

**Codes: FLMD-121:5, FLMD-121.08, BMI FLMD-221:E.01**

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**Course title: Introduction to Film Theory**

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**Course convenors:** László Strausz

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**Class time and place:** Tuesday, 14-15.30 @ -137

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**Course type:** Seminar

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**Course content:** The course is designed as a topical introduction into film theory. Instead of investigating film theory through its historical progression, we will rather focus problems that stand in the forefront of the discipline. Primarily, we will examine broad patterns in how the medium conveys meaning, elicits emotion and addresses audiences. It is concerned with the nature of the medium itself and with the conventions it has developed for what is 'cinematic.' The secondary focus of the course is to acquire skills in applying these theoretical ideas to particular film texts, testing these ideas to see how well they fit individual cases.

Week 1: Introduction, overview of the course. What is film theory?

Week 2: Semiotics and film theory

Week 3: Narrative theories and cinema

Week 4: Authors and texts

Week 5: Genre theory

Week 6: Cognitive film theory

Week 7: Ideological criticism and film theory: psychoanalysis

Week 8: Ideological criticism and film theory: problems of gender

Week 9: Cultural studies and cinema

Week 10: Postcolonial approaches

Week 11: One text, multiple readings I.

Week 12: One text, multiple readings II.

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**Requirements:** Participants will have to regularly attend the seminars and prepare for classes by familiarizing themselves with the required readings. Each week there will be a short quiz on the readings, which will count towards your final grade. Participants will work on a final research project to be submitted during exam period.

Final grade = Participation 20% + Quizzes 30% + Final project 50%

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**Learning outcomes:** Students will (1) develop a general sense of the specificities of theoretically oriented investigations within film studies, (2) understand how theory is related to the other areas of the discipline, (3) conceptualize the historical development of film theory as various ways to interpret screen media texts, (4) develop awareness about the social-cultural contexts of film theory, and (5) cultivate critical thinking and writing skills.

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**Indicative Reading:** Select parts from:

1. Mast-Cohen-Braudy: Film Theory and Criticism. OUP 1992.
2. Miller-Stam: A Companion to Film Theory. Blackwell 2004.