COURSE OUTLINE

GMMD 313 – Studies in Genre Film

a. Documentary Film
b. Horror in Film
c. The Film Western
d. History of American Comic Film
e. Science Fiction in Film

Prepared By: Christopher S. Sweeney
Revised By: Christopher S. Sweeney
A. **TITLE:** Studies in Genre Film

B. **COURSE NUMBER:** GMMD 313

C. **CREDIT HOURS:** 3

D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE (OPTIONAL):** No

E. **COURSE LENGTH:** 15 weeks/one semester

F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Fall/Spring

G. **HOURS OF LECTURE, LABORATORY, RECITATION, TUTORIAL, ACTIVITY:** 3
   hours lecture

H. **CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** This course will provide an opportunity to study one film genre in depth. Emphasis will be on thematic cultural analysis of the genre's role in contemporary society. Different topics will be offered on a cycle, including the following:
   
   GMMD 313a: Documentary Film
   Nonfiction cinema has been defined as factual description of events and people in the historical world, but every aspect of this definition has also been contested or subjected to multiple interpretations. This course aims at sifting through documentary films as they relate to issues of exposition and position—the reflection of a true image and the reflection of a viewpoint.

   GMMD 313b: Horror in Film
   Monsters, vampires and other horrors portray anxieties, whether personal or cultural. They have been a central point of film production from the earliest days of cinema in Germany and beyond. Beginning with the 1922 German classic *Nosferatu,* the course will survey the horror story in film and literature. The course will introduce students to the techniques of film studies and cultural studies while seeking to analyze the particular anxieties embodied in each film.

   GMMD 313c: The Film Western
   This course will examine the wide cultural journeys of the Western genre in its various forms: as Wild West ideology, as spaghetti Western, as nostalgia, as an exploration of genre, and as a critique of American values.

   GMMD 313d: History of the American Comic Film
   This course examines the narrative and formal style of various American film directors and comedians. The course will examine comic theory as well as investigating perennial themes in American comedies.

   GMMD 313e: Science Fiction in Film
   This film will examine the cultural preoccupations of the science fiction film. We will screen and discuss films demonstrating the history of the form, from the silent era to the present. We will concentrate especially on the ways filmmakers use these films to visualize fears about current scientific and technological issues.

I. **PRE-REQUISITES/CO-COURSES:** GMMD 211 Film Analysis or a literature course. Students may take one genre for Gen Ed. credit. Students may take multiple genres for elective credit.

J. **GOALS (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES):**
Course Objective | Institutional SLO
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a. Identify dominant features of genre | 1. Communication skills  
| | 2. Critical Thinking Skills
b. Categorize sub-genres of the dominant genre film studied | 1. Communication skills  
| | 2. Critical Thinking Skills
c. Design a mise-en-scene for a genre-specific story through verbal description and/or storyboarding | 1. Communication Skills  
| | 4. Professional Competence
d. Compare, through writing, filmic treatments of a particular theme in different historical moments | 1. Communication Skills  
| | 2. Critical Thinking Skills

K. **TEXTS:** (These texts are representative. Actual titles may vary due to instructor choice.)

L. **REFERENCES:**
- Nichols, Bill. *Introducing Documentary.*
- Grant, Barry Keith. *Documenting The Documentary.*
- Curran Bernard, Sheila. *Documentary Storytelling for Video and Film Makers.*
- Rickman, Gregg. *The Film Comedy Reader.*

M. **EQUIPMENT:** Audio/visual equipment

N. **GRADING METHOD:** (P/F, A-F, etc.) A-F

O. **MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS:**
Students will be evaluated via:
1. Unit Exams
2. Two formal papers
3. A short screenplay
4. Discussion

P. DETAILED TOPICAL OUTLINE:

313a. Documentary Film
   I. Glimpse of Wonders
      A. Nanook of the North
   II. Images at Work
      A. The Man with a Movie Camera
      B. Night and Fog
   III. Sound and Fury
      A. This is Spinal Tap
      B. Don’t Look Back
   IV. Clouded Lens
      A. Triumph of the Will
   V. Sharp Focus
      A. Roger and Me
      B. Bowling for Columbine
      C. Fahrenheit 9/11
   VI. Movement
      A. March of the Penguins

