MEDA 4390.001: Topics in Media Arts
Topic: Interpreting the Visual Culture of Hollywood
Instructor: Dr. Ethan Thompson
Summer I 2018, Maymester
Office: BH 328
Class Meets: 12-4 pm MTWR, OCNR 130
Office Hours: 11-12 MTWR

Course Description: This course examines the visual culture of Hollywood media production in a focused context, such as during a particular decade, or in relation to a particular genre, star, or cultural topic. The visual culture studied will include not just primary media texts such as films or television programs, but also posters, trailers, and other promotional materials, as well as related visual culture not produced directly by the media industries, such as contemporary art.

Maymester 2018 Focus: The 1980s. The course will focus on the visual culture of 1980s Hollywood cinema through attention to changes in social attitudes, cultural tastes, aesthetic strategies, and the industry’s practices and structures at the time.

Special Note: This course is designed as a “critical making” course that combines “critical” study and analysis with the “making” of media—in our case poster art. It is a combination media studies course and workshop in printmaking. Therefore, students will alternate between time spent in lecture and movie screenings with time 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 of Hollywood
- Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of social change on the film industry and audiences
- Analyze and describe how particular films 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 (15%)  
Print Project 2: Communicate genre (20%)  
Print Project 3: Trailer Sequence (20%)  
Print Project 4: Lobby Card (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 2018)

DAY 1: Monday 5/14: Lecture: Introduction to the Course & Hollywood in the 1980s  
Objective: Understand ongoing importance of stars, genres to Hollywood  
Movie to screen: Beverly Hills Cop  
Assessment: Quiz 1

DAY 2: Tuesday 5/15: Printmaking Studio  
Print Project 1: Communicate star

Objective: Understand how Hollywood changed business and aesthetic strategies in 1980s  
Movie to screen: Fast Times at Ridgemont High  
Lecture clips: Various movie trailers and posters  
Assessment: Quiz 2

DAY 4: Thursday 5/17: Printmaking Studio  
Print Project 2: Communicate genre

Objective: Understand key social and cultural events and shifts in America during 1980s  
Read: Michael Rogin, Ronald Reagan, The Movie (excerpt)  
Movie to screen: Top Gun  
Assessment: Quiz 3

DAY 6: Tuesday 5/22: Printmaking Studio  
Print Project 3: Trailer Sequence

DAY 7: Wednesday 5/23: Lecture: Documentary and Art Cinema in the 1980s  
Objective: Understand range of documentary styles and impact of international and art cinemas on Hollywood in the 1980s  
Movie to screen: Repo Man
DAY 8: Thursday 5/24: Printmaking Studio
Print Project 4: Lobby Card

DAY 9: Friday 5/25: Lobby Card 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 can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. 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.C2.03, *Student Grade Appeals*, 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.C2.03, *Student Grade Appeals*. These documents are accessible online at: [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html).

**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.