



CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Course Name: | Czech Cinema |
| Course Number: | CINE 3009 PRAG |
| Programs offering course: | CES, CNMJ |
| Language of instruction: | English |
| U.S. Semester Credits: | 3 |
| Contact Hours: | 45 |
| Term: | Spring 2020 |

Course Description

The aim of the course is to discuss the most important trends and movements in the history of Czech cinema and to put the films within their historical (political and cultural) context. Also, we will discuss how Czech films capture the life of the Czech society during various epochs (1960s – 2010s). Each lecture is focused on a particular genre, epoch, or movement. Additionally, we will learn how to analyze the film form and style as well as acquaint ourselves with various approaches towards film criticism. During the course students will watch selected feature films in their entirety (with English subtitles) and short extracts illustrating the topic.

Please note that this course requires you to view films outside of class time.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

- classify the most important Czech directors and films;
- assess the Czechoslovak New Wave;
- explain which genres are typical for Czech cinema and why;
- analyze a Czech film of interest in its socio-cultural context;
- use various critical approaches while writing about the particular film;
- analyze a film form and style of a chosen film.

Course Prerequisites

The only prerequisite is a willingness to read, think, speak, write, and learn about Czech cinema and film style and form generally.

Methods of Instruction

The course is rather discussion-laden: one of the weekly sessions is entirely devoted to discussing one particular feature film and the other session to a lecture, which will still require a lot of student participation. Being a film class, the showing of clips is indeed necessary. Occasionally there will be presentation slides shown. We will have two field trips: to the film festival One World and Barrandov studios. Also, there will be two guest teachers.



Assessment and Final Grade

Response Papers (20%) = 200 points (50 each)

Presentation (20%) = 200 points

Midterm essay (20%) = 200 points

Final test (20%) = 200 points

Class participation (20%) = 200 points

Course Requirements

Response Papers

The students will write FOUR 500-word response papers about the films. Each response paper will be written in one of following approaches: reception criticism, feminist criticism, auteur criticism, formalist criticism (each response paper will be written within a different approach; students themselves choose which films they will be writing about and which approach would be suitable for that very film; the suggestions will be provided). All the approaches will be explained in class ahead. The papers about the particular film will be turned in BEFORE the class discussion of the film. All four response papers need to be turned in until the last day of discussion. The response papers will be graded based on consistency of the arguments: students should prove that s/he understands the particular critical approach as well as show that s/he is able to apply it to the film. Students will not write a response paper on the film s/he has a presentation on.

Presentation

One lesson each week (90 minutes) will be devoted to discussion. We will discuss the film and the reading(s) that are assigned for that day. While all the students will be familiar with the film and the reading(s), one student will have a special task to be a “leader of discussion”. S/he will prepare the handout for each student that will include the close analysis of the film based on the reading (not exclusively, student may add whatever else s/he will find important for understanding the film). The handout will include AT LEAST 5 questions for class. Those questions should be rather complicated, can be even controversial, encouraging the students to think about the film more intensively (not “Did you like the film?”). The 90 minutes time span reserved for the discussion does not mean that the “leader” will talk 90 minutes! Since everybody in class will be prepared, the “leader” will encourage all students to talk. The handout/presentation should NOT include the factual information as in the names of the cast and crew (with exception of director and DP when relevant), the number of awards and prizes the film has received, the names of the production/distribution companies associated with the film, the titles of the director’s other films etc., unless it is particularly relevant. You should instead focus on YOUR OWN analysis and/or interpretation of the film (with the help of readings assigned) and perhaps also on the additional reviews/analysis of that film available online. The presentation will be assessed based on following categories.



1. Subject. Was the presentation informative? Did it have a clear focus? Was it well researched? Was the student knowledgeable about the subject?
2. Organization/Clarity. Was it easy to follow? Was there a clear introduction and conclusion?
3. Delivering of the presentation. Was the speaker in control of the sequence, pacing and flow of the presentation? Did s/he make effective use of notes, without relying on them too heavily?
4. Sensitivity to audience. Did the speaker maintain eye contact with all members of the class? Did s/he give you time to take notes if needed? Did s/he speak clearly and loudly?
5. Handouts/Clips. Did the speaker make effective use of handouts? Did s/he used clips from the movie that were relevant to the topic discussed?

Midterm essay

Students will write a midterm essay and they will decide themselves what they want to write about. I am open to suggestions. The in-class presentation is a part of the assignment. Late submission of the essay (max 5 days) will result in lowering the grade by two-thirds of point (e.g. B + instead of A, B instead of A - , B – instead of B + etc.).

