Course title: Berlin in der deutschen Filmgeschichte (in German)
Course code: CINE 3001 BRGE (GER) / COMM 3006 BRGE (GER)
Programs offering course: Global Architecture and Design, Berlin Open Campus Block
Open Campus Track: Language, Literature, and Culture
Language of instruction: German
U.S. semester credits: 3.00
Contact hours: 45.00
Term: Spring Block III 2021

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the history of German cinema, with a special focus on the crucial role of Berlin as both production site and film set. Students engage with important milestones in the history of German cinema, many of which are set in Berlin, and learn about their historical, political and aesthetic contexts. Special emphasis is placed on the so-called “Berlin School” of filmmaking, a New Wave emerging in the late 1990s, and continuing to be highly relevant today.


Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Construct a critical vocabulary and methodology needed for the study of film as a form of expression and cinema as an institution.
- Analyze and interpret issues of genre, form, and performance that are central to cinema.
- Investigate scholarly sources on German film studies as they develop arguments and defend them in class discussion and written assignments.
- Appraise individual films in their respective artistic, popular, commercial, (trans)national, historical, and political contexts.

Course Prerequisites

4 semesters of German or equivalent (contingent upon placement)

Methods of Instruction

The instructor will work with short texts from various media, allowing students at the advanced level (you must have completed at least four semesters of German, or the equivalent, prior to taking this course) to perform everything in the target language and to hone their discussion, research and writing skills. This course relies heavily on group work and collaborative projects in conjunction with authentic examples of contemporary print. As such, the course targets speaking, listening, and reading as its primary skills. The course will also contain writing and grammar workshops, where students can improve their writing and speaking skills.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Final Exam 15%
2. Reading Quizzes 15%
3. Presentation 20%
Response Paper I
Response Paper II

The first response paper is 750 words and the second is 1500 words. Both papers will engage with films and critical writing about them. More detailed instructions will be given in advance of each assignment.

Participation

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. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Attendance

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

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.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent.

Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to any required field placement. Students may not miss placement/work hours at an internship or service learning site unless approved in advance by the Academic Director and placement supervisor. All students must complete all of the requisite 100 minimum work hours on site at the internship or service learning placement to be eligible for academic credit.

Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Absences for classes will lead to the following penalties:

Course Requirements

Final Exam

In the final class session, there will be a final exam. It will consist of an essay topic and a set of two identification questions.

Reading Quizzes

The quizzes will be very brief and test your reading comprehension of the assigned articles. They will not be announced.

Presentation

Each student is required to prepare one short presentation (no longer than 15 minutes) during the course, introducing an article of the course to the audience and presenting its thesis and arguments to them. With the approval of the instructor, these presentations can be done in a group as well.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.
N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

**Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1**

Class: 1.1 Intro to German Film History / Film-specific Vocabulary & Terminology

This session is designed to introduce us to German film through a series of thematically related film clips (The Blue Angel; The Great Love; Sissi; Lola; Run Lola Run). In discussing these clips, we will start to establish and use important terminology needed in order to discuss film critically.

Assignment:
Write a 400-word summary of one of the five clips (they are uploaded to Canvas);

Class: 1.2

We will continue discussing the clips from last session and further build on our film-specific vocabulary.

Grammar focus for the day: using coordinating and subordinating conjunctions.

Reading:
Hicketier, *Film- und Fernsehanalyse*, Chapter 1

**Due date for submission of summary**

**Week 2**

Class: 2.1 The Cinema of the Weimar Republic

Screening and Discussion of *The Blue Angel* (von Sternberg, 1930)

Grammar focus for the day: coordinating and subordinating conjunctions II

Assignment:
Contribute to Canvas discussion forum on *The Blue Angel*

Reading:
Beicken, *Wie interpretiert man einen Film*, 1–25

**Reading Quiz 1 Completed in Class**
Class: 2.2

Excursion to the film museum at Potsdamer Platz

Assignment:

Be sure to complete the worksheet you receive prior to exploring the museum!

Reading:

Mann, *Der Untertan* (excerpt assigned by instructor);

Class: 2.3

Discussion of field trip and concluding discussion of film during the Weimar Republic with clips from *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* and *Kuhle Wampe*.

Grammar focus for the day: the passive voice

Assignment:

Response Paper I - Write a brief description of the strengths and weaknesses of the museum

**Week 3**

Class: 3.1

Cinema of the Third Reich

Screening and discussion of *The Great Love* (Hansen, 1942)

Grammar focus for the day: the passive voice II

Reading:

Hake, *Film in Deutschland*, chapter 3 (and answer guiding questions).

**Due date for submission of Response Paper I**

Class: 3.2

Discussion/reenactment of dialogues of *The Great Love*; working with film clips from other films made during the Third Reich (*The Prodigal Son, Triumph of the Will, Münchhausen*).

Grammar focus for the day: Relative clauses

Reading:

Hake, *Film in Deutschland*, chapter 4 (and answer guiding questions).

**Reading Quiz 2 Completed in Class**

**Week 4**

Class: 4.1

East German Cinema

Screening and discussion of *Berlin, Schönhauser Corner* (Klein, 1957)

Grammar focus of the day: Relative clauses II

Reading:

Interview with Kohlhaase (See: https://www.mdr.de/zeitreise/interview-wolfgang-kohlhaase-defa-filmtage-merseburg-100.html)

**Reading Quiz 3 Completed in Class**

Class: 4.2

Working with *Berlin, Schönhauser Corner* and other DEFA films (*The Murderers are Among Us, Traces of Stones, Solo Sunny*)
Grammar focus of the day: subjunctive I (indirekte Rede)

Assignment:
Preparation for “role-play day” – you will receive a specific assignment in order to prep for your role (to be handed out in class)

Due date for submission of Presentation

Class: 4.3

Role-play day.
Topic: East German directors v. censors
Grammar focus of the day: subjunctive II
Reading:
Hake, *Film in Deutschland*, chapter 5
Assignment:
Response Paper II - Write a brief plot summary of the film if YOU had made it/could remake it today (for example: from a feminist perspective)

Reading Quiz 4 Completed in Class

Week 5
Class: 5.1 Contemporary German Cinema & the Berlin School

Screening and discussion of *The Lives of Others* (von Donnersmarck, 2006) and of *Barbara* (Petzold, 2012)
Grammar focus for the day: comparatives and superlatives
Assignment:
Prepare for your role in the round-table discussion on *The Lives of Others* and *Barbara*
Reading:
bpb-Filmheft about *Lives of Others* and a review distributed in class

Class: 5.2

Round-table discussion on *Lives of Others* and *Barbara* and their treatment of the East German legacy
Grammar focus of the day: comparatives and superlatives II
Assignment:
Start reviewing for final exam!

Due date for submission of Response Paper II

Reading Quiz 5 Completed in Class

Week 6
Class: 6.1 Final Discussion/Review for Final/Final Exam

Review and Preparation for Final Exam
Review topics include: grammar, film-specific vocabulary, history

Class: 6.2
Final Exam Completed in Class

Course Materials
Readings
In addition to the text listed below, we will work with online film reviews, interviews, and other relevant materials distributed by the instructor.


Online Resources
Useful essays on many aspects of (German) cinema:
www.sensesofcinema.com
Official Website of Deutsche Kinemathek:
http://www.deutsche-kinemathek.de/en
A guide to film terminology:
http://www.lssc.edu/faculty/matthew_w_kennedy/Shared%20Documents/ENC%201101/Film%20Terms.pdf
Resource Guide on German and Austrian Cinema:
http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/Germanfilmbib.html
On the connection between German Cinema and Hollywood:
Official Website of the Berlin Film Festival: