Field of Study Course Proposal for MLC 365: German Film in Context (FSLT)

FOS: FSLT
Course: MLC 365
Title: German Film in Context

Catalog description: A survey of German cinema from the 1930s to the present emphasizing the historical and cultural context in which the films were produced.

Prerequisites: sophomore standing

Credit hours: 3 cr.

Estimated enrollment: 15-20

How often/by whom offered: every other year/Kathrin Bower

Staffing implications: none

Adequacy of resources: Some additional films and additional books on German film will be ordered for the library.

Interdepartmental and interschool implications: MLC 365 complements existing film studies courses in the English department.

Contact person: Kathrin Bower, kbower@richmond.edu

NOTE: MLC 365 was approved for academic credit by Academic Council on 1/25/2005.
Field of Study Proposal
MLC 365 as Literary Studies

MLC 365: German Film in Context examines films as verbal and visual texts in their cultural and political context. Central to the course is the acquisition of a critical vocabulary for “reading” film, both for form and content. With its focus on German film from the 1930s to the present, MLC 365 also addresses questions of language and meaning for the non-native speaker of German: How do non-German speaking audiences interpret these films? How do the meaning and impact of the films shift over time and across cultures? What nuances in the visual and textual allegories of the films can be uncovered with additional linguistic and cultural background from the films’ original German context? In order to answer these questions, screenings of each film are prefaced by discussions of the historical period, the political and social climate, and the attitudes of the public toward literature and film during the time in which the film was produced. Students are also introduced to concepts and techniques of film analysis to aid them in making connections between content and form in their interpretations of the films.

NOTE: The attached syllabus is from a pilot version of this course offered in Spring 2005 under another course number. The approach to teaching the course will remain the same.
MLC 365: German Film in Context
Spring 2012
MW 1:30-2:45pm
INTC 228

Professor: Kathrin Bower
Office: INTC 208
Telephone: 287-6060
E-mail: kbower@richmond.edu
Office hours: MW 3:00-4:00pm and by appointment.

Objectives:
German Film in Context examines films as verbal and visual texts in their cultural and historical context. Central to the course is the acquisition of a critical vocabulary for “reading” film, both for form and content. With its focus on German film from the 1930s to the present, MLC 365 also addresses questions of language and meaning for the non-native speaker of German: How do non-German speaking audiences interpret these films? How do the meaning and impact of the films shift over time and across cultures? What nuances in the visual and textual allegories of the films can be uncovered with additional linguistic and cultural background from the films’ original German context? In order to answer these questions, screenings of each film are prefaced by discussions of the historical period, the political and social climate, and the attitudes of the public toward literature and film during the time in which the film was produced. By the end of the course, the student should possess the critical apparatus to analyze the elements of film narrative and demonstrate an increased sensitivity to the conditions of film production and spectatorship. [FSLT]

FILMS: Titles marked with an asterisk * will be shown in class. All other films must be viewed prior to the session when they will be discussed. (NOTE: In-class film screenings will require that you stay beyond the scheduled class period for an additional 10-30 minutes, depending on the length of the film.)

The Blue Angel, dir. Josef von Sternberg (1930) – 99 min.
Jew Süss, dir. Veit Harlan (1940) – 95 min.*
   [+ excerpt from The Eternal Jew, dir. Fritz Hippler (1940)]
The Murderers are among Us, dir. Wolfgang Staudte (1946) – 81 min.*
The Bridge, dir. Bernhard Wicki (1959) – 102 min.*
Naked among Wolves, dir. Frank Beyer (1963) – 119 min.
The Rabbit is Me, dir. Kurt Maetzig (1965) – 109 min.
The Marriage of Maria Braun, dir. Rainer Werner Fassbinder (1979) – 120 min.
Nobody Loves Me, dir. Doris Dörrie (1994) – 104 min.*

E-Reserve readings: [http://librarycat.richmond.edu]


Blackboard readings:
--- “Editing.” Understanding Movies.141-216

Assignments:
Two short sequence analyses (ca. 1000 words each) focusing on specific aspects of the filmic medium: mise-en-scène and editing = 25%
One oral presentation analyzing a central sequence in one of the films shown in the course = 10%
One paper (ca. 2000 words) comparing two films discussed in the course. This paper will require some additional research beyond the assigned readings = 20%
Final exam = 25%
Participation and attendance = 20%

You are expected to have done the readings and viewed the film prior to the date assigned and to contribute your ideas on the material to class discussion.

