

**UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY  
APPLICATION FOR NEW COURSE**

Submitted by **College of Arts and Sciences**

Date **September 12, 2003**

Department/Division offering course: **Division of French and Italian; Department of Modern and Classical Languages, Literatures, and Cultures**

2. Proposed designation and Bulletin description of this course:

(a) Prefix and Number **FR 103** (b) Title\* **French Film** (if applicable, subt. req.)

\*NOTE: If the title is longer than 24 characters (including spaces), write a sensible title (not exceeding 24 characters) for use in transcripts:

(c) Lecture/Discussion hours per week **Three (3)** (d) Laboratory hours per week

(e) Studio hours per week (f) Credits **Three (3)**

(g) Course description: **A history of the French cinema from the early twentieth century to the present. Emphasis on the primary aesthetic movements of French cinematic expression in social and historical context. Attention given to the formal elements specific to film, techniques of film analysis, and the nature of visual culture. Viewing of films outside of class required. Taught in English, with no knowledge of French necessary.**

(h) Prerequisites (if any): **None**

(i) May be repeated to a maximum of \_\_\_\_\_ credits. (if applicable)

4. To be cross-listed as:

Prefix & No.                      Signature, Chairman, cross-listing department

5. Effective Date: **Fall 2004** (semester and year)

6. Course to be offered (a) Fall **X** (b) Spring (c) Summer

7. Will the course be offered each year? (a) Yes **X** (b) No  
(Explain if not annually):

8. Why is this course needed: **Gives students an introduction to one of the twentieth century's great Western artistic traditions, as well as an institution crucial to French and European culture. It will also serve as a new Humanities offering in the USP course list.**

9. (a) By whom will the course be taught? **Dr. Jeffrey Peters**

(b) Are facilities for teaching the course now available? (a) Yes **X** (b) No  
If not, what plans have been made for providing them?



UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY  
APPLICATION FOR NEW COURSE

Signatures of Approval:

Theodore Fiedler

Department Chair

David Seep

Dean of the College

Betha Harris  
\*Undergraduate Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
\*University Studies

\_\_\_\_\_  
\*Graduate Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
\*Academic Council for the Medical Center

\_\_\_\_\_  
\*Senate Council (Chair)

\*If applicable, as provided by the Rules of the University Senate

9/23/03

Date

NOV 04 2003

Date

OCT 14 2003

Date of Notice to the Faculty

3/2/04

Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Notice to Univ. Senate

\_\_\_\_\_  
ACTION OTHER THAN APPROVAL:

Department of Modern and Classical Languages, Literatures, and Cultures  
Division of French and Italian

FR 103-001 (French Film)  
Student Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- analyze the formal and technical aspects of film language;
- recognize and define the primary aesthetic movements of French cinema, and situate them in social and historical context;
- develop a critical language appropriate to the analysis of film;
- communicate their analyses effectively in written form.

## **FR 103 French Film**

Dr. Jeffrey Peters

1031 POT

257-6747

[jnp@uky.edu](mailto:jnp@uky.edu)

### Objectives:

In this course, we will trace the evolution of French filmmaking from 1895, the year of the début of the *Cinématographe* in Paris, to the present. We will examine the primary aesthetic movements that defined French cinema over the course of the twentieth century, beginning with the seminal work of Georges Méliès and the Lumière brothers, and continuing through surrealism and silent film, poetic realism in the 1930s, the cinema of the Occupation, *film noir*, the New Wave, and the beginnings of the digital age. We will explore issues of aesthetics, film theory, and social commentary, while combining discussions of historical context with analysis of the technical elements specific to film. We will also ask how cinema has expressed the cultural values, anxieties, and conflicts that have shaped French identity over the last century. Prior experience or coursework in cinema is not expected or assumed. No knowledge of French is necessary.

### Required Texts:

Alan Williams, *Republic of Images: A History of French Filmmaking*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992.

David Boardwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art. An Introduction*. 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004.

Coursepack of readings.

### Assignments

In addition to taking midterm and final examinations, students will be required to write three essays, each four to six pages in length. The first, due on Monday, September 29, will be a close analysis of one frame from one of the films that will have already been viewed. The details of this analysis will be presented in class. In two other essays, due on Monday, November 3 and Friday, December 5, respectively, students will respond to a question that will be distributed in class. The essays will be graded for the concision and precision of the thesis statement, the overall structure and organization of the argument, the ability of students to incorporate into their writing the technical language of film analysis presented in class and to substantiate their analyses with specific examples taken from films viewed for class.

