FILM 406: French New Wave Cinema  
(Senior Seminar in Film & Media Studies)

**Course Schedule:**  M W 11:30am - 12:45pm Rich Building 103  
**Weekly Screenings:**  W 7:30pm - 10:00pm White Hall 208 (most screenings will finish no later than 9:30)  
**Office Hours:**  Th 4-6pm or by appointment.

**Course Description:** Starting in the 1950s, a group of young critics for the French magazine *Cahiers du cinéma* sparked a revolution in film criticism, formulating the auteur theory and reviving the reputations of filmmakers such as Alfred Hitchcock and Nicholas Ray. As filmmakers in their own right, they established the movement that became known as the French New Wave (Nouvelle Vague). Their vibrant, off-the-cuff films continue to delight and challenge audiences, and have provided a template for subsequent “new waves” throughout the world. In the US, independent filmmakers such as Quentin Tarantino and Richard Linklater are crucially indebted to their work. This course examines the New Wave within the larger context of the French film industry, giving due attention to the movement’s innovations in film criticism, production and aesthetics. In addition to the core *Cahiers du cinéma* figures François Truffaut, Jean-Luc Godard, Claude Chabrol, Éric Rohmer, and Jacques Rivette, we will look at the so-called Left Bank filmmakers Alain Resnais and Agnès Varda, as well as the precursor figure Jean-Pierre Melville.

This course aims to provide a solid grounding in recent English-language scholarship published on the French New Wave and related filmmakers, incorporating a range of methodological approaches and genres. Students will also become closely familiar with a significant body of film texts in the process. This course is designed to develop skills in conducting independent research, working productively in a group setting, and writing/presenting in different genres.

As a senior seminar, this course depends heavily on group participation and independent work. Students are expected to participate actively in discussion, lead discussion periodically, and give in-class presentations. Students will research and write entries for the Emory Cinémathèque blog as a form of scholarly production for a general readership, as well as submit a more substantial final research paper/project. Regular attendance at the weekly screenings is required.

**Course Prerequisites:** FILM 270 (or FS OX270 or FILM 190), FILM 371 and FILM 372, or permission of the instructor.

**Required Texts:**

• Additional readings available through Course Reserves

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**SCREENINGS**: Regular attendance at course screenings is required and counts as part of your overall attendance and participation grade. The weekly screenings are what make this a 4-credit course. For this semester, the Wednesday evening screenings also constitute the Film and Media Studies Department’s Cinémathèque series. I and other faculty will be introducing the films. Almost all the weekly screenings will be in a theatrical format such as 35mm or DCP, so viewing the films on DVD or online is not an adequate substitute. If you have an ongoing scheduling conflict that prevents you from attending the evening screenings, you should drop the course.

**Written Work**: All assignments for the class should be submitted *both* in paper form and via email. I use paper for actual grading, and email for archival purposes. All written work should be double-spaced, 12-point standard font, with 1-inch margins on all sides, on 8.5x11” paper. Acceptable electronic file types are Microsoft Word and PDF.

**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**: 25%
This course requires regular and consistent participation. Please arrive prepared to discuss the readings and films. The seminar environment depends on an ethos of active and respectful contributions, listening and exchange. Students may miss up to two class sessions and one evening screening (i.e., one full week of classes) without penalty; further unexcused absences will have a negative impact on your attendance and participation grade and likely affect your overall performance in the course.

• Each student will lead discussion one class session during the semester. This entails beginning class with some brief observations about the readings and/or screening, as well as preparing some questions to generate discussion.
• Students will submit one informal response paper (Paper #1) 2-3 pages maximum, addressing ideas that arise from the readings and screenings. Part of class discussion on that week will involve sharing and discussing the implications of your responses. Due date is Wednesday, February 3, start of class.

**BLOG ENTRY (Paper #2)**: 20%
The first major research and writing assignment for the course is a short (750-1,000 word) essay in the form of a blog entry for one of the weekly Emory Cinémathèque screenings. It should be well-written and scholarly, but in an accessible style. As a publication intended for the Web, it will not contain footnotes but should include a short bibliography of works consulted. All blog entries are due on Monday, February 15 at the start of class.

**IN-CLASS PRESENTATION**: 15%
Students will select a significant film not screened in class and deliver a 17-20 minute presentation on it. Possible approaches include the reception of the film, how it fits within the given filmmaker’s work or French cinema in general, scholarly debates on the film, etc. You may show brief clips.
TERM PAPER (PAPER #3): 40%
The final project for the course is a 4,000 -5,000 word research paper based on topics chosen by the student, developed in consultation with the instructor. It should address the French New Wave within a broader context such as French or international cinema or French history and culture. Additional topic parameters and deadlines will be distributed in class. Mandatory elements of the project include:

- Brief written abstract
- Annotated bibliography
- Rough draft

All final term papers are due at the start of class on Monday, April 25.

HONOR CODE
All students are expected to abide by Emory's honor code for submitted work and other forms of classroom conduct: http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html. Suspected cases of misconduct will be referred to the Honor Council for investigation.
## DETAILED SYLLABUS

**Wed. 1/13**  
Course introduction.  
Sign up for blog entries.  

**Mon. 1/18**  
**Martin Luther King holiday, no class**

**Wed. 1/20**  
Discuss *Bob le flambeur*  
Reading:  
- Neupert, Chapters 1-2, pp.3-72.  
- Marie, Chapter 1, pp.5-24.  
Weekly screening: *Les Cousins* (Claude Chabrol, 1959)

**Mon. 1/25**  
Discuss *Les Cousins*  
Reading:  
- Neupert, Chapter 4, pp.125-160.

**Wed. 1/27**  
Discuss research resources for blog entry, presentation and final project.  
Reading:  
- Neupert, Chapter 5 (Truffaut), pp.161-177 (Through section on *Les Mistons.*).  
- Truffaut, “A Certain Tendency of the French Cinema” (Online)  
In-class screening of *Les Mistons.*  
Weekly screening: *The 400 Blows/Les quatre cents coups* (François Truffaut, 1959)  
PLUS short *Antoine et Colette* (Truffaut, 1962)

***RESPONSE PAPER DUE WED., FEB. 3 START OF CLASS***

**Mon. 2/1**  
Discuss *The 400 Blows.*  
Reading:  
- Neupert, Chapter 5 (Truffaut), pp.177-189 (section on *The 400 Blows*).  
- Gillain, *François Truffaut*, Introduction and Chapter 1 (pp. 5-49).

