

I. Course Information

Academic unit	Faculty of Arts and Sciences	
Department	General Education	
Code	GEAD200	
English Title	Contemporary Cinema	
French or Arabic Title <i>(when applicable)</i>		
Type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> CTP <input type="checkbox"/> TP <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> TD <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> TH	
Pre-requisites	none	
Co-requisites	none	
Number of credits	3	
Contact hours per week	3	
Delivery Language:	<input type="checkbox"/> French <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):	
Offered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fall <input type="checkbox"/> Spring <input type="checkbox"/> Summer	
Current Semester	Fall 2025	
CRN	12157/12172	
Class Schedule	MF 14:00-15:15 & MF 15:30-16:45	

II. Course Instructor

Name and Title	Dr. Cynthia Zeinoun
Category	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full-time <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time
Office	C201
Email / Teams	cynthazeinoun@usek.edu.lb <i>Replies are to be expected within the following 2 working days</i>
Office hours	Upon request via email

III. Course prerequisite knowledge and skills

Students should have a foundational understanding of media and culture, with basic analytical skills for interpreting visual and narrative content. Prior knowledge in critical thinking, reading comprehension, and engagement with contemporary issues will enhance their ability to explore the themes and concepts presented in the course.

IV. Course Core Information

Course Description

This course explores contemporary cinema, focusing on its artistic, societal, and political aspects. Students will analyze key films from various genres, regions, and the digital era, examining narrative structures, visual styles, and themes. The course also investigates how film shapes and challenges cultural norms and ideologies. Through screenings and discussions, students will develop critical skills for analyzing contemporary films and understanding their cultural impact.

Course Goals

The course aims to enhance students' understanding of contemporary cinema, develop critical thinking skills for analyzing films, and explore the intersection of film with societal, cultural, and political themes. It also seeks to foster an appreciation of diverse cinematic styles and narratives, while encouraging students to engage with films as both art forms and social commentaries.

Delivery Mode

The course employs an interactive and student-centered approach, combining lectures, film screenings, group discussions, and critical analysis. Students will engage with films through a variety of lenses, including historical, cultural, and theoretical perspectives, fostering a collaborative learning environment that encourages active participation and critical reflection.

V. Course Learning Outcomes (LOs)

After a successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze and interpret contemporary films through historical, cultural, and theoretical frameworks.
2. Critically assess the impact of social and political contexts on modern cinema.
3. Compare and contrast diverse cinematic styles and genres in global contexts.
4. Evaluate key filmmaking techniques and their contribution to storytelling in contemporary cinema.
5. Develop informed opinions on current trends and challenges in the film industry.
6. Articulate clear, evidence-based arguments about the significance of contemporary films in shaping societal narratives.

VI. Course General Requirements

Writing Requirements

Students must be able to write precisely and coherently on the course topics in a manner that is comprehensible for the reader. Examples of such writing can be found in published papers, manuals, textbooks, and expository articles aimed at non-expert audiences.

Oral Requirements

Students must be able to express their thoughts clearly, pronounce correctly, listen actively, and participate effectively in discussions. Presentation skills, such as organization, confident delivery, and engaging the audience, are also important. Students should be adaptable in their communication style, open to different viewpoints, and demonstrate critical thinking skills.

Technical Requirements

Students should have basic computer literacy, including proficiency in word processing, internet research, and email communication. Additionally, depending on the field, students may need specific technical skills like programming, data analysis, laboratory techniques, or software proficiency.

