**UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON -- NEW COURSE PROPOSAL**

Electronically submit this completed form with attachments in one file to the Chair of the College Curriculum Committee.

**COLLEGE (check one):**  
- Arts and Sciences **X**  
- Business  
- Education

Proposal Submitted By: Susan Fernsebner  
Date Prepared: September 27, 2015

Course Title: Chinese History through Film

Department/discipline and course number*: HIST 324

*This course number must be approved by the Office of the Registrar before the proposal is submitted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of credits proposed:</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Prerequisites:</th>
<th>None</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will this be a new, repeatable “special topics” course? (Do you want students to be able to take this new course more than once if the topic changes?)</td>
<td>NO <strong>X</strong> YES</td>
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Date of first offering of this new course: FALL SEMESTER, year 2017  
SPRING SEMESTER 2017

Proposed frequency of offering of the course: Yearly / Every other year (depending on department schedule needs)

List the faculty who will likely teach the course: Susan Fernsebner

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<tr>
<th>Are ANY new resources required?</th>
<th>NO <strong>X</strong> YES</th>
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**Document in attached impact statement**

This new course will be (check all that apply):

- Required in the major
- General Elective
- Elective in the major **X**
- General Education**

**AFTER the new course is approved, a separate proposal must be sent to the General Education Committee.**

**Catalog Description:**

This course explores the intersection of Chinese history and cinema during the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Themes of exploration include revolution, gender, sexuality, socio-economic class, as well as the dynamics of globalization, among others (e.g., humor, violence.) Students will also build skills in analysis, speaking, writing, and digital fluencies.

**COURSE HISTORY**

Was this course taught previously as a topics or experimental course? **YES **X** NO **

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number and Title of Previous Course</th>
<th>Semester Offered</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIST 300AA Chinese History through Film</td>
<td>Spring 13</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIST 300AA Chinese History through Film</td>
<td>Spring 14</td>
<td>24</td>
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HIST 300AA Chinese History through Film  
Spring 15 19

CHECK HERE if the proposed course is to be **equated** with the earlier topics or experimental offerings. This means that students who took the earlier “topics” course will only be able to take the new course if they made a C- grade or lower in the earlier course.

**NOTE:** If the proposed course has not been previously offered as a topics or experimental course, **explain in the attached rationale statement** why the course should be adopted even though it has not been tried out.

**REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS:**
1. **Rationale Statement** (Why is this course needed? What purposes will it serve?)
2. **Impact Statement** (Provide details about the Library, space, budget, and technology impacts created by adding this new course. Include supporting statements from the Library, IT Department, etc. as needed.)
3. **Sample Syllabus**

Department Chair Approval: ____________________________ Date: __ 1 October 2015 __

CCC Chair Approval: ____________________________ Date: __10/21/15_

UCC Chair Approval: ____________________________ Date: ____________

Rationale Statement:

“Chinese History through Film” is a 300-level History course that accomplishes several goals:

- **Non-Western Perspectives:** It provides another useful 300-level elective for both History majors and the general student body in a non-Western branch of History. Given that our department has only two full-time faculty who specialize in non-Western areas of study, such additions to our university catalog to the catalog are indeed valuable.

- **Serving the Major and Diverse Minor Fields (Including Minor Field Credit in Digital Studies):** It is a course that builds on my own expertise as a published scholar on the topic of Chinese cinema and history ("A People’s Playthings…", Fernsebner 2002), but which also links this work to comparative fields of study. As such, I’ve designed the course as one that will suit both History majors and a broader audience of undergraduates. In addition to its global perspective, I have also incorporated aspects of my own expertise in Digital Humanities into the curriculum. With its incorporation of video editing workshop exercises, twitter, and a central GIF creation and analysis assignment as part of a broader curriculum linked to our research project, the course has recently been approved for credit in its current run (Spring 2015) for students pursuing the Digital Studies minor. Enrolled students have also been approved for credit towards the Asian Studies minor as well, as it presents a curriculum in Chinese history through readings in history, related cinema-critiques, and viewings of sample films from the historical context (1960s-present).

