I. General Course Information
Department: French & Italian
Course Section and Title: FC 349 / EUS 347: French New Wave
Class Days and Time: T& R: 12:30-2:00PM
Class Building and Room#: HRH 2.112
Textbooks: *Film Art: Introduction with Tutorial CD-ROM*, 10th edition
*Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts*, 4th edition
Selected readings on Coursework
Professor: Hervé Picherit
Email: picherit@utexas.edu
Office: HRH 3.104B
Office Phone: 512-471-6874
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 8:15-9:45AM or by appointment.

II. Course Goals
The first goal of this course is the acquisition of the intellectual and interpretative tools specific to film comprehension, analysis and creation. The second is the establishment of a sense of the French New Wave as a historical and stylistic movement in the history of cinema whose sensibility continues to influence film to this day. In particular, this course aims to cultivate your capacity to “read” a style of film different from what you might be used to. As such, the course will also encourage students to establish links between the films shown in the class, but also with other media. Finally, this class is designed to cultivate your film literacy, allowing you to both engage critically and create with this medium. Our study of the New Wave movement is also meant to reveal the possibility of using cinema as a highly personal and meaningful form of expression.

III. Course Organization
The weekly film showings will serve as the framework for the course, providing the major topics of discussion for the class. Each week’s film will have a set of guiding questions to help orient you in your viewing. You should feel free, however, to lead the conversation in different directions. To encourage rich and pertinent discussions, we will use the textbook *Film Art* as well as supplemental materials such as articles, film clips and internet resources. The book *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts* will serve as a reference for the class to prepare for the film exam, film review and film project. Because of the complexity of studying film, I expect you to take notes of the films, readings and our discussions. You will be responsible for the readings and viewings and also for keeping up with the in-class exchanges. Indeed, the classroom will be our “laboratory” where will experiment with our ideas and impressions about the films. As such, I expect you to participate actively in our discussions. Not only will this create a more engaging atmosphere for us to examine these texts, but it will help each of you when it comes time to complete your individual assignments for the course. Active participation is only possible if you have reflected on the readings and films before class,
and if you come prepared to comment and ask questions about them. I encourage you to write down the thoughts and questions you might want to share with the class. I expect you to prepare beforehand all material assigned for each given date as indicated on the syllabus. And though I will often remind you of when assignments are due, it is your responsibility to keep track of the assignments listed in the syllabus.

There will be no make-up work—including quizzes or exams—except in the case of excused absences. Attendance is essential to your success in this class. **If you receive more than three unexcused absences, you will receive a failing grade for the course.** Attendance will be taken at the very beginning of each day’s class, meaning that students who arrive after class has begun might very well be counted as absent. Please make it a priority to arrive to class on time—if not for your grade, then out of courtesy to the rest of the class. If you do miss class and are not sure if your absence can be considered excused, please talk to me about it. If you know you have to miss class, please let me know ahead of time if possible. I will not accept excuses and/or explanations for absences more than a week after the absence. There will be frequent in-class assignments based on the film viewings and the readings. Students will be expected to write 8 short film responses, to write a film review, to take a film exam, complete a film project and to write their reflections on the final film project. The film responses are short reflections (250-300 words) on the course’s films. The film review is a longer written assignment (1250-1500 words) where you will present an organized analysis of a film. The film exam will test your knowledge of film techniques. The final film project is the production of a short film (10 to 20 minutes) that engages with the styles, themes and techniques unique to the New Wave movement. The reflections on the final film project (1250-1500 words) is a personal contemplation on your work creating a film and on your peers’ films.

IV. Grading
I will use both the point system and the letter system according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Exceptional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Fair</td>
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<tr>
<td>73-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>Poor</td>
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<td>63-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<td>0-59</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failing</td>
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The course grade will be based on the following elements:

1. Class attendance, participation and daily work (throughout the semester)........15%
2. 8 Short film responses (five before, three after the film exam)......................15%
3. Written Movie Review (9-22).............................................................15%
4. Film exam (10-6).............................................................................20%
5. Final film project (11-19).................................................................20%
6. Reflections on the final film project (12-3)......................................15%

V. Assignments
For more detailed information on each of the assignments, please consult the grading rubrics available on Coursework.

