

## Course Title:

Exploring Chinese Culture through Film

Course Code: FS312

Credits: 2

Teaching hours: 32

Prerequisites: No prerequisites.

Semester: Fall or Spring Semester



## Lecturer's Information:

Name: Zeng Xianfei

Email: zengxianfei@sina.com

Tel: 0086+15070066698

## Course Description:

This course will introduce the students to the unique Chinese culture through Chinese films. The films covering all periods in China will be introduced in our lecture, but the emphasis will be made on the last 30 years. The students will be provided with a lot of Chinese films from our office. Class time will be used to introduce and discuss relevant cultural aspects raised in the films, so that the students would appreciate and analyze the films in advance.

## Aims and Objectives:

- To provide an overview of Chinese film history.
- To provide an overview of Chinese culture.
- To let the students know how to further their appreciation of Chinese films.
- To let the students know how to analyze Chinese culture through watching films.

## Prerequisites:

There are no prerequisites for this course. Students who have interests in both Chinese culture and films are welcome. Most films have English subtitles.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- form a general idea about the history of Chinese films.
- know the basics about Chinese culture; such as teachings of Confucius, the custom and concept of a Chinese marriage, kung fu culture, Chinese Cuisine, etc.
- know how to analyze Chinese films.
- understand the similarities and differences between both the Chinese and Western cultures and their respective values through the study of Chinese films.

### **Teaching methods:**

This course will be conducted primarily through two parts: prescreening and discussion.

• **Prescreening.** You can rent videos from our office or watch the films on line. Watching the films and videos online is not as good as watching them in cinemas or theaters; this is because the video screen is inferior to theater screen. For this reason, we will arrange for the students to watch the films in local cinemas for several times.

• **Discussion.** Topic for discussion will be provided for each film. We will focus on the culture in the film rather than the techniques used in making the film.

### **Assessment:**

To achieve a pass grade in this course, students must obtain 60% or more as an aggregate mark on the assessment.

Grading Scale: 100 - 90 = A; 89 – 80 = B; 79 – 70 = C; 69 – 60 = D; 59 or below = F

|                        |      |
|------------------------|------|
| Attendance             | 10%  |
| In-class Participation | 20%  |
| Class Presentation     | 20%  |
| Team Project           | 20%  |
| Final Essay            | 30%  |
| Total                  | 100% |

• **Attendance.** Absence from class will not be accepted unless you are able to provide proof that you were absent because of circumstances beyond your control supported with an authorized document. Absence without excuse is counted as 2 points off your final grade. Five absences without excuse will mean you getting an F for the final grade.

• **In-class Participation** is compulsive. We will score your grade according to your participation in class.

• **Class Presentation.** You will sign up for a particular date on which you will be responsible for presenting a research paper upon your assignment.

• **Team Project.** Refer to the *Team Project* in the next page.

• **Final Essay.** Your Final essay should be no less than 3000 words and must be written by

yourself. Plagiarism is unforgivable. Plagiarism is the copy of another's works or ideas as one's own. It includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas.

### **Students input:**

Including time spent in lectures and classes, they should expect to spend an average of approximately 6 hours per week on this course. They will be expected:

- to prescreen those films according to *the Calendar Activities*. Make notes on the films while you watch so that you are able to recall the details when you need them.
- to review your lecture notes and the reading materials according to *the Calendar Activities*.
- to prepare the weekly topics according to *the Calendar Activities*. Team work on the topic is allowed. I strongly recommend that everybody should participate in the discussion.

### **Course outline:**

1. Chinese film: Introductory lecture and discussion
2. A brief history of Chinese films.
3. *Confucius* and the Thoughts of Confucius.
4. Love story film: The concept evolution of Chinese love and marriage
5. Kung Fu film: Kung Fu in the Chinese mind
6. Food film: Irresistible Chinese cuisine
7. Latest film: Exploring the latest films produced in China
8. East meets West: A comparison between films produced both in China and the West.

### **Text books and indicative reading list:**

Berry, Chris. *Chinese Films in Focus: 25 New Takes*. London: BFI Publishing, 2003.

Ye Lang, Zhu Liangzhi. *Insights into Chinese Culture*: Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 2008.

### **Team project:**

The Team Project is a piece of collaborative work culminating in a project report to make presentation at the end of semester and will be assessed as 20% of the total course assessment. Ideally, teams should consist of 5 individuals, although teams of 4 or 6 members may be allowed with the Course Lecturer's explicit permission. Team members will work together to produce a joint report, and each member of the team will receive the same mark for the report. It is up to each team to allocate responsibilities amongst members and organize its own work.

### **Calendar of teaching activity:**

|       | activities | chapters | Things to remember                         |
|-------|------------|----------|--|
| Week1 | lecture    | 1        | <b>Preparation:</b> the reasons you choose |

|        |         |   |   |
|--------|---------|---|---|
|        |         |   | this course   |
| Week2  | lecture | 1 | <b>Reading:</b> A brief introduction of Chinese film  |
| Week3  | lecture | 2 | <b>Films:</b> <i>Confucius</i><br><b>Reading:</b> Confucian thoughts  |
| Week4  | seminar | 2 | <b>Discussion:</b> The thoughts of Confucius reflected in the film  |
| Week5  | lecture | 3 | <b>Films:</b> <i>Raise the Red Lantern; My Father and Mother; If You Are the One</i><br><b>Reading:</b> The Marriage Customs of China                             |
| Week6  | seminar | 3 | <b>Discussion:</b> The changing concepts of marriage in China   |
| Week7  | lecture | 4 | <b>Films:</b> <i>The Shaolin Temple; Fist of Fury; Drunken Master; Kung Fu Hustle; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon.</i><br><b>Reading:</b> Martial arts (Kung Fu); |
| Week8  | seminar | 4 | <b>Discussion:</b> The spirits reflected in Kung Fu films   |
| Week9  | lecture | 5 | <b>Films:</b> <i>Pushing Hands; The Tai-Chi Master</i><br><b>Reading:</b> Flying Shadow Boxing  |
| Week10 | seminar | 5 | <b>Discussion:</b> The truth of Kung Fu   |
| Week11 | lecture | 6 | <b>Films:</b> <i>The God of Cookery; The proud of Mei Long Town; Magic Kitchen</i><br><b>Reading:</b> Culinary delights in China.                                 |
| Week12 | seminar | 6 | <b>Discussion:</b> The characters of Chinese foods  |
| Week13 | lecture | 7 | <b>Films:</b> The latest films produced in this year  |
| Week14 | seminar | 7 | <b>Discussion:</b> The cultures reflected in the latest films   |
| Week15 | lecture | 7 | <b>Films:</b> <i>The Wedding Banquet; Eat Drink Man Woman; Pushing Hands</i>  |
| Week16 | seminar | 8 | <b>Wrap-up Discussion:</b> The cultural conflicts between the west and east in the films  |
| Week17 |         |   | <b>Paper submission deadline</b>  |