- **Training in Fundamentals:** Students build fundamental skills through scaled assignments over the semester leading to a term-paper that focuses on a research project linked to historical analysis and contextualization of two works of Chinese cinema. While writing a research proposal as a homework assignment, composing weekly reading & research journals, composing smaller papers amid their film viewings (and secondary readings), and using our digital assignments to workshop their own analyses of the research they are conducting, they build fundamental skills in writing, research, and analysis. Students also gain digital fluencies through the use of diverse technologies employed in the course: including online forums and video editing tools (for our GIF assignment) that help them build these analyses. Each of the course assignments is intended to build on the last, so that the diverse skills they are slowly gaining ultimately reinforce the broader project: building analytical insight and communication skills via writing, speaking, and their own digital image compositions.
Impact Statement:

This course requires no additional resources other than the students’ own time and, occasionally, loaner laptop computers (in my most recent course we loaned two laptop computers for one 90 minute workshop). If a student does not have a laptop computer, we have extras available at the department we can provide them for use. I have already worked closely with Instructional Technology specialists at DTLT to develop digital skills workshops in my past two runs of teaching the course, so these are already in place and do not require extra materials or training. No additional budget or space is needed.

Sample Syllabus: see below.
HIST 324: CHINESE HISTORY THROUGH FILM
SPRING - W6:8:45 PM - MONROE 210
DR. SUSAN FERNSEBNER

Office Hrs: MWF 11-12, W2-3, and by appt.
Office: Monroe 233

Contact Info: sfernseb@umw.edu.
I will generally be able to reply to weekday emails within 24 hours; weekends within 48 hours, unless it is a break period on the academic calendar. Please remember to include your full name and course number in your email. For more information on how to correspond with a professor (as with other professional correspondence) see: http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor

Course Website: http://chinesefilm2013.umwblogs.org/

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES
This course explores the intersection of Chinese history and cinema from the mid-twentieth century through the present day. Key themes include, among others, revolutionary aesthetics, gender, sexuality, humor and violence, and their intersections with themes of revolution and global capitalism. This course will also help students build skills in digital fluencies, image & video editing, writing, spoken communication and critical analysis.

Please note that students should be prepared to work not only in close study of films and texts, but also to engage in training and work with video editing and digital tools.

Additional course objectives include the development of a historical understanding of global processes, the ability to analyze sources and arguments, and the ability to read critically primary sources and modern authorities.

HIST 300AA offers credit towards the History major as well as the Asian Studies and the Digital Studies minors at UMW.

REQUIRED TEXT(S)

Other than Benson, all of our required readings and viewings listed on the syllabus schedule will be available online or via links at our course’s website.

GRADING

Class Participation - 20%
R-Logs (Weekly Online Research & Reading Logs) - 20%
Film Analyses (2, each 750 words in length, averaged together) - 25%
GIF Analysis Assignment (350 words) - 10%
Final Term Paper (10-12 pages) - 25%

In order to receive a passing grade for the course, all students must demonstrate serious engagement with each of the course’s major assignments. Declining to actively participate in or complete any of the major components of the course above risks failure for the course itself.

REQUIREMENTS

Participation (20%) - The success of our course relies on you actively joining in on class discussions of films and their related background readings. All students should plan on being prepared ahead of each of our class meetings, with reading assignments done for that day, and to participate in class discussion each and every week. Students who fail to join in our discussion on a regular basis can anticipate receiving a 60-70% as their participation grade. If you are uncomfortable talking in class, please feel free to make an appointment to visit me, Dr. Fernsebnner, I’m happy to help.

R-Logs (20%): These Research or Reading Logs (R-Logs) will take the form of written entries on your readings for that week or be writings, images, and/or video entries as work you’re doing in the form of brainstorming for your term paper. They are noted on your syllabus with specific topics provided. All deadlines for these R-Logs are by 11:59 pm on the Tuesday night before our class meeting unless otherwise noted on the syllabus.

