Program: CET Siena
Course Title: Contemporary Italian Cinema: From Canon to the Fringe
Course Code: ITTR 3670
Total Hours: 45
Recommended Credits: 3
Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Italian Studies / Film Studies
Language of Instruction: English
Prerequisites/Requirements: None

Description
This course examines the social, political and economic evolution of contemporary Italy through cinema and other forms of visual culture. Film is one of the 20th-century art forms most suitable as a medium for observing and developing an understanding of the way that contemporary Italy has evolved since World War II, with cinema as the historical record of this evolution. As such, the cinema is also examined from an aesthetic point of view, the iconographic and stylistic developments of the medium also being crucial elements of a visual culture that complements and references traditional modes of representation such as painting and sculpture, as well as architecture, literature and the oral folk tradition.

The course is subdivided into several units, which cover important trends in 20th-century filmmaking, such as: neorealism, stardom, comedy Italian-Style, Modernist Cinema, Spaghetti Westerns, Il cinema impegnato, and horror. Women’s and LGBTQ issues are also part of the course, insofar as it traces the evolution of social rights in Italy and issues of diversity and inclusion, as portrayed by contemporary film.

ITTR 3670 Contemporary Italian Cinema: From Canon to the Fringe has no pre-requisites. It may be taken in addition to ITTR 2630 Italian History and Culture through Film, as a complement. While it can be taken before or after the other film class, the more rigorous course assignments of ITTR 3670 may make it more suitable for enrollment following ITTR 2630.

Objectives
- Students acquire knowledge of the history of traditional Italian cinema.
- They focus on the social, political and economic trends reflected in filmmakers’ concerns in the context of industrialized society and its evolution since the late 1950s.
- They are exposed to the issues which have characterized film studies in relation to Italian cinema and the diversity of filmmaking in the Italian context.
- They gain an awareness of how the cultural history of Italy has been portrayed in canonical cinema.
- They acquire a broad overview of Italy’s emergence as a major world industrial power, providing an acquaintance with the issues affecting ordinary Italians through critical consideration of the ideas, contexts and practices of filmmakers and film commentators in this period.

Course Requirements
CET Syllabus of Record

Students must take four quizzes, two before the midterm paper is due, and two before the final paper is due. The quizzes cover the films and readings that the students must watch or complete throughout the course.

Students are required to complete a midterm paper about two of the films that they watch and discuss during the first half of our course. They receive a series of paper prompts one week before the deadline and must choose one of these on which to base their response.

Students must also complete a final paper on a topic of their choice. During the second half of our course, they complete this project in stages including: selection of a topic, completion of a bibliography, completion of a first draft, and a final draft.

Methods of Evaluation
Attendance and Participation  15%
Quizzes                        20%
Midterm Paper                 25%
Presentation                  15%
Final Paper                   25%

Primary Texts
Contemporary Italian Cinema Course Reader

Supplementary Texts
A. Aciman, Call Me By Your Name: A Novel, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, New York 2007
P. Bondanella, Italian Cinema from Neorealism to the Present, Continuum, New York 2004
M. Giori, Introduction, Homosexuality and the Italian Cinema: From the Fall of Fascism to the Lead Years, Palgrave MacMillan, London, 2017
M. Landy, Stardom Italian Style, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 2008
M. Landy, Italian Film, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2000
G. Lombardi & C. Uva (eds), Italian Political Cinema: Public Life, Imaginary, and Identity in Contemporary Italian Film, Peter Lang, Bern 2016
M. Marcus, Italian Film in the Light of Neorealism, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1986
J. Reich, Beyond the Latin Lover. Marcello Mastroianni, Masculinity, and Italian Cinema, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 2004
M. P. Wood, Italian Cinema, Berg, Oxford 2005

Outline of Course Content

TOPIC 1 - Course Introduction
Background to Italian cinema up to the 1940s

TOPIC 2 - Neorealism
Roma città aperta (R. Rossellini, 1945)
Classic Neo-realist: its essence defined, the social, cultural and political context of the 'movement' Focus on the role of Anna Magnani

Ladri di biciclette (V. De Sica, 1948)
De Sica, Zavattini and the myth of non-actors
CET Syllabus of Record

*Bellissima* (L. Visconti, 1951)
Luchino Visconti, Anna Magnani and the end of Neorealism

**TOPIC 3 - Stardom**
*Stromboli, terra di Dio* (R. Rossellini, 1950)
Italian film and International Stars: The Ingrid Bergman case

*Pane, amore e fantasia* (L. Comencini, 1953)
‘Pink Neorealism’ and the new Italian stardom in the context of the ‘economic miracle’

Male stardom and comedy, Italian style

Film: *Sedotta e abbandonata* (P. Germi, 1964)
Stardom (female)

**TOPIC 4 – Comedy Italian Style**
*Matrimonio all’italiana* (V. De Sica, 1964)
Stardom in the Sixties: Sophia Loren and the “unruly woman”. Gender issues at stake in comedy, Italian style.

**TOPIC 5 – Modernist Cinema**
*La dolce vita* (F. Fellini, 1959)
Fellini, modernism and the Italian star system

*L’eclisse* (M. Antonioni, 1962)
A Peculiar Stardom: Monica Vitti in the Context of Modernist Cinema

**TOPIC 6 – The “Spaghetti Western”**
*C’era una volta il West* (S. Leone, 1968)
Revisiting Hollywood genres: western, Italian style

**TOPIC 7 – The Political Film** (*il cinema impegnato*)
*Swept Away* (L. Wertmüller, 1974)
Political and class divisions between Italy’s Two Halves

**TOPIC 8 – Horror**
*Profondo rosso* (D. Argento, 1975)
Horror movies and gender issues: the Dario Argento case

**TOPIC 9 – Women’s and LGBTQ Issues in Contemporary Cinema**
*Chiamami col tuo nome* (L. Guadagnino, 2017)
Sexual orientation and (fragile) masculinity in a changing society

*Io e Lei* (MS. Tognazzi, 2015)
Female sexuality and sexual orientation in contemporary Italy

*Un’ora sola ti vorrei* (A. Marazzi, 2002)
Building female identity between motherhood and self-awareness
CET Syllabus of Record

*Corpo celeste* (A. Rohrwacher, 2011)
Family, religion and gender in contemporary Italy