Division	School of Motion Picture Arts	
Course Name	MOPA 409 – Visual Theory and Practice	Credits: 6
Instructors	xxx@capilanou.ca	604.986.1911 local xxx
Office		

VISION STATEMENT

The School of Motion Picture Arts is dedicated to inspiring a new generation of independent Canadian filmmakers through the fostering and mentoring of emerging talent utilizing progressive learning environments and authentic production experiences, such that graduates make valued contributions to the global media culture.

COURSE FORMAT
Eight lecture hours per week, for 15 weeks.

COURSE PREREQUISITES
27.5 credits of 300 level MOPA.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
General
This is an integrated seminar and project-based course. This course explores the history and theory of visual culture, in particular film theory, and gives students an overview of the evolution of aesthetics, critical theory, and media language. Each week is comprised of a lecture, followed by a practical assignment that is designed to demonstrate and explore pertinent themes and ideas, followed by a seminar with discussions based on assigned readings. The intention of this course is to integrate students' practical understanding of cinema with visual theory and culture in order to expand the thematic elements in their emerging voices as filmmakers. Originality, authenticity, and individual voice are encouraged in discussions and presentations, as well as two research papers.
Instructional
Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:
* Evaluate and analyze films based on theoretical interpretations;
* Apply art, aesthetic and film theories into their filmmaking;
* Demonstrate twentieth-century art theory both in film critique and practical film assignments;
* Assess how meaning is conveyed through film and interpreted with film/art theory.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

Program Mission
To provide the encouragement, equipment, training and setting for a vital experience of creation and collaboration. Student filmmakers will expand and refine their practical, professional, artistic and social skills in order to acquire craft excellence and successfully integrate into the increasingly complex and diverse industries of filmed entertainment, digital communications and new media.
Program Goals
Knowledge: To enable students to articulate and apply their knowledge of story and story development to documentary and narrative projects on all platforms; to combine and apply both practical and theoretical knowledge; to investigate and interpret a broad range of theoretical perspectives. **Skills:** To orchestrate a detailed industrial process; to manage time and budget on large projects over extended periods of time; to use technology as a tool to create innovative and authentic stories; to develop a convergent approach to creative content; to collaborate creatively. **Value:** To conceptualize, research, develop and produce projects from initial idea through to final product; to market and distribute projects; to develop innovative business models and strategies to build sustainable companies; to understand the role of film and the film industry in Canada's culture and economy; to identify potential areas/sectors of employment; to identify opportunities for further study; to articulate and pursue a unique and personal voice and vision through the artistic and technical means of filmmaking and visual communication, and, in particular, to use the tools and resources at their disposal with clarity, intelligence, resourcefulness and professionalism.

PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
Students successfully completing this program will: 1. Analyze historical, technological, philosophical and theoretical trends in the national and global cinemas; 2. Acquire a range of skills and applications of visual communication in order to expand their potential to realize and create meaningful career opportunities; 3. Contribute their technical skills, creative skills, and personal vision to the art of filmmaking; 4. Consult, liaise and negotiate in a professional manner in all aspects of the filmmaking process; 5. Develop industry relationships and create authentic learning environments in order to provide opportunities to expand their potential as independent filmmakers.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Media and Cultural Studies: Keyworks. Revised Edition. Edited by Meenakshi Gigi Durham and Douglas M. Kellner. Blackwell Publishing. 2006/2012.

[Note: You can buy this text used as either edition will work.]

WEEKS 1-15
WEEK 1:
* Introduction: What is visual theory and practice?   * Plato's parable of the cave   * Apparatus theory   * Activity #1   * Seminar #1: Introduction and review
WEEK 2:
* Marxist film theory   * Bazin and Eisenstein   * Activity #2   * Seminar #2: The Ruling Class and the Ruling Ideas, *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels;* The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction, *Walter Benjamin*
WEEK 3:
* Auteur theory   * Gestalt theory   * Activity #3   * Seminar #3: The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception, *Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno*
WEEK 4:
* Formalist film theory   * The society of the spectacle   * Activity #4   * Seminar #4: The Commodity as Spectacle, *Guy Debord;* A Propaganda Model, *Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky*
WEEK 5:
* Genre theory   * The medium is the message   * Activity #5   * Seminar #5: The Medium is the Message, *Marshall McLuhan*; Introduction: Instructions on How to Become a General in the Disneyland Club, *Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart;* (i) From Culture to Hegemony; (ii) Subculture: The Unnatural Break*, Dick Hebdige*
WEEK 6:
* Philosophy of language film analysis   * Picture theory   * Activity #6   * Seminar #6: (i) Operation Margarine; (ii) Myth Today, *Roland Barthes*
WEEK 7:
* Feminist film theory   * Queer theory   * Activity #7   * Seminar #7: Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema, *Laura Mulvey;* Stereotyping, *Richard Dyer;* Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance, *bell hooks*

WEEK 8:
* Project #1 due
* Student project presentations and discussion
* Seminar: *The Pervert's Guide to Cinema*, Slavoj Žižek (if time allows)
WEEK 9:
* Screen theory
* Censorship and propaganda
* Activity #8
* Seminar #8: (i) History of the Subaltern Classes; (ii) The Concept of "Ideology"; (iii) Cultural Themes: Ideological Material, *Antonio Gramsci*; Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation), *Louis Althusser);* Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory*, Raymond Williams*
WEEK 10
* Psychoanalytical film theory
* Suture theory
* Activity #9
* Seminar #9: Encoding/Decoding, *Stuart Hall*
WEEK 11:
* Structuralist film theory
* Post-structuralism
* Deconstructivism
* Activity #10
* Seminar #10: Quentin Tarantino's Star Wars?: Digital Cinema, Media Convergence, and Participatory Culture, *Henry Jenkins*
WEEK 12:
* Digital media and code
* Sound and images
* Activity #11
* Seminar #11: The Precession of Simulacra, *Jean Baudrillard*
WEEK 13:
* Critical theory
* The Frankfurt School
* Activity #12
* Seminar #12: The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article, *Jürgen Habermas;* Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism, *Fredric Jameson;* Feminism, Postmodernism and the "Real Me", *Angela McRobbie;* Postmodern Virtualities*, Mark Poster*
WEEK 14:
* Post-theory
* Globalization and Social Movements
* Activity #13
* Seminar #13: Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Economy*, Arjun Appadurai* ; Globalization as Hybridization, *Jan Nederveen Pieterse;* Oppositional Politics and the Internet: A Critical/Reconstructive Approach, *Richard Kahn and Douglas M. Kellner*
WEEK 15:
*Project #2 due
*Student project presentations and discussion

The fourth hour will be a combination of screenings, project feedback, discussion, and online contact.

EVALUATION PROFILE	
Readings (10 @ 2%)	20%
Activities (12 @ 2%)	24%
Quizzes (2 @ 3%)	6%
Participation	10%
Project #1	15%
Project #2	25%
Total	100%

ASSIGNMENTS	
1. Readings 10 @ 2% One page synopsis of weekly readings.	20%
2. Activities (12 @ 2%) Varying from week to week, these will be exercises involving mixed media that apply visual and theoretical techniques discussed in the class.	24%
3. Quizzes (2 @ 3%) Review of lecture topics in exam format.	6%
3. Participation Students will be asked to present their one page synopses and/or their activity exercise to the afternoon seminars and lead the discussion.	10%
4. Projects #1 @ 15% and #2 @ 25% Projects are based on themes and discussed in seminar discussion. Students are encouraged to explore and express visually concepts of interest from lectures and seminar presentations. Projects are presented and discussed in class: Project #1 in Week 8 and Project #2 in Week 15.	40%
Total	100%

Grading Profile			
A+ = 90-100%	B+ = 77-79%	C+ = 67-69%	D = 50-59%
A = 85-89%	B = 73-76%	C = 63-66%	F = 00-49%
A- = 80-84%	B- = 70-72%	C- = 60-62%	

OPERATIONAL DETAILS:
Capilano University has policies on Academic Appeals (including appeal of final grade), Student Conduct, Cheating and Plagiarism, Academic Probation and other educational issues. These and other policies are available on the University website.
ATTENDANCE:
Attendance will be taken daily and will form part of the final grade (See Evaluation Profile). When students are absent from class, they are still responsible for the material covered during their absence, including announcements, assigned readings and hand-outs.
PUNCTUALITY:
Punctuality is essential and forms part of the participation grade. Late attendance will be reflected in the student's final grade.
LATE ASSIGNMENTS:
All assignments must be delivered at the place and time specified by the instructor. Late assignments will only be accepted if prior approval for a late submission date has been given by the instructor.

MISSED EXAMS AND QUIZZES:
Missed exams and quizzes will be assigned a grade of zero. Students will be allowed to make up exams and quizzes only under the following conditions: if a doctor's certificate of illness is provided; if, in the case of the death of a close family member, a death certificate is provided; if prior approval of the instructor has been obtained.
CHEATING/PLAGIARISM:
Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's work or ideas as if they were one's own. Plagiarism is both dishonest and a rejection of the principles of scholarship. All students should familiarize themselves with the University Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism (See the University website) as such behaviour can result in suspension from the University.
INCOMPLETE GRADES:
Grades of Incomplete "I" will be granted only if there is a valid reason for extending the evaluation deadline and if students have a reasonable chance of improving their grade to pass the course.
ENGLISH USAGE:
All written work submitted must use good academic English and follow the guidelines provided in the Capilano University Guide to Writing Assignments (available from the University Bookstore). It is the responsibility of students to proof-read all their writing for any grammatical, spelling and stylistic errors.
STUDIO/FILMING DISCIPLINE:
Students must be dressed appropriately. Wet and cold weather requires waterproof and warm clothing. Students are required to wear work clothes for technical and production sessions. Clothing may be subjected to dirt, paint and dust. Sturdy shoes are a must. No food or beverages are allowed on set during production activities and during technical classes. Disruptive students will be asked to leave.
COMPUTER COURSE REQUIREMENTS/RESPONSIBILITIES:
You are expected to abide by the Statement of Appropriate Use of Information Technology Facilities and Services in any use of computers at the University. This statement can be obtained from your department, the Library, Computer Services or on the University website.
ELECTRONIC DEVICES/LAPTOPS:
Use of electronic devices is not allowed during class time, except at the discretion of the instructor.
COMPUTER LAB USAGE:
No food or beverages are allowed in the University's computer labs at any time. Students must not abuse internet privileges by visiting inappropriate or illegal websites. Intentionally opening and/or altering other students' projects will not be tolerated. Respect for other students' work is of utmost importance. Offences regarding the above will result in the "0" mark in the participation grade, and restricted access to facilities.
PARTICIPATION/PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR:
The grade for class participation is based on both the frequency and the quality of students' comments, questions and observations, with the emphasis on quality. The quality is determined by, among other things, the relevance, insight and clarity of remarks. Students are expected to demonstrate a professional attitude and behaviour towards their work, fellow-students, and their instructor. Students should demonstrate reliability, respect for and co-operation with colleagues. A willingness to work calmly and courteously under difficult conditions as well as a determination to achieve first-class work while meeting deadlines is necessary in this course. Students should have respect for equipment and systems, and a constructive response to criticism.
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:
Students should familiarize themselves with emergency procedures posted in the classroom.