COMM 4390.002: Topics in Communication
Topic: Interpreting the Visual Culture of 1960s Hollywood
Instructor: Dr. Ethan Thompson
Summer I 2017, Maymester
MTWR 8:00am – 11:45am BH 205
Office: BH 328
Office Hours: 12-1 pm MTWR

Course Description: This course examines the visual culture of Hollywood media production in the 1960s: a time of dramatic changes in social attitudes, cultural tastes, aesthetic strategies, and the industry’s practices and structures. Particular attention will be paid to the variety of aesthetic strategies used to promote films in posters and trailers to audiences during the decade.

Special Note: This course is designed as a combination media studies course and workshop in printmaking. Therefore, students will alternate between days spent in lecture and movie screenings with days spent in the print studio. No prior experience with printmaking is expected. Students will create print projects related to the course topic, in collaboration and individually. This is a special opportunity for students to step outside typical disciplinary bounds to create projects that will require developing new skills and ways of thinking related to visual communication.

Student Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the shifting industrial practices in Hollywood during the 1960s
- Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of social change on the film industry and audiences
- Analyze and describe how particular films from the 1960s were impacted by changes in aesthetic, industrial, and social norms
- Create visual culture that synthesizes these understandings with aesthetic strategies to promote films to audiences

Text/Materials Required: Assortment of reserve readings available on Blackboard. Print making materials will be available in the print studio.

Course assignments & Method of Evaluation:

Quizzes: 4 based on lectures and reading. (20%)
Print Project 1: Communicate star/genre (15%)
Print Project 2: Communicate to youth audience (20%)
Print Project 3: Appropriate screen images (20%)
Print Project 4: Movie Poster (Final) (25%)
Detailed instructions on projects will come during the course.

Grade Scale: A = 100-90, B = 89-80, C = 79-70, D = 69-60, F = 59 and under.

COURSE SCHEDULE (MAYMESTER 2017)
(4 lecture & film days, 4 print studio days, + 1 day for final presentations)

DAY 1: Monday 5/15: Lecture: Introduction to the Course & Hollywood in the 1960s

MORNING
Unit X: Overview of Course
Objective: Understand course objectives and requirements

Unit 1: Cornerstones of Movies & Promotion: Stars & Genres
Objective: Understand ongoing importance of stars, genres to Hollywood
Movie to screen: Psycho (1960, Hitchcock, 109 minutes)

AFTERNOON
Unit 2: Hollywood Industrial & Textual Practices in the 1960s
Objective: Understand how Hollywood changed business and aesthetic strategies in 1960s
Movie to screen: Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf? (1966, Nichols, 131 minutes)
Lecture clips: Various movie trailers and posters

Assessment: Quiz 1

DAY 2: Tuesday 5/16: Printmaking Studio
Print Project 1: Communicate genre and/or star

DAY 3: Wednesday 5/17: Lecture: Changing Aesthetics and Audience Tastes
Reading: Kristin Thompson & David Bordwell, Film History. Chapter 22. Hollywood’s Fall and
“The Origin and Development of the American moving picture poster,” Gary Don Rhodes (PDF)

MORNING
Unit 3: Cinema & Changing Aesthetics
Objective: Understand how 60s films differed from “Classical Hollywood Style” due to aesthetic
influences foreign and domestic.
Movie to screen: Masculin/Feminin (1966, Godard, 110 minutes)
Lecture clips: Breathless, La Jetee, Jule et Jim, Beach movies, The Girl Can’t Help It

AFTERNOON
Unit 4: Art Cinema: International & Avant-Garde
Objective: Understand popularity and influence of art cinema, both international and avant-garde, during the decade.
Movie to screen: *Blow-Up* (1966, Antonioni, 111 minutes)

Assessment: Quiz 2

**DAY 4: Thursday 5/18: Printmaking Studio**
*Print Project 2:* Communicate to youth market


**MORNING**
Unit 5: From Social Issue to Political Film
Objective: Understand how “political films” ranged from “social problem” genre of Hollywood to radical independent filmmaking.
Movie to screen: *A Raisin in the Sun* (128 minutes, Petrie, 1961)

**AFTERNOON**
Unit 6: Documentary Cinema
Objective: Understand range of documentary style and evolution during the decade.
Movie to screen: *In the Year of the Pig* (103 minutes, de Antonio, 1968)
Lecture Clips: *Primary, Medium Cool, Sweet Sweetback*

Assessment: Quiz 3

**DAY 6: Tuesday 5/23: Printmaking Studio**
*Print Project 3:* Appropriating Screen Images

**DAY 7: Wednesday 5/24: Lecture: Art Cinema Goes to Hollywood**
*Reading:* Harris, Excerpts from *Pictures at a Revolution*

**MORNING**
Unit 7: Hollywood at the Crossroads in 1967
Objective: Understand how industry incorporated elements of art cinema and avant-garde practice into popular filmmaking.
Movie to screen: *Bonnie & Clyde* (1967, Penn, 111 minutes)

**AFTERNOON**
Unit 8: The End of the 1960s and the Beginnings of the New Hollywood
Objective: Understand transition to the “New Hollywood” of the 1970s.
Movie to screen: *Easy Rider* (1969, Hopper, 95 minutes)
Lecture Clips: *Gimme Shelter, Head, Two-Lane Blacktop*

Assessment: Quiz 4

**DAY 8: Thursday 5/25: Printmaking Studio**  
Print Project 4: Movie Poster

**DAY 9: Friday 5/26**

Final project presentations

**Attendance Policy**  
Attendance is mandatory. Since this is a Maymester course, you cannot miss any classes. An unexcused absence will result in a deduction of 10 points from your overall course grade, and you will not be able to make up any missed work.

**Classroom/Professional behavior**  
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

**Dropping a Class**  
Events sometimes occur that make dropping a course seem necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

**Academic Advising**  
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.
Statement of Academic Continuity
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Grade Appeals
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available at http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.01_student_grade_appeal Procedure.pdf). For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean's Office.

Disabilities Accommodations
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.