SCHEDULE:

1) 1/9/2012 – M  Introduction
   Handout: “How to view a film”

2) 1/11/2012 – W  The Blue Angel
   Discussion of the film
   Brockmann, “Der blaue Engel (1930) and Learning to Talk” 96-111

3) 1/16/2012 – M  class meets from 1:00-1:50pm (MLK schedule!)
   Rise of Nazism

4) 1/18/2012 - W  Jew Süss (in class)
   Giannetti, “Mise en scène” 47-97 [Blackboard]

5) 1/23/2012 – M  Student presentation
   Discussion of Jew Süss
   Schulte-Sasse, “Courtier, Vampire, or Vermin?” 184-220
   Transformation sequence from The Eternal Jew – clip

6) 1/25/2012 – W  Murderers are among us (in class)
   Shandley, “Dismantling the Dream Factory” 9-24, 194

7) 1/30/2012 – M  Student presentation
   Discussion of the film
   Mückenberger, “The Anti-Fascist Past in DEFA Films” 58-76
   Sinka, “The Murderers are among Us” 75-85

8) 2/1/2012 – W  The Bridge (in class)
   Sequence analysis due – mise en scène and the post-war context in The Murderers are among us (1000 words)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2/6/2012  | M     | Student presentation  
Discussion of the film  
Brockmann, “*Die Brücke* (1959): Film and War” 302-313  
| 2/8/2012  | W     | Ideology and Identity  
Fulbrook, “Crystallization and Consolidation” 168-196  
Gianetti, “Editing” 141-216 [Blackboard] |
| 2/13/2012 | M     | *Naked among Wolves*  
Student presentation  
Discussion of the film  
Niven, “The Cinema Film of *Naked among Wolves*” 122-150 |
| 2/15/2012 | W     | Official Culture in the GDR  
Goodbody, Tate, Wallace, “The Failed Socialist Experiment” 147-179 |
| 2/20/2012 | M     | *The Rabbit is Me*  
Student presentation  
Discussion of the film  
Feinstein, “The Eleventh Plenum and *Das Kaninchen bin ich*” 151-175, 279-283 |
| 2/22/2012 | W     | New German Cinema and the Protest Movements of the 1960s/1970s  
Hake, “West German Cinema 1962-89” 144-178  
**Proposed topic for comparative film analysis due** |
| 2/27/2012 | M     | *Marriage of Maria Braun*  
Discussion of the film  
Student presentation  
Hillman, “Narrative, Sound, and Film” 181-195  
Rheuban, “*The Marriage of Maria Braun*” 207-226 |
| 2/29/2012 | W     | *Marianne and Julianne* (in class)  
**Sequence analysis due** – editing in *The Rabbit is Me* (1000 words) |
| 3/12/2012 | M     | Student presentation  
Discussion of the film  
Silberman, “The Subject of Identity” 198-213, 280-283  
Writing exercise: use of sound in *Marriage* and *M&J* |
| 3/14/2012 | W     | *Nobody Loves Me* (in class)                                         |
| 3/19/2012 | M     | Student presentation  
Discussion of the film  
Benbow, “Ethnic Drag in the Films of Doris Dörrie” 517-536 |
| 3/21/2012 | W     | *Run Lola Run* (in class)  
**Outline and preliminary bibliography for comparative analysis paper due** |


23) 4/2/2012 – M  Good Bye Lenin! Student presentation Discussion of the film Creech, “A Few Good Men” 100-126 LAC group: handout on Good Bye Lenin! due

24) 4/4/2012 – W  Turkish German Cinema Gemünden, “Hollywood in Altona” (German Pop Culture) 180-190 Burns, “On the streets and on the road” 11-26

25) 4/9/2012 – M  Head On Student presentation Discussion of the film Survey of film reviews

26) 4/11/2012 - W  German Cinema at the “Oscars” Comparative analysis paper due

27) 4/16/2012 – M  The Lives of Others Student presentation Discussion of the film Fisher, “German Historical Film as Production Trend” 186-215

28) 4/18/2012 – W  Concluding discussion

Final exam on Friday, April 27, 2012 from 2-5pm

MLC 253: CLAC (Culture and Language across the Curriculum):
CLAC students will participate in six discussion sessions (see schedule below), write four short commentaries in German on assigned topics, and complete one group project on Good Bye Lenin! (using materials from http://www.bpb.de/publikationen/13J4EY,0,Good_Bye_Lenin%21.html) in the form of a handout for the class.

CLAC Zeitplan: