China into Contemporary Chinese Film

DESCRIPTION:

This course is intended to offer insights into the political, social and cultural changes in contemporary China and the impact of modernization and globalization on its cultural redefinition and identity reforming. Using primarily a selection of films directed by the internationally acclaimed Chinese 5th and 6th generation directors, the course will invite students to exercise their critical thinking skills to appraise the cultural narratives of each selected film, and the aesthetic presentation produced by each film director. Topics covered will include: modernity, globalization, revolution, nation, gender, class, and commercialism, youth culture, etc.

Central issues:

- How to evaluate the representation and criticism of Chinese cultural tradition and value in contemporary Chinese film.
- How to understand the political, social and cultural changes in the past three decades.

CREDIT HOURS:.

2 credits

INSTRUCTORS:

Zhu Jianxin (Ph.D)

PREREQUISITES:

No prerequisites.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

Lecture, in-class discussion, and student presentation.

ADDITIONAL COSTS:.

LANGUAGE OF PRESENTATION:

English

REQUIRED WORK AND ASSESSMENT:

This course offers one semester teaching. Each week, references or readers will be suggested according to the topic of the lecture. Regular class attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to attend class as well as participate in lectures and discussions. Student participation in classroom discussion is the key to success
in this course. Course requirements will include (1) film viewing attendance (20%); (2) class discussions and presentation (30%); (3) a final term paper (50%).

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

**CONTENT:**

**Week 1:**
Lecture: An Introduction to Chinese Cinema.

**Week 2:**

**Week 3**
Lecture and discussion: Change and Continuity of Chinese Culture in East-West Encounter.

**Week 4**
Film Screening: *Ermo (Ermo, dir. Zhou Xiaowen, 1994)*, in Chinese with English subtitles, 95 min.

**Week 5**
Lecture and discussion: A Glimpse of Rural China in Economic Transition.

**Week 6**
Film Screening: *The Story of Qiu Ju (Qiuju daguansi, dir. Zhang Yimou, 1992)*, in Chinese with subtitles, 100 min.

**Week 7**
Lecture and discussion: Shades of Morality in Contemporary Chinese society.

**Week 8**
Film Screening: *Shower (Xizao, dir. Zhang Yang, 1999)* in Chinese with subtitles, 92 min.

**Week 9:**

**Week 10:**

**Week 11:**


**Week 12:**

Film Screening: *Suzhou River* (*Suzhou He*, dir. Lou Ye, 2000), in Chinese with English subtitles, 83 min.

**Week 13:**

Lecture and discussion: New Chinese Cinema of the “Sixth Generation”: A Distant Cry of Forsaken Children?

**Week 14:**

Film Screening: *Be There or Be Square* (*Bujian busan*, dir. Feng Xiaogang, 1998), in Chinese with English subtitles, 100 min.

**Week 15:**

Lecture and discussion: Blockbuster in Chinese Style: Feng Xiaogang’s New Year’s Film (*He Sui Pian*).

**Week 16:**

Class presentation.

**REQUIRED READINGS:**


**RECOMMENDED READINGS:**


**ORGANIZED ACTIVITIES:**

A workshop on contemporary Chinese cinema will be arranged during the semester.

**INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHIES:**

Dr. Zhu Jianxin graduated from Fudan University, China in 1989, majoring in English and American Literature. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in English Literature from Fudan University and Shanghai International Studies University in 2001 and 2006 respectively. Since 1989, Dr. Zhu has been working at Fudan University. Currently he is an associate professor of English Literature and Film Studies, and serves as vice chair of English Department. Dr. Zhu teaches literature, film and cultural studies. His major research interests are film and literature, film and society, and Nordic film. In 1998, he taught courses on Chinese culture and society at Beloit College, WI, USA. From July 2005 to July 2006, he visited University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, IL, USA as Freeman Fellow. Since 1991, he has translated over 80 foreign films for Shanghai Film Archives. From 1993 to 1997, he worked as a chief interpreter for Shanghai International Film Festival. Since 2012, he has become editorial board member of *Adaptation*, an international journal of adaptation studies published by Oxford University Press. Now Dr. Zhu is working on two books on film adaptation and Chinese/Chinese-Americans in Hollywood films.