

NDL107

Chinese Film Studies: Exploring China Through Film

Gustavus Adolphus College January Term 2009

Instructor: Dr. Steven Mellema

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Textbooks: *Chinese National Cinema*, by Yingjin Zhang
 China on Screen: Cinema and Nation, by Chris Berry and Mary Farquhar

Course Description:

This course will be an introductory survey of cinema from mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. A wide range of historical periods, cinematic styles, and genres will be covered, with a focus on films that have gained recognition for their artistic quality and/or landmark status in Chinese cinema history. The course will emphasize the historicity of the filmic texts, leading to greater appreciation and knowledge of Chinese culture, politics, and society over the last century. It will also focus on the cultural values portrayed in the films, and seek to compare and contrast them with values in contemporary American culture.

Course Policy and Evaluation:

1. **Class Meetings:** The class will meet every day, Monday through Friday, from 10:30 am-12:30 pm for film viewing and class discussions. On Tuesday and Thursday afternoons we will also meet from 1:30-4:30 pm in order to view feature-length films. Finally, there will be evening meetings each Wednesday beginning at 7:00 pm to hear guest speakers and/or view additional films. A detailed calendar of all class meetings appears at the end of this syllabus.
2. **Reading Assignments and Discussion:** This course will be run as a seminar, and discussion is the “heart and soul” of any such course. The success and enjoyment of a seminar stem from the active engagement of all participants in the discussion and pursuit of knowledge. There will be daily reading assignments. Reading is expected to be completed **before** coming to the class. Reading assignments will come from the two required textbooks and from supplementary material posted on the course Moodle website (at <http://moodle.gac.edu>).
3. **Moodle “Forums” Discussion Board:** The [Moodle website](#) for this course will have a discussion forum set up for each of the films we view in class. Each student must contribute one posting on each film before the next class meeting. A posting can range from a few sentences to 2-3 short paragraphs, and can take the form of a response to the forum prompt, a

thoughtful question, a brief analysis of a part of the film, a response to a previous posting by another student, etc. – but it should not consist merely of your general opinion of the film. Students are expected to read all of the posts that appear on the discussion boards.

4. **Papers:** Each student will be required to write three papers for this course. The first paper, 2-3 pages long at 1.5-line spacing, will be due on Monday, January 12. The second paper, 2-3 pages long at 1.5-line spacing, will be due on Monday, January 19. The final paper, 4-5 pages long at 1.5-line spacing, will be due on Friday, January 30. Detailed assignments for each paper will appear on the course [Moodle website](#).
5. **Exams:** There will be two one-hour exams. on Friday mornings, January 16 and January 30. The scope of the exams will be the common readings, on-line forums, and in-class discussions. The format will be short-answer essay questions. The exams will be open-book, open-notes. Students must arrange **in advance** to take an exam at other than the scheduled time, and may do so **only** for a valid health or school-related reason
6. **Attendance:** Regular attendance at all class meetings is expected. Students will be held responsible for informing themselves of all announcements/assignments made in class. Students will also be held responsible for any announcements/assignments made on the course [Moodle website](#).
7. **Evaluation:**

Class Discussion/Participation	20%
Discussion Board contributions:	10%
Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%
First Paper	10%
Second Paper	10%
Final Paper	20%
8. **Grading Option:** ABCDF only
9. **Academic Honesty:** Having signed and agreed to abide by the College's Honor Code, students thereby pledge that, in all academic exercises, examinations, papers, and reports, they shall submit their own work. Footnotes, or some other acceptable form of citation must accompany any use of another's words or ideas. Submitting under one's own name work that is merely copied from another source is a violation of the Honor Code. (The full text of the Gustavus Academic Honor Code Policy may be found in the Gustavus Academic Bulletin 2008-2009, p. 37).
10. **Incompletes :** A grade of incomplete will only be given for work not completed due to circumstances beyond the control of the student.

January

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
				1	2	3
4	5 10:30-12:30	6 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Zhang, Chapter 1 1:30-4:30 Film Screening	7 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Zhang, Chapter 2 7:00-8:30 Guest Lecture	8 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Zhang, Chapter 3 1:30-4:30 Film Screening	9 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Zhang, Chapter 4	10
11	12 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Zhang, Chapter 5 First Paper Due	13 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Zhang, Chapter 6 1:30-4:30 Film Screening	14 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Zhang, Chapter 7 7:00-9:30 Film Screening	15 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Zhang, Chapter 8 1:30-4:30 Film Screening	16 10:30-12:30 First Hour Exam	17
18	19 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Berry and Farquhar, Chapter 1 Second Paper Due	20 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Berry and Farquhar, Chapter 2 1:30-4:30 Film Screening	21 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Berry and Farquhar, Chapter 3 7:00-8:30 Guest Lecture	22 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Berry and Farquhar, Chapter 4 1:30-4:30 Film Screening	23	24
25	26 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Berry and Farquhar, Chapter 5	27 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Berry and Farquhar, Chapter 6 1:30-4:30 Film Screening	28 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Berry and Farquhar, Chapter 7 7:00-9:30 Film Screening	29 10:30-12:30 Reading Assignment: Berry and Farquhar, Chapter 8 1:30-4:30 Film Screening	30 10:30-12:30 Final Hour Exam Final Paper Due	31

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