VII. Course Timetable and detailed schedule

Timetable

Week	Topic	LO(s)	Assessment Activities	Learning Activities
1	Introduction to Filmmaking & Basic Vocabulary	LO4		Introduction to film as an art form, covering key terminology and concepts in cinema.
2	The Rise of Streaming Platforms	LO5, LO6		Examination of how Netflix and streaming platforms have reshaped film distribution and audience consumption patterns.
3	Aesthetics in Contemporary Cinema	LO1, LO4		Analysis of visual style, cinematography, and composition techniques used in filmmaking to enhance storytelling.
4	Genre Exploration: The Blurring of Categories	LO3		Examination of hybrid genres and how contemporary cinema blends traditional genre conventions to create innovative narratives.
5	Representation and Identity in Film	LO2	A1: In-class film analysis exercise	Analysis of how race, gender, and sexuality are portrayed and explored in contemporary films, and their impact on societal narratives.
6	Global Cinema: Diverse Perspectives	LO1, LO3, LO6		Exploration of non-Western cinema's influence on global storytelling, emphasizing diverse

				cultural perspectives and narrative styles.
7	The Role of the Auteur in Modern Filmmaking Midterm Exams	LO4		Examining the influence of directors as creators.
8	Documentaries and Realism in Cinema	LO2		Examination of documentary films' impact on modern storytelling, focusing on their ability to inform, persuade, and provoke thought on social, political, and cultural issues.
9	Technology and Innovation in Film	LO4		Analysis of how advancements in technology, such as CGI, virtual reality, and streaming platforms, have transformed filmmaking techniques and shaped the audience's viewing experience.
10	The Influence of Cultural Trends on Cinema	LO1, LO2	A2: Research poster	Analysis of how societal shifts, cultural movements, and significant events influence the themes, characters, and narratives in films, reflecting the evolving values and concerns of society.
11	Sound and Music in Film	LO4		Examination of how sound design and scoring contribute to the emotional impact, storytelling, and atmosphere in films, enhancing the viewer's experience and understanding of the narrative.
12	Animation in Contemporary Cinema	LO1, LO3	A3: In-class animation film exercise	Examination of the evolution of animated films, exploring their role in conveying complex themes and expanding storytelling possibilities.
13	Women in Film: Representation and Leadership	LO2, LO6		Exploration of women's roles in cinema, focusing on feminist film and its challenge to traditional narratives and gender equality in film production.
14	Final Project – Part A (in-class quiz) and Part B (Contemporary Cinema portfolio – 10 slides)			

Schedule of Holidays, Make-up Sessions, Evaluations dates and Deadlines for Assignments.

USEK Academic calendar can be found at www.usek.edu.lb.

Week	Month	Date	Day	Specific Announcement
1				
2				
3				
4				
5	October	2	Thursday	Assignment 1
6				
7	October	16	Thursday	Midterm Project
8				
9				
10				
11	November	13	Thursday	Assignment 2
12	November	22	Saturday	Independence Day
13	November	27	Thursday	Assignment 3
14				
15	December	2	Tuesday	Final in-class quiz
15	December	4	Thursday	Final portfolio submission
15	December	5	Friday	End of classes for Fall Semester 2025

VIII. Course Material

Required Texts	"Film Art: An Introduction" by David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson (11th Edition, 2021) "The Culture of the Screen: An Introduction to the Cinema of Modernity" by John Hill (2019)
Supplemental References	"The Visual Story: Creating the Visual Structure of Film, TV and Digital Media" by Bruce Block (3rd Edition, 2021) No Film School (nofilmschool.com) MasterClass (www.masterclass.com)
Required Materials	Access to laptop and video viewing platforms (YouTube, Vimeo, Netflix, etc.)

IX. Course Grading System

Provide information about each assignment and assessment activity and specify their weight in the overall grade.

Assignment 1: In-class film analysis exercise (7%)

Assignment 2: Academic research mini-poster (6%)

Assignment 3: In-class animation film exercise (7%)

Midterm project: Midterm research project (global cinema case study) (30%)

Final Exam – Part A (in-class quiz – 15%) and **Part B** (Contemporary Cinema portfolio – 25%)

Attendance & Active participation (10%)

All course grades will be regularly shared with students, preferably on the e-learning platform.

The course final examinations date will be published by the Registrar Office in due time. No test or examination shall be given during the last two weeks before the regular examination period.

Passing grade

A minimum grade of **60%** is required for this course.

The Grading policy can be found in the **Academic Rules and Regulations** published on the website.

