

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by School of Creative Media  
with effect from Semester A 2017 /18**

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**Part I Course Overview**

<b>Course Title:</b>	<u>Independent Chinese Cinema</u>
<b>Course Code:</b>	<u>SM5327</u>
<b>Course Duration:</b>	<u>One semester</u>
<b>Credit Units:</b>	<u>3</u>
<b>Level:</b>	<u>P5</u>
<b>Medium of Instruction:</b>	<u>English</u>
<b>Medium of Assessment:</b>	<u>English</u>
<b>Prerequisites:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<u>Nil</u>
<b>Precursors:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<u>Nil</u>
<b>Equivalent Courses:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<u>Nil</u>
<b>Exclusive Courses:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<u>Nil</u>

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

During the past two decades, many films from Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong have not only reached the world audience, but also become trend-setters in world cinema. This course aims to first present a brief history of independent Chinese cinema from 1905 to present time and then examine narrative and documentary features produced since 1990. By covering major ideas, movements and trends in Chinese language cinema, the course will enhance your knowledge on Chinese culture in general and provide you with a vocabulary, with which you can explore related topics and issues further. By contextualizing Chinese language cinema in world cinema, this course will meanwhile introduce fundamental terminology and critical methods that are essential for you to read and understand other cinema and moving images in general. In this sense, this course offers you examples of case studies to show you how a film can be read from different perspectives—social, economic, aesthetic, cultural, historical, gender or narrative.

### 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Describe the terminologies of film in general and explain special terminologies in Chinese film history		✓	✓	✓
2.	Identify special characteristics of Chinese independent cinema in the large context of Chinese and world film histories		✓	✓	✓
3.^	Analyze significant trends, directions and directors in independent Chinese cinema in relationship to ones own experience		✓	✓	✓
		100%			

^ Negotiated Learning Outcome (NLO) explicitly articulating the elements of Discovery oriented learning.

A1: Attitude

*Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.*

A2: Ability

*Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.*

A3: Accomplishments

*Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.*

### 3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
Reading film	Define terms in film narrative and production with the aid of visual-audio materials in-class and invite students to identify learned terms through in-class discussions	✓						
Discussion	Present representative film texts from various eras and invite students to discuss their characteristics through on-line discussions		✓					
Critical writing	Invite students to conduct a small-scale research on a small body of films by a certain director within the context of independent Chinese cinema			✓				

### 4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Continuous Assessment: 100%								
Participation in in-class discussion	✓						20%	
Four On-line Film Journals		✓					40%	
Final Essay			✓				40%	
Examination: 0% (duration: _____, if applicable)							100%	

## 5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Class Participation and Performance	This assessment task reviews students' participation and performance in discussions, debates and peer critique during the tutorial sessions. The evidence of 'negotiation', the sign of discovery, lies in students' pre-class preparation and interpersonal sensitivity to his/her peer members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active in-class participation, positive listening, strong ability to stimulate class discussion and comment on other points</li> <li>- In-depth pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials</li> <li>- Interpret others' views with an open mind and ready to negotiate</li> <li>- Readiness to share personal insight via analysis and synthesis with informed views</li> <li>- Constructively critical, thus facilitating the discovery of new issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active in-class participation, positive listening, ability to initiate class discussion and comment on other points</li> <li>- Adequate pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials</li> <li>- Interpret opinions effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attentive in in-class participation, listening with comprehension, but only infrequently contributing</li> <li>- Adequate pre-class preparation but little familiarity with peer reports and other materials</li> <li>- Fair ability in interpreting opinions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unmotivated to participate in class discussion or comment on other people's views</li> <li>- Little pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials</li> <li>- Poor ability in interpreting opinions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unwilling to participate in class discussion and comment on other points, even when requested by the teacher</li> <li>- No pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials</li> <li>- Minimal ability in interpreting opinions</li> </ul>
2. Film Journal	This assessment will grade on rationality, clarity and fluency of argument and comment. The threshold of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rich content, excellent ability to interpret and integrate various resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adequate content, sufficient ability to integrate various</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adequate content, fair ability to integrate various resources based on demand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weak content, limited use of resources</li> <li>- Poor organization, structure and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inadequate content, no/ irrelevant use of resources</li> <li>- No organization, structure or/and</li> </ul>

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
	‘discovery’ lies in a student’s ability to negotiate a position that is informed, defensible, and standing on personal insight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Rigorous organization, coherent structure, systematic composition</li> <li>– Precision in argument, well defined and reasoned points of view grounded in insightful interpretation of existing literature</li> <li>– Readiness to respond to peer opinion and other views initiated in class discussion</li> <li>– Discussion shed light on new dimensions of the issue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>resources based on demand</li> <li>– Reasonable organization with balanced structure and composition</li> <li>– Clear elaboration of ideas that sticks to the point, with clearly differentiated issues, ability to interpret opinions independently</li> <li>– Sufficient responses to peer comments to sustain a discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Fair organization with adequate structure and composition</li> <li>– Relevant points made to the subject matter in question</li> <li>– Ability to respond to other statements and engage in class discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>composition</li> <li>– Relevant points to the subject matter, marginal ability to interpret opinions</li> <li>– Ability to respond to other comments in simple terms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>composition</li> <li>– Irrelevant points to the subject matter, no ability to interpret opinions</li> <li>– Fail to respond to other comments</li> </ul>
3. Final Essay	Students should demonstrate ability to utilize primary and secondary sources, build up argument and analysis. The threshold of ‘discovery’ lied in a student’s self initiatives to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Excellent grasp of research material, able to explain key concepts, assumptions and debates</li> <li>– Rigorous organization, coherent structure, distinct thesis, properly argued with strong</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Firm grasp of materials, able to explain key concepts and assumptions</li> <li>– Reasonable organization, balanced structure, adequate content, sufficient ability to integrate various</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Comprehensive grasp of materials, able to explain key concepts</li> <li>– Fair organization, weak structure, adequate content, fair ability to integrate various resources based on demand</li> <li>– Relevant points to the subject matter, fair ability to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Loose grasp of materials, cannot explain key concepts</li> <li>– Poor organization and structure, weak content, limited use of resources</li> <li>– Relevant points to the subject matter, marginal ability to interpret opinions</li> <li>– Insufficient and/or unorganized bibliography</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Poor grasp of materials</li> <li>– No organization and structure, inadequate content, no/ irrelevant use of resources</li> <li>– Irrelevant points to the subject matter, minimal ability to interpret opinions</li> <li>– Irrelevant bibliography</li> </ul>

