIEE policy on academic integrity, please see Appendix 1 at the end of the syllabus.

### Weekly Schedule



NOTE: this schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to take advantage of current experiential learning opportunities.

## **Week 1**

### **Session 1**

- Presentation of the course, the schedule and the breakdown of assignments.
  - Discussion on perceptions of French (and European) cinemas.
  - A brief guide to film exhibition/distribution and movie-going in Paris/in France.
- Suggestions of events and places to research and visit for final group presentations.

#### *For next class*

- Read sections on aspect ratio, film gauge, framing (terms for film description and analysis) in the Files section on Canvas.
- Complete survey on Canvas on your prior experience with the subject matter of the course.

### **Session 2**

- Screening and discussion: Abderrahmane Sissako, *Timbuktu* (2014).

#### *For next class*

- Watch *Elle* (Paul Verhoeven, 2016), the film assigned for the film essay, and look up information on the film.
- Read terms for the description and analysis of angles and shot scales as well as mobile framing.

## **Week 2**

### **Session 3**

- Screening and discussion: clips from Michel Hazanavicius, *The Artist* (2011).
- Debrief on first viewing of *Elle*; discussion of information found on the film.
- Guest speaker: Emma Cogan, projectionist at movie theater L'Écran (St-Denis, north of Paris).

#### *For next class*

- Read terms for the description and analysis of sound.
- Prepare a 100-word synopsis of *Elle*, emphasizing the narrative structure and arc of the film. Add a paragraph on what you would say is the message, or discourse, of the film, being as specific as possible.
- Read Emmanuelle Toulet, *Birth of the Motion Picture*. Ch. 1-3 are required, 4-6 are recommended.



#### **Session 4**

- Co-curricular outing: visit to the Cinémathèque française.
- French film history: the 'invention' of cinema. Early film = silent film?
- Discussion of the narrative progression of *Elle*. What is the discourse of the film, in your opinion?

#### *For next class*

- Read terms for the description and analysis of mise-en-scène.
- Prepare for quiz #1.

### **Week 3**

#### **Session 5**

Quiz #1: the invention of cinema / early cinema.

Choice of film venue or event for film research presentation due.

- Screening and discussion: Olivier Nakache and Eric Toledano, *Intouchables* (2011). Do film comedies thrive on preconceptions for laughs, or can they lead to questioning of any kind?

#### *For next class*

- Read terms for the description and analysis of continuity editing.
- Reading: Jean-Pierre Jeancolas, "From the Blum-Byrnes Agreement to the GATT Affair," parts I and II (required); part III (recommended).

#### **Session 6**

- Screening and discussion: Noémie Lvovsky, *Camille redouble* (2013).
- French film history: the legacy of the Occupation and postwar eras for French cinema.

#### *For next class*

- Read terms for the description and analysis of alternatives to continuity editing.
- Identify three excerpts that represent *Elle*, according to you, and come prepared to justify your choice. Situate the excerpts precisely in the film, with time codes noted for each.

#### **Session 7**

- Screening and discussion: Mathieu Amalric, *On Tour* (2010).
- Discussion of excerpts chosen as representative of *Elle*. Which aspects of filmmaking, film form, theme do they emphasize?

#### *For next class*

- Prepare for quiz #2.



## Week 4

### Session 8

**Quiz #2: French film in the Occupation and the postwar era.**

- Screening and discussion: Robert Guédiguian, *La Ville est tranquille* (2000).

*For next class*

- Reading: Michel Marie, *The French New Wave. An Artistic School*, ch. 1 and 2.

### Session 9

- French film history: the New Wave.
- Guest speaker: Mickaël Berreby, assistant director. To be confirmed.

*For next class*

- Write outline of the two aspects of *Elle* you plan to describe and analyze.

### Session 10

**Outline of description and analysis of two aspects of *Elle* due.**

- Screening and discussion: Claire Denis, *I Can't Sleep* (1994).

*For next class*

- Prepare for quiz #3.