### Films

Each of the following films are on reserve in AV Services in the Young Library basement. Each must be viewed outside of class prior to the class meeting in which it will be discussed.

|  |            |                   |
|--|------------|-------------------|
| <i>The Lumière Brothers' First Films</i>   | 1996       | Bernard Tavernier |
| <i>Short Films of Georges Méliès</i>       | 1902-12    | Georges Méliès    |
| <i>The Vampires</i>                        | 1913-15    | Louis Feuillade   |
| <i>Return to Reason &amp; The Starfish</i> | 1923, 1928 | Man Ray           |
| <i>An Andalusian Dog</i>                   | 1929       | Luis Bunuel       |
| <i>L'Atalante</i>                          | 1934       | Jean Vigo         |
| <i>The Human Beast</i>                     | 1938       | Jean Renoir       |

|                           |      |                       |
|---------------------------|------|-----------------------|
| <i>Daybreak</i>           | 1939 | Michel Carné          |
| <i>The Crow</i>           | 1943 | Henri-Georges Clouzot |
| <i>Bob the Gambler</i>    | 1955 | Jean-Pierre Melville  |
| <i>The 400 Blows</i>      | 1959 | François Truffaut     |
| <i>Contempt</i>           | 1963 | Jean-Luc Godard       |
| <i>Hate</i>               | 1995 | Mathieu Kassovitz     |
| <i>The Gleaners and I</i> | 2000 | Agnès Varda           |

## Syllabus

### August

- 27 Introduction: Visual culture in France before film. What is French Cinema? Technical elements of film.
- 29 **Film:** *The Lumière Brothers' First Films* (Bernard Tavernier, 1996)  
Reading: Williams, *Republic of Images*, pp. 1-26

### September

- 1 Labor Day – no class
- 3 **Film:** *Short Films of Georges Méliès* (Georges Méliès, 1902-12)  
Reading: Méliès, "Cinematographic Views," *French Film Theory and Criticism: 1907-1939*. Vol. 1. Ed. Richard Abel. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988. 35-47.
- 5 Reading: Williams, *Republic of Images*, pp. 27-47; 48-73
- 8 Reading: Boardwell and Thompson, *Film Art*, pp. 176-200
- 10 **Film:** *The Vampires* (Louis Feuillade, 1913-15)
- 12 Reading: Williams, *Republic of Images*, pp. 77-100
- 15 Reading: Boardwell and Thompson, *Film Art*, pp. 200-28
- 17 Reading: Richard Roud, "Louis Feuillade and the Serial," *Rediscovering French Film*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1983. 45-51.
- 19 **Films:** *Return to Reason & The Starfish* (Man Ray, 1923, 1928); *An Andalusian Dog* (Luis Bunuel, 1929)
- 22 Reading: Williams, *Republic of Images*, pp. 101-54
- 24 Reading: Williams, *Republic of Images*, pp. 213-42
- 26 **Film:** *L'Atalante* (Jean Vigo, 1934)  
**Due:** Essay I (frame analysis)
- 29 Reading: Boardwell and Thompson, *Film Art*, pp. 347-88

### October

- 1 Reading: Dudley Andrew, "Poetic Realism," *Rediscovering French Film*, pp. 112-20.; Richard Abel, "The Transition to Sound," *French Film Theory and Criticism*
- 3 Fall break – no class
- 6 **Film:** *The Human Beast* (Jean Renoir, 1938)
- 8 Reading: André Bazin, "The Destiny of Jean Gabin," *What is Cinema?* Vol. 2. Trans. Hugh Gray. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971. 176-8; "The Evolution of the Language of Cinema," *What is Cinema?*
- 10 Reading: Boardwell and Thompson, *Film Art*, pp. 229-59
- 13 **Film:** *Daybreak* (Michel Carné, 1939)
- 15 Reading: Maureen Turim, "Poetic Realism as Psychoanalytical and Ideological Operation: Michel Carné's *Le Jour se lève* (1939)," *French Film: Texts and Contexts*. Ed. Susan Hayward and Ginette Vincendeau. London: Routledge, 2000. 63-77.
- 17 Reading: Boardwell and Thompson, *Film Art*, pp. 259-93

