BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION  
DIVISION OF ARTS, HUMANITIES, AND WELLNESS

COURSE SYLLABUS

CIN160 Women in Cinema

Basic Information about Course and Instructor

Semester and year:  
Course and Section Number:  
Meeting Times and Locations:  
Instructor:  
Office Location:  
Phone:  
Office Hours:  
Email Address:

Course Description

CIN160 Women in Cinema is a study of how the images, stories, and formal constructions in film can frame female identities. This course is not only about the representation of women in film history, it is also a study of cinema by women (such as Maya Deren, Su Friedrich, and Chantal Akerman). Specific topics addressed over the span of the semester may include the history of the “weepies”; the biographies of certain actors and filmmakers; feminist film theory; the formal aspects of film; the depiction of women across film genres; and the role of filmmaking in the American and international feminist movements.

3 credits. 2 lecture; 2 lab.
Prerequisites: None
Humanities Elective
General Education Course [pending]
Diversity Course [pending]

Student Learning Objectives:

As a result of meeting the requirements of this course, a student will be able to

1. identify important gender-related themes in a film (assuming the film has one or more);
2. develop an understanding of how female identity can be constructed through different elements in a film;
3. increase knowledge of the work of some of the major female filmmakers and actors in the history of cinema;
4. detect (both orally and in writing) the point of a view of a given film, or whether a film’s point of view is ambiguous;
5. learn to use methods and vocabulary unique to film analysis in speaking and writing about film;
6. state and support his/her own views (orally and in writing) on the films in this course—and ideally any film—with greater coherence, clarity, depth, and insight.

The Student Learning Objectives in this course are intended to be consistent with the college’s Core Competencies and General Education Goals.
Assessment of Student Learning Objectives

Objective 1: assessed through critical writing assignments with an emphasis on gender-related themes in particular films
Objective 2: assessed through critical writing assignments with an emphasis on how film language can construct gender identities
Objective 3: assessed through tests on specific knowledge of course content and films
Objective 4: assessed through in-class discussions and/or critical writing assignments on a film’s point of view
Objective 5: assessed through a test on vocabulary unique to film analysis
Objective 6: assessed through critical writing assignments that require knowledge of different theoretical approaches to film and to the notion of gender

Objectives 1, 2, 4, and 6 can also be assessed in directed classroom discussions
Objectives 1, 2, 4, and 6 can also be assessed through in-class writing assignments or journals
Objectives 1 and 4 can also be assessed through in-class writing assignments or short quizzes
Objectives 1, 4, and 6 can also be assessed through short critical writing assignments
Objective 3 can also be assessed through assigned research papers

Course Content

The most basic aspects in this course that must be covered are
1. instruction on how to locate themes pertinent to women in films;
2. instruction on the basic elements of the film medium (lighting, editing, narrative structure, etc.);
3. instruction on how to view films with the proper techniques;
4. instruction on different ways to understand the term “gender”;
5. instruction on at least general aspects of history that have been pertinent both to women’s lives and to filmmaking;
6. instruction on how to speak and write about film clearly;
7. determination of final grades for this class through a combination of critical writing assignments and fact-based tests (film identifications, dates, directors, eg.).

Critical Thinking

The Instructor of this course teaches critical thinking skills such as how to analyze a film; what interpretation means; how a student can challenge his/her own assumptions; what it means to support a hypothesis; what “point of view” means; how to write in the critical mode. The Instructor will respond in detail (and in a timely fashion) to students’ work both in the classroom and during office hours.
A minimum of 12 pages of critical writing about the subject matter of the course will be assigned. There must also be evaluation of students’ specific knowledge of this subject matter (names of directors, relevant dates, eg.).

Textbook(s)

Instructors assign one or more textbooks and/or a series of at least 12 academic articles.

Grading Policy

Students will be evaluated on the quality of their work.

Attendance Policy

The instructor will follow the guidelines of the BCC attendance policy: All students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of each course in which they are registered. Attendance and lateness policies and sanctions are to be determined by the instructor for
each section of each course. These will be established in writing on the individual course outline.
Attendance will be kept by the instructor for administrative and counseling purposes.

Other College, Divisional, and/or Departmental Policy Statements

Plagiarism is cheating and stealing. If you use someone else's ideas, words, phrases, paragraphs,
without giving that person credit, you are guilty of plagiarism. If you copy even a small passage from
another text and present it as your own, you are guilty of plagiarism. The penalties for plagiarism can be
severe, from course failure to expulsion from the college.

Student Support Services

The Tutoring Center: S118  (201-447-7908)
The Writing Center:  C110 (201-447-7136)
The Online Writing Lab (OWL) www.bergen.edu/owl
The Office of Specialized Services:  S153  (201-612-5270)
SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE

Sample Required texts:


Collection of articles (on E-Reserve, in the Academic Search Premiere or JSTOR Language and Literature databases, and/or xeroxed)

Books on General Aspects of Cinema:


On Women in Cinema:


Sample Calendar:

WEEK ONE DISAPPEARING WOMEN

The Spiritualist Photographer; The Magic Lantern; The Mermaid (dir. Georges Melies, 1903)

PRE-CODE WOMEN
I'm No Angel (dir. Wesley Ruggles, 1933)

Required Reading:

WEEK TWO MELODRAMA AND MOTHERHOOD

Way Down East (dir. D.W. Griffith, 1920)


WEEK THREE THE ‘WOMAN’S FILM’

Stella Dallas (dir. King Vidor, 1937)


WEEK FOUR MARRIAGE

Rebecca (dir. Alfred Hitchcock, 1940)


WEEK FIVE WOMEN IN FILM NOIR

Mildred Pierce (dir. Michael Curtiz, 1945)


WEEK SIX THE ‘WOMAN’S FILM’ (con’t)

Brief Encounter (dir. David Lean, 1946)

Required Reading: Haskell, Molly. “The Woman’s Film” in her From Reverence to Rape. 153-188. (E-Reserve).
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Film(s)</th>
<th>Required Reading</th>
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**WEEK THIRTEEN**

**FAMILY DRAMA**

*Eve's Bayou* (dir. Kasi Lemmons, 1997)

**Required Reading:**

**WEEK FOURTEEN**

**DYSTOPIA**

*A Handmaid's Tale* (dir. Volker Schlondorff, 2001)

**Required Reading:**

**WEEK FIFTEEN**

**PAPER DUE/TEST 2**

Animation selections

Suzan Pitt and Maryellen Bute and others

**GRADING:**

- TEST 1 (25%)
- TEST 2 (25%)
- PAPER 1 (25%)
- PAPER 2 (25%)