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
		narrative – Insightful interpretation of the subject matter with distinct themes and thesis – Critical analysis with insightful comments opening up new issues, or suggesting the ability to theorize – Ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools – Strong bibliography suggesting breadth and depth of coverage and informed insights	resources based on demand – Clear ideas which keep to the point, clear-cut subject, ability to interpret opinions independently – Organized bibliography which can be utilized in accordance with the topic	interpret opinions – Unorganized bibliography which can be utilized in accordance with the topic		

**Note: All A+/A/A- grade assignment should comply with the highest performance of Discovery-oriented learning.**

### Part III Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

#### 1. Keyword Syllabus

(An indication of the key topics of the course.)

1. Introduction to the Course; Overview of 100 Years of Chinese Language Cinema; and The Cradle Period (1905-1921)
2. The Early Years (1923-1930s): Stars, Scandals, Shanghai Modern and Left-wing Films and the Realist Tradition
3. Early Taiwanese Cinema (1940s-1950s), Early Hong Kong Cinema (1920s-1950s), and the Era of Studio Productions
4. Hong Kong New Wave, Taiwan New Cinema, and The Fifth Generation Film Movement
5. The Sixth Generation Directors in Mainland China and Their Works
6. Mainland China's New Documentary Movement and Representative Works
7. Second Hong Kong New Wave, and Hong Kong Cinema before and after 1997
8. Second Wave of New Taiwan Cinema, and Important Independent Directors after 1990
9. Gender Issues in Independent Chinese Cinema
10. Documentary Films Produced after 2000 in Taiwan and Hong Kong
11. Documentary Films Produced after 2000 in Mainland China
12. Scholarly Approaches to the Study of Independent Chinese Cinema

#### 2. Reading List

##### 2.1 Compulsory Readings

(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	<b>Berry, Michael. <i>Speaking in Images: Interviews with Contemporary Chinese Filmmakers</i>. NY: Columbia University Press, 2005.</b>
2.	<b>Bordwell, David. <i>Planet Hong Kong: popular cinema and the art of entertainment</i>. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2000.</b>
3.	<b>Browne, Nick. et al, <i>New Chinese cinemas: forms, identities, politics</i>, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge UP, 1994.</b>
4.	<b>Chen, Xihe. "Shadowplay: Chinese Film Aesthetic and Their Philosophical and Culture Fundamentals", <i>Chinese film theory: a guide to the new era</i>, ed. George S. Semsel, Xia Hong, and Hou Jianping, New York: Praeger, 1990, p192-204.</b>
5.	Clark, Paul. <i>Reinventing China: a Generation and Its Films</i> . HK: The Chinese UP, 2005.
6.	Cui, Shuqin. <i>Women through the Lens: Gender and Nation in a Century of Chinese Cinema</i> Honolulu: U of Hawai'i P, 2003.
7.	Huang, Ren. <i>60 Years of Film Critique in Taiwan</i> . [In Chinese.] Taipei: Asia Pacific Press, 2004.
8.	<b>Iordanova, Dina, David Martin-Jones, and Belén Vidal eds. <i>Cinema at the Periphery</i>. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2010.</b>
9.	<b>Lu, Sheldon Hsiao-peng ed. <i>Transnational Chinese Cinemas: Identity, Nationhood, Gender</i>. Honolulu: U of Hawai'i P, c1997.</b>
10.	Lu, Sheldon Hsiao-peng and Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh. Eds. <i>Chinese-language Film: Historiography, Poetics, Politics</i> . Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005.
11.	Pickowicz, Paul G. and Yingjin Zhang. Eds. <i>From Underground to Independent: Alternative Film Culture in Contemporary China</i> . Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006.
12.	Yeh, Emilie Yueh-yu. <i>Taiwan Film Directors: a Treasure Island</i> . New York: Columbia UP, 2005.

## 2.2 Additional Readings

(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Zhang Yingjin and Xiao Zhiwei. <i>Encyclopedia of Chinese Film</i> , New York: Routledge, 1998.
2.	Zhang Yingjin. <i>Chinese National Cinema</i> . New York: Routledge, 2004.
3.	Zhang Zhen. Ed. <i>The Urban Generation: Chinese Cinema and Society at the Turn of the Twenty-first Century</i> . Durham: Duke University Press, 2007.
4.	楊遠嬰主編《中國電影專業史研究：電影文化卷》，北京：中國電影出版社，2005年出版。