**Wed. 2/3**  
Discuss student response papers.  
Reading:  
- Truffaut, “A Wonderful Certainty” (Review of *Johnny Guitar*) Online.  
Weekly screening: *Shoot the Piano Player/Tirez sur le pianist* (Truffaut, 1960)

**Mon. 2/8**  
Discuss *Shoot the Piano Player*  
Reading:  
- Gillain, Chapter 2, Section on *Shoot the Piano Player* (pp.51-79).  
- Neupert, Chapter 5 (Truffaut), pp.189-199 (section on *Shoot the Piano Player*).  

**Wed. 2/10**  
**View on your own by this date to discuss in class: Jules and Jim**  
Reading:  
- Gillain, Chapter 3 (pp.81-95), section on *Jules and Jim.*

Weekly screening: *The Soft Skin/La peau douce* (Truffaut, 1964)

***BLOG ENTRY (PAPER # 2) DUE MONDAY, FEB. 15, START OF CLASS***

Mon. 2/15  
Discuss *The Soft Skin*  
Reading:  
Gillain, Chapter 3 (pp.63-78), section on *The Soft Skin.*  
Student presentation of a Truffaut film

Wed. 2/17  
Reading:  
Marie, Chapter 3, pp. 49-70.  
Neupert, Chapter 6 (Godard), p.207-246  
In-class screening of early Godard short.  
Weekly screening: *Breathless/À bout de souffle* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1960)

Mon. 2/22  
*Discuss Breathless*  
Reading:  
Biltereyst, Daneil. “Disciplining the Nouvelle Vague” (Online)

Wed. 2/24  
Reading:  
Colin MacCabe, *Godard*, Chapters 1 & 2 (pp.1-96)  
Student presentation of a Chabrol film.  
Weekly screening: *Made in U.S.A.* (Godard, 1966)

Mon. 2/29  
*Discuss Made in U.S.A.*  
Reading:  
MacCabe, Chapter 3

Wed. 3/2  
3 student presentations on Godard films.  
Weekly screening: *Week-end* (Godard, 1967)

Mon., 3/7 – Wed. 3/9: SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS  
On your own: re-watch *Week-End* (dir. Jean-Luc Godard)

Mon. 3/14:  
Discuss *Week-end*  
Reading: MacCabe, Chapter 4, pp.179-238.  
Student presentation on 60s-70s Godard film.

Wed. 3/16  
Reading: MacCabe, Chapter 5, 239-319.  
Student presentation on 80s Godard film.  
Weekly screening: *Cléo from 5 to 7/Cléo de 5 à 7* (Agnès Varda, 1961)

Mon. 3/21  
Discuss *Cléo from 5 to 7*  
Reading:  
Neupert, Chapter 8 (Left Bank), pp.299-354

Wed. 3/23  
Reading: Kelley Conway, Chapter on *Cléo from 5 to 7* (Online)  
Student presentation on Varda film  
Student presentation on Demy film  
Weekly screening: *Hiroshima mon amour* (Alain Resnais, 1959)
Mon. 3/28  
Discuss *Hiroshima mon amour*  
Reading:  
Marguerite Duras, *Hiroshima mon amour* script (excerpts, online)  
*Cahiers du cinéma* roundtable on *Hiroshima mon amour* (Online)

Wed. 3/30:  
Reading:  
Emma Wilson, *Alain Resnais*, Chapter 2, pp.46-69 (Online).  
Student presentation on Resnais film.  
Weekly screening:  
*Je t’aime je t’aime* (Resnais, 1968)

Mon. 4/4  
Discuss *Je t’aime je t’aime*  
Reading:  
Suzanne Budgen - review in *Screen* (Online)  
Halter, Ed. “Travel Agents”  
Student presentation on Resnais films.

Wed. 4/6  
Reading: Neupert, Chapter 7 (Rohmer, Rivette et al., pp. 247-298.)  
In-class screening of the *The Bakery-Girl of Monceau*.  
Student presentation on Rohmer  
Weekly screening:  
*Le Rayon Vert* (Éric Rohmer, 1986)

Mon. 4/11  
Discuss *Le Rayon vert*  
Reading:  
Mary Harrod, “Auteur Meets Genre: Rohmer and the Rom-Com.” (Online)

Wed. 4/13  
Reading:  
Mary Wiles, *Jacques Rivette,*“ pp.41-61. (Online)  
1973 interview with Jacques Rivette (Online)  
Student presentation on Rivette  
Weekly screening:  

Mon. 4/18:  
Discuss *Le Pont du Nord*  
Reading:  
Wiles, *Jacques Rivette*, pp. 77-98. (Online)

Wed. 4/20  
Reading:  
Niels Niessen, “Access Denied: Godard Palestine Representation” (Online)  
Student presentation on late Godard film.  
Weekly screening:  
*Film Socialisme* (Godard, 2010)

***Mon. 4/25, start of class: FINAL DRAFT OF TERM PAPER DUE.***

Mon. 4/25  
Discuss *Film Socialisme*, course wrap-up.