Class attendance and active participation: The tenor and quality of this course depends on your interaction with the films, readings and with the rest of the class. As such, you must be as attentive and responsive to what is said in the classroom as what you read and view outside of it. Indeed, your academic success, as well as the class’s intellectual quality, depend on the nature and worth of your contributions to the discussions. In other words, I expect you to come to class with things to say and I expect to hear form you each day. I strongly suggest that you keep a journal for the course in which you will note your impressions, thoughts and questions about the films and readings. Though I do not require you to keep such a journal, I can assure you that it will help you participate more actively in class, and prove to be an invaluable reference when you will study for the exams and prepare your papers. In short, a class journal requires little work, and provides many benefits. I encourage you to consider the Guiding Questions for each week’s film. These questions are meant to prompt your thoughts about each film. Finally, I expect you to be respectful of others in all your exchanges inside and outside of class. This is the only way to create a free and safe space for an exchange of ideas.

Religious Holy Days: By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

8 Short Film Responses (250-300 words): You will need to write eight (five before, three after the film exam) short responses to films of your choice. Indeed, you should choose films that you find particularly engaging, striking or otherwise compelling. Note that these terms to not necessarily imply that you will “like” or “enjoy” all the films you write about. Indeed, some or our most profound interactions with a work of art begin with an impression we must interrogate the themes, techniques and images of the French New Wave—by analyzing the films critically. That is to say that you should use evidence from the films—and in particular, the techniques used to make the film—to inform your discussion of them. Each short response will be marked as “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory”.

Written Movie Review (1250-1500 words): You will need to write one longer review of a film of your choice (due 9-22 on week 5). As with the Short Film Responses, you should choose a film that you find particularly engaging, striking or even frustrating. The goal of this assignment is to give an informed appraisal of a film. A movie review can be
negative or positive, as long as the reasons for this assessment are grounded in the film itself. You should imagine yourself writing for other sophisticated viewers of film who want to know about the movie’s form as well as its content. As such, this assignment will draw on your knowledge about film form and production (cf. *Film Art*), as well as the vocabulary of cinema (cf. *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts*). The written movie review will be assigned a letter grade.

**Film exam:** The film exam will test your mastery of the terms and concepts associated with film analysis (due 10-6 on week 7). The in-class exam will be divided into two parts. The first will have you define film vocabulary. The second part will consist of a film-clip shown in class that you must “parse” using the concepts and terms required. The terms and concepts you will need to know are in *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts*. Though we will go over many key techniques and terms in class, **it is your responsibility to learn these concepts outside of class** (you should however always feel free to ask about terms or techniques you don’t understand). Given the scope of this assignment, I recommend that you view it as the long-term task of the first half of the semester, and that you begin working on it as soon as possible. I would also encourage you to work in study groups to study for this exam. The exam will be assigned a letter grade.

**Final Film Project:** This project is a 10 to 20 minute film engaging with the course themes, and using the film techniques we will have studied in class (due 11-19 on week 13). I will assign you to work in groups of three to five, expecting that each member will take part in every aspect of the film making process. The nature of the film is for each group to decide, the only constraint being that your film should engage with the themes and techniques of the French New Wave. Given this freedom, you should decide on the subject, style and genre as soon as possible. Possibilities include, but are not limited to: documentary film, fiction film, narrative film, non-narrative film, parody, comedy, drama, avant-garde film, etc. You do not have to appear in your own film. Whatever subject you choose, it should allow you to showcase a wide range of techniques we will have studied in class, in particular editing, framing, camera movement and sound techniques. I would encourage you to begin thinking about this project as soon as possible, since it will be the long-term assignment of the second half of the semester. Plan on going through both a “pre-production” process (including composing a script, mapping out your scenes, finding filming locations, etc.) and a “post-production” process (editing, adding sound and/or music, etc.). These films will be shown in our own, departmental French Film Festival. Note that this assignment takes into account the fact that you are likely first time filmmakers, and that you do not have access to professional equipment. As such, your project will be judged its engagement with the themes and use of the techniques unique to the French New Wave, and not its production quality. The Final Film Project will be assigned a letter grade.