313b. Horror in Film
   I. The Vampiric Reflection
      A. Nosferatu
      B. Dracula (Browning)
      C. Dracula (Coppola)
      D. In The Shadow of the Vampire
   II. The Zombie
      A. White Zombie
      B. Night of the Living Dead
      C. Dawn of the Dead
      D. Day of the Dead
      E. Land of the Dead
      F. 28 Days Later
   III. The Ghost
      A. Ghost Story
      B. The Sixth Sense
      C. Poltergeist
   IV. The Slasher
      A. Friday the Thirteenth
      B. Halloween
      C. Texas Chainsaw Massacre
      D. Suspiria
      E. Trauma
      F. Scream
   V. The House
A. The Haunting
B. The Amityville Horror
C. Psycho
D. The Shining

VI. The Serial Killer
A. Silence of the Lambs
B. American Psycho

VII. The Exotic
A. The Exorcist
B. Ringu
C. Ju-on

313c. The Film Western
I. Introduction:
A. How the West was Won
B. Stagecoach

II. The Western Formula
A. Gunfight at the OK Corral
B. Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid
C. High Noon

III. Cold War-Path
A. The Cowboys
B. Dances with Wolves

IV. Racial Attitudes
A. Hang 'Em High
B. Blazing Saddles

V. Postwar Alienation from the Good Society
A. Shane
B. True Grit

VI. Society in the 1950s: Complacent or Plaintive?
A. Calamity Jane
B. Oklahoma
C. Paint Your Wagon

VII. Against the Establishment
A. The Magnificent Seven
B. A Fistful of Dollars
C. A Few More Dollars
D. The Good the Bad and the Ugly

VIII. New West or True West?
A. Unforgiven
B. Brokeback Mountain

313d. History of American Comic Film
I. The Silent Era
A. The Gold Rush
B. The Navigator

II. Gender
A. Some Like It Hot
B. Tootsie
C. Annie Hall
D. Mrs. Doubtfire
E. Private Benjamin

III. The Slapstick
A. Duck Soup
B. Airplane!
C. A Fish Called Wanda
D. Bananas
E. The Producers

IV. The Romantic Comedy
A. The Graduate
B. There's Something About Mary
C. Moonstruck
D. Pillow Talk

V. Youth
A. Fast Times At Ridgemont High
B. Animal House
C. American Pie

VI. Work
A. 9 to 5
B. Office Space

VII. The Paranormal
A. Ghostbusters
B. Sleeper

VIII. The Misfit
A. The Jerk
B. The Nutty Professor

IX. Group Psychology
A. Diner
B. It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World

X. The Dark Comedy
A. Fargo
B. The Royal Tennenbaums

313e. Science Fiction in Film

I. Post Death or Post Human
A. Frankenstein (Whale)
B. Frankenstein (Branagh)
C. Gattaca
D. Vanilla Sky
E. Cocoon

II. Cloning
A. Anna to the Infinite Power

III. The Man-Machine
A. Metropolis
B. The Stepford Wives
C. Blade Runner
D. A. I.

IV. Humans in Space
A. 2001
B. Solaris
C. The Astronaut's Wife
D. Contact
V. Humans in Time
   A. The Time Machine
   B. Back to the Future

VI. Encounters
   A. Close Encounters of the Third Kind
   B. E. T.
   C. Alien
   D. Aliens

VII. The Military Industrial Complex
   A. Dr. Strangelove
   B. The War of the Worlds
   C. Star Wars
   D. Star Trek

VIII. The End of the World
   A. The Day the Earth Stood Still
   B. Godzilla

IX. The Comic Book
   A. Flash Gordon
   B. Nausicaa of the Valley of the Winds

X. The Parody
   A. Plan 9 From Outer Space
   B. The Rocky Horror Picture Show