Film Studies 349: Film Theory SAMPLE SYLLABUS

English 349: Film Theory and Criticism
Spring 2013 |12:00-2:45 | Welles 119

Professor Okada
Office: Welles 224C
Office Hours: WF 2-3:30 p.m. and by appointment
Office Phone: (585) 245-5241
Email: okada@geneseo.edu

Course Description:
This course develops an advanced understanding of film as a complex cultural medium through the discussion of key theoretical and critical approaches. Theoretical and critical approaches discussed may include: realist theory, genre criticism, auteur theory, structuralism, feminist theory, and journalistic criticism. The course combines weekly feature-length viewings with lectures, group discussions, and written assignments.

Learning Outcomes:
Students will:
- build upon their basic knowledge of film as an art form to reach a more complex and sophisticated theoretical and critical perspectives on the film texts studied in class;
- demonstrate mastery over key historical and theoretical positions in film theory;
- demonstrate effective critical thinking and writing ability as assessed through class discussion and writing critical papers.

Required Texts:
Other readings available online and on reserve.

Guidelines and Policies:

ACCOMMODATIONS: SUNY-Geneseo will make reasonable accommodations for persons of documented physical, emotional or learning disabilities. Students should notify the Director of the Office of Disability Services (Tabitha Buggie -Hunt, 105D Erwin, tbuggieh@geneseo.edu) and their faculty of any needed accommodations as early as possible in the semester. Information on services and campus polices can be found at: http://www.geneseo.edu/~doc/otherareas/disability.shtml

CLASS POLICIES: Required Work: To pass this course, students must attempt all assignments. Incompletes will be granted ONLY if the following three conditions are met: documented extenuating circumstances (e.g. severe illness or family crisis); a specific request from the student; AND a plan of action to make up the missing work, including due dates.

Late Paper Policy: No late papers unless you have specifically arranged with me an alternate due date IN WRITING AT LEAST A FULL WEEK IN ADVANCE OF DUE DATE. I will not accept email submissions of any assignment unless you have been given explicit permission to do so. If you turn in a paper late, penalties begin to accrue at 5 p.m. the paper is due; up to one day (24 hours) late, penalty is 1/3 letter grade (e.g. A becomes an A-); up to two days late, 2/3; three days, 1 full grade; four days, 1 1/3; five days, 2 2/3; six days, 2 full grades; seven days, 2 2/3; more than seven days late, not accepted for credit without excuse certified by the Dean of Students’ office (this includes Counseling center). Weekends count in calculating lateness – if you need to hand in a paper late, either have a secretary in Welles 226 initial, on the paper, the date/time it was finally handed in or send a duplicate copy to me by email (hard copy still should be handed in to my box in the English office in Welles) to get credit for the time you turned it in. Documenting the time a paper was handed in is YOUR responsibility; given a lack of documentation, the penalty will be calculated based on when I receive the paper.

Please note that I will not accept verbal explanations of illness or other problem as an excuse for lateness. Without documentation from a doctor or other official documentation that excuses your late work, your work will be penalized for lateness.

Evaluation Procedures:

Class Participation 20 %
Midterm Paper 25 %
Weekly response papers* 10 %
Presentations 20 %
*Every Monday, I will collect a ½ page response paper on the film that has been assigned for viewing for the week. Response papers should connect the film with the readings due for that week.

**Students will do group presentations (please see attached sheet on rules for presentations) which require you to orally present a summary of the reading and film for the week.

*** Students are required to attend a weekly outside film screening. Depending on the needs of the students, I will reserve a screening room on campus for a film lab. However I will also leave the films on reserve at Milne Library Reserves Desk for you to view independently.

### Class Schedule

(Subject to change. I will not answer emails that ask ‘what did I miss?’) The following is a schedule of topics we will cover in the class and the corresponding reading assignments. Additional materials will be supplied in-class or online. You must complete the reading and viewing prior to class.

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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING &amp; ASSIGNMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>Jan 28</td>
<td>Realist Theory</td>
<td>Kracauer “Basic Concepts” 171-182</td>
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<td>Bazin “De Sica: Metteur-En-Scène” 203-211</td>
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<td>**Umberto D (DeSica, 1952)</td>
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<td>Feb 4</td>
<td>Formalist Theory</td>
<td>Arneith “The Complete Film” 212-215</td>
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<td>Munsterberg “The Means of the Photoplay” 401-407</td>
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<td>Deren “Cinematography: The Creative Use of Reality” 216-227</td>
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<td>Haskell “Female Stars of the 1940s” 566, 571-575 “Bringing Up Baby (Hawks, 1938)</td>
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<td>Genre Criticism</td>
<td>Altman “A Semantic/Syntactic Approach to Film. Genre 630-641.</td>
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<td>Schatz “Film Genre and the Genre, Doubt</td>
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<td>Narrator” 473-486. Thompson “The Concept of Cinematic Excess” 487-498</td>
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<td>March 6-March 21</td>
<td>**24 Hour Party People (Winterbottom, 2002)</td>
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**FIRST PAPER DUE**

March 6-March 21

S**PRING BREAK**

March 24 Structuralism


March 31 Spectatorship

April 7  Feminist Theory  Gledhill “Recent Developments in Feminist Criticism” 251-
272. Williams “Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess”. **Mildred Pierce (Curtiz, 1945)

April 14  Group Presentations  **TBD

April 21  MONDAY SCHEDULE – NO CLASS—Professor gone on conference.

April 28  Race  Stam and Spence "Colonialism, Racism and Representation" 235-

** Fitzcarraldo (Herzog, 1982)

May 5  Individual Presentations.  Final Paper Due.