Program: CET Prague  
Course Title: Central European Film  
Course Code: PR/FILM 215  
Total Hours: 45  
Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Film Studies / Central European Studies  
Language of Instruction: English  
Prerequisites/Requirements: Open to all students

Description
This course examines the most important trends and movements in the history of Czech and Central European cinematography. It also puts films within their historical (political and cultural) context. Chronology of the Czech film history is combined with thematic and stylistic analysis. During class sessions, students engage in discussions on specific themes and watch films or clips from films that represent these themes.

Objectives
By the end of the course, students are able to:
- Explain the most powerful forms of Czech/Central European (CE) cinematography
- Define the Czech New Wave, Polish Cinema of Moral Concern and other movements
- Explain which genres are typical for Czech/CE cinematography and why
- Analyze a Czech/CE film of interest in its socio-cultural context
- Apply film theory in writing
- Understand the most important terms in film theory

Course Requirements
Course readings average 30 pages per session and course preparation may include outside film screenings. Both readings and screenings should be completed before class. Students are expected to come to class ready to discuss the issues at hand. Students are required to write a review (1 page, about 350 words) of a Czech/CE film seen outside of class and an article (1 page, about 350 words) about a film festival, workshop or similar event visited while studying in Prague. Students also prepare a presentation based on a film seen within class and based on a required reading.

Students write a midterm essay (4 pages minimum, 1400+ words) and a final essay (6 pages minimum, 2100+ words).

Students are expected to abide by CET’s Attendance Policy.

Methods of Evaluation
The final grade is determined as follows:
- Participation: 20%

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- Assignments (each 5%): 10%
- Presentation: 25%
- Midterm essay: 15%
- Final essay: 30%

Primary Texts
Lawton, Anna M. “The double... a Dostoevskian theme in Polanski,” Literature/Film Quarterly 9 (1981), no. 2: 121-129.
Freeland Cynthia: “Explaining the Uncanny in The Double Life of Véronique”. In Schneider, Steven Jay (Ed.), Horror film and psychoanalysis: Freud’s worst nightmare (Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 87-105.

Supplementary Texts
Films:
Gnome (Tomáš Vorel, 2005)
Control (Nimród Antal, 2003)
The Shop on Main Street (Ján Kadár and Elmar Klos, 1965)
Witness ( Péter Bacsó, Hungary, 1969)
Sunshine in the Net (Štefan Uher, 1962)
The Joke (Jaromil Jireš, 1968)
Loves of a Blonde (Miloš Forman, 1965)
Daisies (Věra Chytilová, 1966)
Birds, Orphans, and Fools (Juraj Jakubisko, 1969)
Knife in the Water (Roman Polanski, 1962)
Double Life of Veronique (Krzysztof Kieślowski, 1991)
Conspirators of Pleasure (Jan Švankmajer, 1996)
Walking too Fast (Radim Špaček, 2009)

Outline of Course Content
Note: Fall/Spring students cover approximately 1 topic every week.
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Topic 1 – Introduction and Chronology
Chronology of the Czech/Central European Cinema
Common history / common topics
What is cinema?
Field trip to Czech Television (Kavčí hory)

Topic 2 – Contemporary Central European Cinema / Mise-en-scene
“Velvet” (and other) revolutions and the changes they brought about in the cinema.
What is mise-en-scene and why is it important in the movies?

Topic 3 - Workshop: How to write an essay / Framing
Dos and Don’ts: What to avoid in writing an essay
What is framing and how is it important in the movies?

Topic 4 – WWII and Holocaust in the movies / Editing
WWII and Holocaust in the Central European Cinema
Referential, explicit, implicit and symptomatic meanings

Topic 5 – Hungarian Cinema / Narration
Chronology
Miklós Jancsó
Narration and narrator / plot vs. story

Topic 6 – Czechoslovak New Wave / Off-Screen Space
New Wave – its social and cultural roots, international links, the inspiration
Traits of CNW: existentialism, sexuality, etc.
The directors of “Czechoslovak New Wave”: Věra Chytilová, Jiří Menzel, Jaromil Jireš, Juraj Jakubisko, Štefan Uher etc.

Topic 7 - Miloš Forman / Feminist Film Theory
Miloš Forman a his CS and US career
Feminist film theory: its premises and goals

Topic 8 - Czech Cinema in the 1970s and 1980s / Editing
Obstacles of Czech New Wave directors in the 1970s and 1980s
Similarities with the 1950s
Ideology and socialistic realism
Different kind of editing

Topic 9 - Polish Cinema / Sound
Chronology
Andrzej Wajda
Krzysztof Kiesowski
CET Syllabus of Record

Function / similarity and repetition / difference and variation / development / unity and disunity