For reading-logs you should do the following: share a quote that you found particularly relevant from the reading, your thoughts on it (why does this quote matter? What does it tell us, what insights does it offer?) Are there further questions that it raises for you about the issues we’re digging into this week? Or that we’ve explored recently? Be sure to provide a page number and the author’s name & year of publication of our reading as a citation – e.g., for Week 2, “McGrath (2009): 7.” (no quotes) might be your citation. Think of your reading log as a way to prep comments for our class discussion, too, a warm-up for insights or brainstorms you may share. Remember: questions to jog further thinking & raise issues to

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explore are just as important as conclusions. But you also want to stay relevant to the topic at hand, as opposed to generating random questions for their own sake (beware simply writing hot air, or cribbing your classmates... it shows.) For research-logs, the standards are similar, but the topic is your own work. Think aloud, bring quotes in from your readings, share images or film clips and GIFs you’re exploring, editing, and creating. Brainstorm ideas related to the topic and share the resources you’ve discovered. In both cases creativity, specificity, and engagement will be rewarded. Comments on classmates’ posts are not required but will you extra credit toward your R-Log grade. Remember to be thoughtful and polite!

**Film Analyses (25%):** 2, each 750 words max., averaged together for 25% of your course grade. These assignments will be provided a week in advance and focus on films we have watched recently in class, asking for a specific point of analysis for you to explore. These analyses are aimed to help you sharpen your writing and analytic skills ahead of your research paper.

**GIF Analysis Assignment (10%):** (350 words, plus GIF) After training in a GIF workshop with the appropriate tools (free video editing applications in particular), students will create a GIF from a scene in a film related to their research project and also compose an accompanying analysis. This idea is to use a GIF to help illustrate the scene and the written composition, together with this GIF visual, to further illuminate aspects of the film for the reader. This assignment is a building block for the final research paper. It is also a component—indeed, an anonymous entry—for our end-of-semester GIF Awards Ceremony on the last day of classes.

**Final Term Paper (25%):** (10-12 pages) All students will compose a term paper based on their own careful analysis of two related films from a particular period in history of the People’s Republic or Hong Kong (1949-present day), a paper that also builds on research on the related historical context and the film itself in relevant academic secondary works (that is, works by scholarly authors.) As you view these films, you should choose a particular topic of focus as a point of exploration. Most lines of focus will build from our discussions over the course of the semester as we explore what’s happening on the screen as well as its historical context. These themes may include but are not limited to themes such as: revolution, nationalism, sexuality, LGBTQ identities, gender, hooligan culture, violence, organized crime, market capitalism, globalization, the Chinese family or domestic relations, as well as depictions of specific events (e.g. the 1949 Communist Revolution, The Great Leap Forward, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution; the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre; 1990s Economic Reform; or others, with approval) on the big screen.

Your mission in the paper is to compose a close read of the two films you’ve chosen, exploring the ways in which these Chinese films have presented the theme you have chosen at that moment in time through storyline, character development, dialogue, visual imagery, or other key aspects of what appears on the screen. What is the message conveyed in this film? How is it presented? Importantly, how does depiction relate to (and/or represent) a certain historical moment? Choose key scenes and analyze them closely as you build your analysis of the theme you’ve chosen through the films you’ve selected.

A proposal and bibliography will be due for this project as a homework assignment (and to help be sure you are on the right track) early in the semester. See the schedule below for details. The final paper will be due at the beginning of our last class meeting.

**Grading Rationale**

A – Unusual Excellence (93 or higher = A; 90-92 = A-)
B – Distinctly Above Average (87-89 = B+; 83-86 = B; 80-82 = B-)
C – Average Quality (77-79 = C+; 73-76 = C; 70-72 = C-)
D – Below Average Quality (67-69 = D+; 60-66 = D)
F – Failure, No Credit (0-59 = F)

**POLICIES**

- **Attendance:** Regular attendance in our class is expected. Of course, all semesters bring their own emergencies, so each student is granted a “free” missed meeting for our once-a-week class, no explanation needed. Do save it for those times of real emergency, however. Note that this missed meeting does not automatically provide a deadline extension or make-up for missed assignments on that day. Be sure to always communicate with your professor ahead of deadlines in case of emergencies.

