

Spring 2-1-2019

CHIN 391.01L: ST - Chinese Culture Through Films

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The Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures

CHIN 391: Chinese Culture through Films

Spring 2019

SYLLABUS

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Office hours: M.W.F.: 1m to 2pm T.TH 11am to 12 noon

General Introduction

This experimental course is constructed in an attempt to introduce students the Chinese culture through films. The major aspects to be covered are: the Chinese mythology of creation, chronological outline of the Chinese dynasties, the fundamental religions and philosophies underling the Chinese culture and the modern China. The course will be carried out in two formats: film showing and seminars.

Students Learning Outcomes:

1. To get familiar with the Chinese cinematography of the 20th Century, the major works and ways of presentation and expression.
2. To learn and understand the beliefs and values of the different segments of the Chinese culture, and how they are reflected in their behavior, their multi social roles and lives as shown in the films.
3. To understand the complexity of the patterns of relationships governed by the believing system between people and government; poor working class and upper elite class; between people to people and people to nature.
4. To learn to be able to observe and critique China's current political, economic, cultural and social issues, and also the issues in its relationships with the rest of the world.
5. To enrich the students in their appreciation of the Chinese films as a form of art and representation of the history and culture.

Evaluation

1. Attendance and class participation 30 points
Students are expected to attend each class and actively participate in class discussion or group presentation. Two absences are allowed for the semester. Each absence thereafter is subject to point deduction in the grading.

2. Tri-weekly response paper (4 total) 20 points
Every other week, students are to submit a 2-page paper in response to one of the two films watched in class.
3. Group presentations 20 points
Students are expected to work in groups (3 to 4) and give three class presentations. The first one is 5 points, the 2rd and 3rd is 10 points each.
4. Cultural tests (2) 15 points each.
5. Extra Credit. 6 points
Film report (2), 3 points each.

Further Important Information:

1. This course uses pluses and minuses in its grading. The lowest credit-receiving grade is D minus, the highest possible course grade a straight A, not A+.
2. Note that you need to select the traditional grading option if you are planning to have this course count toward fulfillment of the Chinese Minor and/or General Education requirements.
3. Auditors: Anyone auditing the class must formally enroll as an auditor.
4. Anyone with a learning or medical disability and in need of special arrangements must inform us of this fact at the beginning of the course. People with such disabilities must provide documentary proof of their status.

Tentative Schedule:

1. Week 1 (Jan 10th)
Introduction, goals and expectations. Group assignment 1.
Film-movie
2. Week 2 (Jan 14th)
Tuesday
Group presentation: Chinese puppet show, introduction history, Pangu (Chinese version of creation), Nuwa (creation of mankind), Story of Nuwa and Fuxi, Silent movies in 1920s.
Thursday
a. All China's dynasties explained in 7 minutes (5,000 years of Chinese history)
b. History of China's Empires Qin, Han, Xin Dynasties History Documentary
3. Week 3 (Jan. 21st)
Tu: The Emperor and Assassin
TH: Discussion
4. Week 4 (Jan. 28th)

Tu: Red Cliff. 赤壁
TH: Discussion

5. Week 5 (Feb. 4th)

TU: Happy Chinese New Year! Tang Xuan Zang 大唐玄奘
TH: Discussion

6. Week 6 (Feb. 11th)

TU: The Last Emperor 末代皇帝
TH : Discussion

7. Week 7 (Feb. 18th)

TU: Family. 家
TH: Discussion

8. Week 8 (Feb. 25th)

TU: Raise the Red Lantern 大红灯笼高高挂
TH : Test One,
Discussion

9. Week 9 (March 4th)

TU : White Haired Girl 白毛女
TH : Discussion

10. Week 10 (March 11th)

TU: Red Sorghum. 红高粱
TH: Discussion

11. Week 11 (March 18th)

TU: To Live 活着
TH: Discussion

Spring Break (March 25th – March 29th) No Classes

12. Week 12 (April 1st)

TU: Blue Kite 蓝风筝
TH: Discussion

13. Week13 (April 8th)

TU: Farewell My Concubine 霸王别姬
TH: discussion

14. Week 14 (April 15th)
TU: Not One Less 一个也不能少
TH: Test Two,
Discussion

15. Week 15 (April 22rd)
TU: Group Presentation
TH: Group Presentation