Grading criteria

Grading Criteria (Total = 100%)	
10%	Attendance and active participation
20%	Assignments 1-3
30%	Midterm Project
40%	Final Project

X. Course Policies and Support to students

The USEK **Academic Rules and Regulations** is the official document of record concerning academic programs and regulations. It can be found at www.usek.edu.lb.

Class attendance policy

- Students arriving more than 15 minutes late will be marked as absent for that class.
- Attendance will only be recorded at the end of the class. If students leave early without a valid excuse, they will be marked as absent.
- Students must inform the instructor by email about any planned absences **before** the class begins, except in cases of emergencies.
- Absences without valid proof will be considered at the instructor's discretion and may not be excused.

Students can, for valid and justified reasons, be absent for a number of teaching hours equal to three teaching weeks (20% of the course's number of hours, i.e., 9 hours = 6 sessions of an hour and 15 minutes each). However, they are responsible for learning material covered in class and will fail all graded class activities (quizzes, tests, presentations, discussions, etc.) organized during these absences.

Students who exceed the authorized limit of absences will not be allowed to sit for their final exam. They must officially withdraw from the course before the official deadline, otherwise, they will be given the grade FW (Fail to Withdraw).

Students with an excused absence will be permitted to make up coursework or complete an equivalent assignment agreed upon with the instructor.

Absence to Mid-term and final exam

A student who does not show up for the Mid-term and final exams, for any reason, is given, by the teacher, a failing grade of zero. If this absence is due to special justifiable circumstances, such as:

- Death of a family member or relative.
- Hospitalization, attested by a medical report from the hospital.

- Tested positive to COVID-19, attested by a PCR test with a QR code.
- Serious accident, attested by an official report from a sworn expert.

Then the student can present a petition with supporting documents at the Student Affairs Office within the 24 hours following the missed exam. The request will be accepted for a valid justification or in case of a recurrence. A student who has shown up for the exam cannot, in any case, present a petition for a make-up exam. The Mid-term and final exams policy can be found at www.usek.edu.lb.

Late Submission

All assignments must be submitted through eLearning, unless the file is too large. In that case, use WeTransfer or preferably a Google Drive link. For every day past the deadline, a 5% deduction will be applied. Assignments submitted more than a week late will receive a grade of zero.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism and any form of academic dishonesty are strictly prohibited. All work submitted must be your own, unless otherwise specified.

Students are expected to practice the highest possible standards of academic integrity. Any deviation from this expectation will result in an academic penalty of the student failing the assignment and may result in additional disciplinary measures. This includes, but not limited to, improper citation of sources, using another student's work, and any other form of academic misrepresentation. Suspicions of use of artificial intelligence aids will be considered as alleged violations of Cheating.

The Academic Integrity policy can be found at www.usek.edu.lb.

Netiquette

Students are expected to communicate with each other and with the instructor in a learning community. They are expected to be respectful, polite, and knowledgeable during oral and written communication and when posting to the class discussion forums.

Course Evaluation Survey

Completion of the online course evaluation survey is required. Students will not be able to access their course grade until they have completed the course evaluation.

Arrangements for Students with Special Needs

USEK empowers students to manage challenges and limitations imposed by special needs. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Accessibility Services Unit by sending an email to students.access@usek.edu.lb for any accommodation needed to fulfill course requirements (within the first week of the semester).

Writing Center

The USEK Writing Center offers writing assistance to students. Its main mission is to develop their writing skills and provide free writing support for students of all levels and at any stage of the writing process by offering in-person consultations during which writers can brainstorm ideas, adopt different writing approaches and strategies, and receive feedback from a well-trained tutor. For assistance student are encouraged to contact the center by sending an email to writingcenter@usek.edu.lb.

Technical Support

The Enterprise and Information Technology Services (EITS) at USEK provides essential assistance to students for resolving technical issues and ensuring smooth access to digital resources. It offers guidance and troubleshooting for hardware and software problems, assists with network connectivity, and helps students navigate learning management systems and online platforms.

Latest Update on	Signature
27 August 2025	Dr. Cynthia Zeinoun