- **Late Papers:** Papers must be submitted in hard copy at the start of class on the day they are due, unless otherwise noted on the syllabus. Late papers will lose 5 points per 24 hour period past their original deadline and will not be accepted after one week. All late papers must be submitted by both electronic attachment (for a time-stamp for submission) and in hard-copy form.

- **Note that computer crashes and technology problems are not an excuse for not turning in an assignment or for late assignments. Be sure to back up your materials (including on the cloud) and/or to find the appropriate**

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help as your are conducting your work.

- **Mid-Semester Deficiency Reports** will be sent to students who have a C- or lower average for the semester.

- **Technology in the classroom:** we may be using computers at times for our workshops. Other than this usage, however, no technology is permitted in our classroom as students should be focused on both our films and discussion. Laptops, cellphones, and all other electronics should be turned off and put away. Students who are using electronics in class outside of our designated workshop times will find their participation grades penalized. If you have a personal emergency at hand during classtime, please let me know ahead of time.

- Please do not bring work for other classes, chat extraneously, or sleep during our class meetings. If the semester is catching up to you, it is best to your allowed absence, stay home, and utilize your time as is most constructive for you on that day (and also as is least disruptive for your fellow classmates.)

**Disabilities**
The Office of Disability Services is the primary office to guide, counsel, and assist students with disabilities. If you already receive services through this office and require accommodations for this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodations. Please bring your accommodation letter with you to the appointment. I will hold any information you share with me in the strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise.

**Plagiarism**
In your own work for this course, be sure that you provide citations for any material that you utilize in composing your own essays and which serves to help shape your arguments on the page, even if you are paraphrasing another person’s text in your own words. For full guidelines and instructions, see the links provided at our website’s Writing page. Please contact your professor before you submit a paper, if you have any questions.

Papers that do not meet academic standards for citation may not be credited for the course and, if plagiarism is a concern, may also be forwarded to the Honor Council for consideration, as noted above.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**
Note that this syllabus is subject to change. All changes will be announced in class and posted on our course website, which is authoritative.

**WEEK 1 - (1/14): COURSE INTRO AND TECH SETUP**
**BRING LAPTOP COMPUTERS (FULLY CHARGED) TO CLASS. (If you don’t have a laptop computer, please contact Prof. Fernsebner by Monday, 1/12, at 11 am).**
**Readings:** Read syllabus, print out, and bring to class along with a list of any questions you may have about it; Benson, “Note on pronunciation” xiv, 1-41.
**R-Log:** Post a screen shot from your favorite film and your reasons for an interest in that particular work of cinema. (Note: it can be a work from any period, genre, or country.) Deadline: Thursday, 5 pm.

**WEEK 2 - (1/21): MAOIST CINEMA – RED HEROES: “RED DETACHMENT OF WOMEN” (d. Xie Jin, 1961, 92 min.)**
**Homework Viewing:** “China: The Mao Years” (d. Sue Williams, 1994; 120 min) [See “Readings” page]
**R-Log:** On one of the two readings above.

**WEEK 3 - (1/28): MAOIST COMPLEXITIES: “STAGE SISTERS” (D. Xie Jin, 1964, 114 min.)**
**Readings:** Gina Marchetti, “Two Stage Sisters: The Blossoming of a Revolutionary Aesthetic” (Lu, 59-80); Benson, 41-49 (Cultural Revolution to the Death of Mao).
**R-Log:** On Marchetti. Due regular R-Log time (Tues, 11:59 pm)
**R-Log:** Introduce a film you’re considering exploring in your research paper and tell us something about what was happening in China (or Hong Kong) as context for when the film was made. Don’t forget to provide citations for your sources (image and info) in your log entry. (Due Friday, 11:59 pm). **Stuck for ideas for a research topic? This is the week to visit Dr. Fernsebner’s office hours! Don’t wait till the last minute…**

**WEEK 4 - (2/4): FIFTH GENERATION FILM: “RED SORGHUM” (d. Zhang Yimou, 1989, 91 min.)**
**FILM ANALYSIS #1 DUE (Hardcopy at the start of class.)**

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**R-Log:** No R-Log this week.