- 20 **Midterm exam**
- 22 **Film:** *The Crow* (Henri-Georges Clouzot, 1943)  
Reading: Williams, *Republic of Images*, pp. 245-71
- 24 Reading: Williams, *Republic of Images*, pp. 272-98  
Reading: Henry Russo, "Introduction" and "The Dark Years and the Silver Screen," *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France Since 1944*. Trans. Arthur Goldhammer. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991. 226-40.
- 27 **Film:** *Bob the Gambler* (Jean-Pierre Melville, 1955)
- 29 Reading: Williams, *Republic of Images*, pp. 272-98
- 31 Reading: Boardwell and Thompson, *Film Art*, pp. 389-412

### November

- 3 **Film:** *The 400 Blows* (François Truffaut, 1959)  
Reading: Williams, *Republic of Images*, pp. 354-78  
**Due:** Essay II
- 5 Reading: François Truffaut, "A Certain Tendency of the French Cinema." Ed. Bill Nichols, *Movies and Methods*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976. 224-37.
- 7 Reading: "François Truffaut: 'Evolution of the New Wave': Truffaut in Interview with Jean-Louis Comolli and Jean Narboni." Ed. Jim Hillier, *Cahiers du Cinéma, 1960-68: New Wave, New Cinema, Reevaluating Hollywood*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986. 106-110.
- 10 **Film:** *Contempt* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1963)
- 12 Reading: Jacques Aumont, "The Fall of the Gods: Jean-Luc Godard's *Le Mépris*," *French Film: Texts and Contexts*, pp. 217-29.
- 14 Reading: Richard Brody, "An Exile in Paradise: How Jean-Luc Godard Disappeared from the Headlines and Into the Movies." *The New Yorker*. November 20, 2000. 62-76.
- 17 Reading: Boardwell and Thompson, *Film Art*, pp. 68-81
- 19 **Film:** *Hate* (Mathieu Kassovitz, 1995)
- 21 Reading: Ginette Vincendeau, "Designs on the *Banlieue*: Mathieu Kassovitz's *La Haine* (1995)," *French Film: Texts and Contexts*, 310-27
- 24 Reading: Ien Ang, "Hegemony-in-Trouble: Nostalgia and Ideology of the Impossible in European Cinema," *Screening Europe: Image and Identity in Contemporary European Cinema*. Ed. Duncan Petrie. London: British Film Institute, 1992. 21-31.
- 26 Reading: Williams, *Republic of Images*, pp. 354-78
- 28 Thanksgiving – no class

### December

- Reading: Boardwell and Thompson, *Film Art*, pp. 82-105
- 3 **Film:** *The Gleaners and I* (Agnès Varda, 2000)
- 5 Reading: Boardwell and Thompson, *Film Art*, pp. 294-333  
**Due:** Essay III

- 8 Reading: Susan Hayward, "Beyond the Gaze and into Femme-filmécriture: Agnès Varda's *Sans toit ni loi* (1985), *French Film: Texts and Contexts*, 269-80
- 10 Reading: Boardwell and Thompson, *Film Art*, pp. 333-46
- 12 Last day of class - conclusions

To: smcare0@uky.edu  
From: "Jeffrey N. Peters" <jnp@uky.edu>  
Subject: New UK French course  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
Attached:

Dear Professor Carey,

I am writing to notify you of a new course that the UK Division of French and Italian (Department of Modern and Classical Languages, Literatures, and Cultures) is currently submitting for approval to the university.

The course is FR 103 (French Film). The course description, as it appears on our application, is as follows:

**A history of the French cinema from the early twentieth century to the present. Emphasis on the primary aesthetic movements of French cinematic expression in social and historical context. Attention given to the formal elements specific to film, techniques of film analysis, and the nature of visual culture. Viewing of films outside of class required. Taught in English, with no knowledge of French necessary.**

Thank you and please let me know if you have any questions concerning this course.

Yours sincerely,

Jeffrey Peters

Jeffrey N. Peters  
Associate Professor of French  
Director of the Division of French and Italian  
Department of Modern and Classical Languages,  
Literatures, and Cultures  
University of Kentucky

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