- * Essay will have 1400 words (about 6 pages double-spaced).
- * The essay that would combine your major and (particular) film is highly encouraged.
- * The essay will cover one or more Czech film(s). It does not have to necessarily be about film(s) we have seen in class, in that case, though, I need you to let me know ahead.
- * Plagiarism is unacceptable, and if any part of the assignment is plagiarized you will receive a failing grade for the essay and may fail from the overall course.

“Itinerary”:

- 1/ Think about the topic for your essay and the source(s) you would like to use.
- 2/ Meet me in a scheduled meeting and let’s discuss your project.
- 3/ Present your project to your classmates and myself and receive feedback.
- 4/ Send me a final version of your essay before midnight on the Thursday of midterm week.

Final test

A test on the material covered in class will be written during final exam week. The questions will stem from both the history of Czech cinema, as well as the film theory. One class will be entirely devoted to reviewing facts/information that will be needed to succeed on the final test.



Class Participation

CIEE Prague Class Participation Policy

Assessment of students' participation in class is an inherent component of the course grade. 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. Students are required to actively, meaningfully and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions and all types of in-class activities throughout the duration of the class. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared, as directed, in advance of each class session. This includes valued or informed engagement in, for example, small group discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Students are responsible for following the course content and are expected to ask clarification questions if they cannot follow the instructor's or other students' line of thought or argumentation.

The use of electronic devices is only allowed for computer-based in-class tests, assignments and other tasks specifically assigned by the course instructor. Students are expected to take notes by hand unless the student is entitled to the use of computer due to his/her academic accommodations. In such cases the student is required to submit an official letter issued by his/her home institution specifying the extent of academic accommodations.

Class participation also includes students' active participation in Canvas discussions and other additional tasks related to the course content as specified by the instructor.

Students will read the texts required for each lesson and discuss them in the class. Lively discussion is expected. Students should ask anything that is not clear enough, bring their own ideas, and participate actively in the program of the course.

Students will receive a partial participation grade every three weeks.

CIEE Prague Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and **all absences are treated equally regardless of reason** for any affected CIEE course. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursions or events, as well as Internship.

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.

Missing classes will lead to the following penalties:

90-minute semester classes:



| <i>Number of 90-minute classes</i> | <i>Equivalent percentage of the total course hours missed</i> | <i>Minimum penalty</i> |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| one to two 90-minute classes | up to 10% | no penalty |
| three 90-minute classes | 10.1–15% | reduction of the final grade by 3% |
| four 90-minute classes | 15.1–17% | reduction of the final grade by 5%; written warning |
| five 90-minute classes | 17.1–20% | reduction of the final grade by 7%; written warning |
| six and more 90-minute classes | more than 20% | automatic course failure and possible expulsion |

180-minute semester classes:

| <i>Number of 180-minute classes</i> | <i>Equivalent percentage of the total course hours missed</i> | <i>Minimum penalty</i> |
|--|---|---|
| one 180-minute class | up to 10% | no penalty |
| two 180-minute classes | 10.1–20% | reduction of the final grade by 5%; written warning |
| three and more 180-minute classes | more than 20% | automatic course failure and possible expulsion |

Persistent absenteeism (students approaching 20% of the total course hours missed, or violating the attendance policy in more than one class) will result in a written warning, a notification to the student’s home school, and possibly a dismissal from the program.

Missing more than 20% of the total class hours will lead to a **course failure**, and **potential program dismissal**. This is a CIEE rule that applies to all CIEE courses and is in line with the Participant Contract that each CIEE student signs before arriving on-site.

Late arrival to class will be considered a partial (up to 15 minutes late) or full (15 or more minutes late) absence. **Three partial absences due to late arrivals will be regarded as one full class absence.**

Students must notify their professor and Program Coordinators (PC) beforehand if they are going to miss class for any reason and are responsible for any material covered in class in their absence.

If missing a class during which a test, exam, the student’s presentation or other graded class assignments are administered, **make-up assignment will only be allowed in approved circumstances**, such as serious medical issues. In this case, the student must submit a local doctor’s note within 24 hours of his/her absence to the PC, who will decide whether the student qualifies for a make-up assignment. Doctor’s notes may be submitted via e-mail or



phone (a scan or a photograph are acceptable), however **the student must ensure that the note is delivered to the PC.**

Should a truly **extraordinary situation** arise, the student must contact the PC immediately concerning permission for a make-up assignment. Make-up assignments are not granted automatically! The PC decides the course of action for all absence cases that are not straightforward. **Always contact the PC with any inquiry about potential absence(s) and the nature thereof.**

Personal travel (including flight delays and cancelled flights), handling passport and other document replacements, interviews, volunteering and other similar situations are not considered justifiable reasons for missing class or getting permission for make-up assignments.