**WEEK 5 - (2/11): REVOLUTION RETOLD: “FAREWELL MY CONCUBINE” (d. Chen Kaige, 1993, 171 min.)**

PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE: Via hardcopy, in Dr. Fernsebner’s office mailbox (Monroe 233), by 12:00 pm on Monday, 2/9. See instructions earlier in this syllabus.

**Reading:** Wendy Larson, "The Concubine and the Figure of History: Chen Kaige’s Farewell my Concubine" (Lu, 331-346); Jenny Kwok Wah Lau, "Farewell my Concubine: History, Melodrama, and Ideology in Contemporary Pan-Chinese Cinema" Film Quarterly 49.1 (Autumn 1995): 16-27.

**R-Log:** On either reading.

**WEEK 6 - (2/18): GIF WORKSHOP**

BRING A LAPTOP COMPUTER TO CLASS, FULLY CHARGED. (If you don’t have a laptop, let Prof. Fernsebner know by Monday, 9 am.)

**Reading:** Make a schedule of your research readings if you haven’t already and start work on these. Work on viewings for your project.

**R-Log:** (1): Share an introduction to your research project, including the key question(s) you’ll be exploring, themes, and an image from one of your films. Due Tues., 11:59 pm.

**R-Log:** (2): Email a practice GIF you made since our workshop (and a title you invent for it) to sfernseb@umw.edu and then post your notes on your experience making it by Saturday, 11:59 pm. (Dr. F. will provide a thread for these notes on our online forum.)

**WEEK 7 - (2/25): HOOLIGANISM AND MEMORY: “In the Heat of the Sun” (d. Jian Wen,1994, 134 min.)**


**R-Log:** On either reading.

**WEEK 8: SPRING BREAK**


**Reading:** Read and take notes on sources for your project.

**R-Log:** Write about one of the secondary sources (cover a book or article by an academic author) related to a theme you are exploring for your project. For example, does this source speak to, inform, or complicate your own ideas on the topic, the film(s), and/or the time period in which they are set? How does it help you raise new questions to explore? Don’t forget to provide a citation for your source.

**WEEK 10 - (3/18): HONG KONG MARTIAL ARTS CINEMA: “Come Drink with Me” (d. King Hu, 1966, 95 min.)**

**FILM ANALYSIS #2 DUE (Hardcopy at the start of class).**


**R-Log:** Post an update on your term paper research.


**R-Log:** On either of the readings.

**WEEK 12 - (4/1): HONG KONG ON THE EVE OF RETURN: “Chungking Express” (d. Wong Kar-wai, 1994, 98 min.)**

**Reading:** Nicholas Y. B. Wong, “Loving You By Not Falling in Love: The Post-Modern Representation of Love in Chungking Express and Lost in Translation,” Screen Education 53 (Autumn 2009): 121-137; Continue readings for your research paper.

**R-Log:** Discuss one of the key points of analysis you are beginning to build for your paper (or a question you are exploring).


**FINAL GIF ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY 5:00 PM WEDNESDAY VIA EMAIL ATTACHMENT (Separate GIF and write-up as two different attachments to same email.)**

**Reading:** Continue research paper readings, begin to draw up thesis & outline for your paper.


**Reading:** Complete research readings & paper outlining; begin writing your research paper.

**R-Log:** Post an update on your term paper research.

**WEEK 15 - (4/22): COURSE CONCLUSION AND GIF AWARDS CEREMONY**

**FINALS WEEK: TERM PAPER DUE (at the start of the exam period).**

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