## Week 5

### Session 11

**Quiz #3: the New Wave.**

- Screening and discussion: Agnès Varda and JR, *Faces Places* (2016).
- Discussion: writing a good introduction and conclusion to the essay on *Elle*. How would you summarize the message, or discourse of the film at this stage?
- Course evaluations to be completed.

*For next class*

- Prepare for the presentation of your field research on a film-related event or site. Send all accompanying documents, including slideshows (Powerpoint, etc) to the instructor no later than 5pm.

### Session 12

**Final group presentations of field research on event attended/site visited, followed by Q&A.**

- Discussion: how has the course affected your perception and understanding of French cinema?



### ***Last assignment***

Final version of the assembled and proofread film essay due by Tuesday of week 6, 12:30pm.

### **Course Materials**

#### **Bibliography**

Emmanuelle Toulet, *The Birth of the Motion Picture* (1988; London, New York: Abrams, 1995).

Jean-Pierre Jeancolas, "From the Blum-Byrnes Agreement to the GATT Affair," in *Hollywood and Europe. Economics, Culture, National Identity 1945-1995*, eds. Geoffrey Nowell-Smith and Steven Ricci (London: BFI, 1998).

Michel Marie, *The French New Wave. An Artistic School*, trans. Richard Neupert (1997; Oxford: Blackwell, 2003).

#### **Recommended background reading for a general survey of French film history (available on Canvas)**

*The Oxford History of World Cinema*, ed. Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1999).

### **Academic Integrity**

CIEE subscribes to standard U.S. norms requiring that students exhibit the highest standards regarding academic honesty. Cheating and plagiarism in any course assignment or exam will not be tolerated and may result in a student failing the course or being expelled from the program. Standards of honesty and norms governing originality of work differ significantly from country to country. We expect students to adhere to both the U.S. American norms and the local norms, and in the case of conflict between the two, the more stringent of the two will prevail.

Three important principles are considered when defining and demanding academic honesty. These are related to *the fundamental tenet that one should not present the work of another person as one's own.*

The first principle is that *final examinations, quizzes and other tests must be done without assistance from another person, without looking at or otherwise consulting the work of another person, and without access to notes, books, or other pertinent information* (unless the professor has explicitly announced that a particular test is to be taken on an "open book" basis).



The second principle applies specifically to course work: *the same written paper may not be submitted in more than one course. Nor may a paper submitted at another educational institution be submitted to satisfy a paper requirement while studying abroad.*

The third principle is that *any use of the work of another person must be documented in any written papers, oral presentations, or other assignments carried out in connection with a course. This usually is done when quoting directly from another's work or including information told to you by another person* (the general rule in U.S. higher education is that if you have to look something up, or if you learned it recently either by reading or hearing something, you have to document it).

There are three levels of escalation establishing the seriousness of the plagiarism in question.

- **Level one plagiarism:** minor or unintentional plagiarism; leading to passable grade/failing grade on the assignment, depending on perspective of lecturer. No opportunity for resubmission.
- **Level two plagiarism:** significant plagiarism, but potentially due to poor referencing rather than intellectual property theft. This leads to a failing grade (potentially zero points) on the assignment. No opportunity for resubmission.
- **Level three plagiarism:** significant plagiarism, requiring investigation by the Center/Resident/Academic Director, and subsequent disciplinary panel.

Faculty will report any suspected circumstances of plagiarism to the Center/Resident/Academic Director immediately. Faculty can, if they deem it appropriate, require students to submit the Plagiarism Declaration Form (Appendix D) with each assignment as it is submitted.

In any case where Academic Honesty is in question while the student is still onsite at the program, and will impact the grade for the assignment in question, the CIEE Academic Honesty form (Appendix E) will be completed by the Center/Resident/Academic Director, signed by the professor, delivered to the student for signature and added to the student's permanent records. For any Level three violation, or repeated lower level violation, the Center/Resident/Academic Director will inform the student's home institution of the infraction and subsequent penalty.