For class conflicts (irregularities in the class schedule, including field trips, make-up classes and other instances), **always contact the Academic Assistant** to decide the appropriate course of action.

Course attendance is recorded on individual Canvas Course Sites. **Students are responsible for checking their attendance regularly to ensure the correctness of the records.** In case of discrepancies, students are required to contact the Academic Assistant **within one week of the discrepancy date** to have it corrected. Later claims **will not** be considered.

CIEE staff does not directly manage absences at FAMU and ECES, but they have similar attendance policies and attendance is monitored there. Grade penalties may result from excessive absences.

CIEE Academic Honesty Policy

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 American norms and the local norms, and in the case of conflict between the two, the more stringent of the two will preside. 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 two classes. Nor may a paper for which you have already received credit at your home institution be submitted to satisfy a paper requirement while studying overseas.

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 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.

The penalty ranges from an F grade on the assignment, failure in the course to dismissal from the program. The Academic Director is consulted and involved in decision making in every case of a possible violation of academic honesty.

Weekly Schedule

| | |
|--------|--|
| Week 1 | Class 1: Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course introduction: course objectives, reading, assignments, approach, etc.• What is cinema? Class 2: Response Papers: AUTEUR CRITICISM <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jan Švankmajer (shorts) |
| Week 2 | Class 1: Field Trip Class 2: Chronology / MISE-EN-SCENE + CINEMATOGRAPHY |
| Week 3 | Class 1: Chronology II + How to write an essay (workshop) Discussion: BURNING BUSH (Hořící keř, Agnieszka Holland, 2013, 231', color) Required readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* "Mise-en-scene." <https://collegefilmmandmediastudies.com/mise-en-scene-2/>.* "Cinematography." <https://collegefilmmandmediastudies.com/cinematography/>. Class 2: |

Response Papers: FEMINIST CRITICISM

- Michaela Pavlátová (Repete, 1995) + other animated films
 - Required readings:
 - * Hamen (2012), 87-95.
 - * Smelik (1999), 353–365 or
- <www.annekesmelik.nl/TheCinemaBook.pdf >)

Week 4

Class 1: Guest Speaker

Eliška Děcká “Contemporary stop-motion films”.

Class 2:

Topic: Czechoslovak New Wave; narration

- New Wave – its social and cultural roots, international links, the inspiration
- The directors of “Czechoslovak New Wave”: Věra Chytilová, Jiří Menzel, Pavel Juráček, Juraj Jakubisko, Juraj Herz, Jaromil Jireš etc.

Week 5

Class 1

Discussion: *DAISIES* (Sedmikrásky, Věra Chytilová, 1966, 74’, color)

Required reading:

- Lim (2001), 36-77.

Turn in DAISIES response paper (suggested approaches: feminist, reception, formalist)

Class 2:

Discussion: ***HAPPY END*** (Oldřich Lipský, 1967, 71’, b&w /tinted/)

Required reading:

- * Bordwell, David, and Kristin Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction*. The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2010: 89-107. Print.

Turn in HAPPY END response paper (suggested approaches: reception, formalist, feminist)

Week 6

Midterm Exam
Period

Class 1:

Field Trip: Karel Zeman Museum

Class 2:

Topic: midterm essays – drafts

- Class discussion on the drafts of students’ final papers (each student will have a presentation, others will give him/her feedback, the presentation creates 5% of a grade)

Midterm essay due

Week 7
Midterm Exam
Period

Class 1:
Topic: Czech cinema in the 1970s + 1980s
• the political situation and its consequences
• new “genres”

Class 2:
Topic: Miloš Forman / EDITING
• Miloš Forman CS/US careers

Week 8

Class 1:
Discussion: *LOVES OF A BLONDE* (Lásky jedné plavovlásky, Miloš Forman, 1965, 88', b&w)
Required reading:
• Parvulescu (2009), 87–91.
• Shaviro; <<http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?p=546>>.

Turn in *LOVES OF A BLONDE* response paper (suggested approaches: reception, formalist, feminist)

Class 2:
Discussion: *FIREMEN'S BALL* (Hoří, má panenko, Miloš Forman, 1967, 71', color)
Required reading:
• Smelik (1999), 353–365.
• Heilman; <<http://www.moviemartyr.com/1967/firemansball.htm>>.

Turn in *FIREMEN'S BALL* response paper (suggested approaches: reception, formalist, feminist, auteur)

Week 9

Class 1:
Field Trip: NaFilm! Film Museum

Class 2:
Topic: post-1989 Czech cinema / DOCUMENTARY
• New topics in new regime

Week 10

Class 1:
Discussion: ***CZECH DREAM*** (Český sen, Klusák+Remunda, 2004, 93', color)
Required readings:

* Coover, Roderick. "Czech Dream in a capitalist republic: an interview with Czech film-maker Filip Remunda." *Film International* 5.3 (2007): 63–68. Print.

* Nichols, Bill. "Modes of Documentary." n. pag. Web. 9 August 2017 <<http://bit.ly/2vPo80x>>.

Turn in CZECH DREAM response paper (suggested approaches: formalist)

Class 2:

Topic: Avant-garde and Experimental Movie / SOUND

- The early and contemporary avant-garde cinema
- Surrealism and Jan Švankmajer
- Advertisement

Week 11

Class 1:

Discussion: **CONSPIRATORS OF PLEASURE** (Spiklenci slasti, Jan Švankmajer, 1996, 85', color)

Required readings:

* Bordwell, David, and Kristin Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction*. The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2010: 269–285, 288 – 298. Print.

* Shaviro, Steven. "Conspirators of Pleasure." *The Pinocchio Theory* 11 Feb 2007: n. pag. Web. 9 August 2017 <<http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?p=555>>.

Turn in CONSPIRATORS OF PLEASURE response paper (suggested approaches: formalist, feminist, auteur)

Class 2:

Field Trip: Barrandov Studios

Week 12

Class 1:

Topic: Revision for Final test

Class 2:

Topic: Q&A + discussion about class

- Discussion about the class (What did you learn? What do you miss? What was your best experience?)

Week 13

Finals Week

Class 1:

Topic: Q&A + discussion about class

- Discussion about the class (What did you learn? What do you miss?)



What was your best experience?)

- Anything about final test you need to know?

Class 2:

Topic: Final Test

Bibliography

Readings

“Mise-en-scène.” n. pag. Web. 9 August 2017 <<https://collegefilmandmediastudies.com/mise-en-scene-2/>>.

“Cinematography.” n. pag. Web. 9 August 2017 <<https://collegefilmandmediastudies.com/cinematography/>>.

“Editing.” n. pag. Web. 9 August 2017 <<https://collegefilmandmediastudies.com/editing/>>.

Bordwell, David, and Kristin Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction*. The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2010. Print.

Coover, Roderick. “Czech Dream in a capitalist republic: an interview with Czech film-maker Filip Remunda.” *Film International* 5.3 (2007): 63–68. Print.

Hamen, Susan E. *How to Analyse the films of the Coen Brothers*. Edina: ABDO, 2012. Print.

Lim, Bliss Cua. “Dolls in Fragments: Daisies as Feminist Allegory.” *Camera Obscura* 16.2 (2001): 36–77. Print.

Nichols, Bill. “Modes of Documentary.” n. pag. Web. 9 August 2017 <<https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:IJV0n9keFr4J:https://keyconceptsinnmc.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/doc-modes-nichols.pdf+&cd=1&hl=cs&ct=clnk&gl=cz>>.

Parvulescu, Constantin. “Betrayed Promises: Politics and Sexual Revolution in the Films of Márta Mészáros, Miloš Forman, and Dušan Makavejev.” *Camera Obscura* 24.2 (2009): 87–91. Print.

Shaviro, Steven. “Conspirators of Pleasure.” *The Pinocchio Theory* 11 Feb 2007: n. pag. Web. 9 August 2017 <<http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?p=555>>.

Shaviro, Steven. “Fireman’s [sic] Ball.” *The Pinocchio Theory* 6 Jan 2007: n. pag. Web. 9 August 2017 <<http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?p=535>>.

Shaviro, Steven. “Loves of a Blonde.” *The Pinocchio Theory* 24 Jan 2007: n. pag. Web. 20 July 2014 <<http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?p=546>>.



Smelik, Anneke. "Feminist Film Theory." *The Cinema Book*, edited by Pam Cook and Mieke Bernink. London: British Film Institute, 1999. 353–365. Print. (Also at Web. 9 August 2017 < www.annekesmelik.nl/TheCinemaBook.pdf >)

Films (in order they will be discussed)

BURNING BUSH (Hořící keř, Agnieszka Holland, 2013, 231', color)

DAISIES (Sedmikrásky, Věra Chytilová, 1966, 74', color)

HAPPY END (Oldřich Lipský, 1967, 71', b&w /tinted/)

LOVES OF A BLONDE (Lásky jedné plavovlásky, Miloš Forman, 1965, 88', b&w)

FIREMEN'S BALL (Hoří, má panenko, Miloš Forman, 1967, 71', color)

CONSPIRATORS OF PLEASURE (Spiklenci slasti, Jan Švankmajer, 1996, 85', color)

CZECH DREAM (Český sen, Klusák+Remunda, 2004, 93', color)