**Reflections On the Final Film Project (1250-1500 words):** This piece should be a personal essay (1250-1500 words) about the experience of working on your film, and the experience of viewing your fellow students’ films (due 12-3 on week 15). In this essay, you should address the following questions: what have you learned about cinema making our own film? What about this process surprised you? How did this project change your
understanding of the French New Wave as a cinematographic movement? How did it change your understanding of the films we saw in class? What do you feel is the relationship of your film with those of your fellow students? The goal of this assignment is to “debrief” you about the Film Festival, and to serve as a final statement about your experience in this course. The Reflections on the Final Film Project will be assigned a letter grade.

A Note on the Film Viewings: All the films for this course are on reserve at the Fine Arts library unless otherwise indicated in the syllabus. Many are also available on commercial websites such as Hulu or Netflix. I would strongly recommend that you view the films in groups. Not only will this make acquiring the films easier, but it will provide you with a richer experience. It is your responsibility to find and view each week’s films before class on Tuesday.

VI. Statement About Studying Film

Studying film is a demanding endeavor. It is a medium that combines elements from many artistic fields including painting, dance, music, sculpture and literature to mention only a few. Yet, more than any of these fields, film is bound to a technology that influences cinematic production as much—perhaps more—than artistic considerations. Cinema is also an economic endeavor; unlike the poet or novelist who can write in hopes of someday being published, more often than not a filmmaker must secure financial backing before he or she can even begin their creation. Finally, films are a collective effort. The endless lists of names that roll by during a film’s credits refer to people each of whom have influenced—in whatever small way—the final outcome of a production.

As a complex medium, cinema requires a mastery of a large body of information. Yet, unlike many other subjects, this mastery is one step in a larger process. Indeed, in the same way cinema is not simply the sum of its artistic, technological and economic parts, film analysis is not the cold unpacking of facts about a movie. True film analysis requires a sincere involvement with a film. Indeed, films are rare and “living” entities that require intimate interaction with the viewer before they can begin to unfold. A way to conceptualize this is that a film is a “genetic code” that contains traces of the time, the place and—most importantly—the “way of being in the world” that brought it into existence. Though it is the filmic object that contains all this information, you are the source of its life and energy. Indeed, until you bring to it your past, your point of view, your emotional reactions, a film is nothing but moving light. But when you do bring yourself—the human totality of yourself—to these films, they become an inexhaustible source of questions and answers about yourself and the world.

The creators of the films we will examine together threw themselves—heart and soul—into what they made. I ask you to do the same when you watch them. In short, your own subjectivity—your intellectual and emotional self, your personal experience—is the best instrument for experiencing what a film holds. But as much as your reaction to a film is an essential starting point, it is a sensitivity that must be cultivated, a skill that must be developed before it produces significant results and an intuition that you must learn to translate into a coherent and critical argument. In short, it’s not the professor’s job to tell you what to think about your viewings; it is his job to teach you how access
and express what is essential and pertinent about your experience of a film. As such, I expect you to cultivate a personal, critical and questioning interaction with this complex media.

Finally, I would remind you that you cannot know in advance which skills or classes will become most important to you in the future, and that some of the most rewarding courses yield their full value only over time. As such, I ask you to make the most of this opportunity—if only as a favor to your “future self”.

VII. Documented Disability Statement
Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). Faculty are not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD.

- Please notify me as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible (e.g., instructional videos need captioning, course packets are not readable for proper alternative text conversion, etc.).

- Please notify me as early in the semester as possible if disability-related accommodations for field trips are required. Advanced notice will permit the arrangement of accommodations on the given day (e.g., transportation, site accessibility, etc.).

- Contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone) or reference SSD’s website for more disability-related information: http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssl/for_cstudents.php

VIII. Academic Integrity
University of Texas Honor Code: The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism or receiving outside help on assignments, will not be tolerated in this course, and violators will be found and disciplined to the fullest extent of University Regulations. That is to say, any student found committing an act of academic dishonesty will be subject to the University’s regulations for dealing with such cases. I strongly encourage anyone who may have questions about the honesty of a particular action to speak with me before engaging in the questionable behavior.

An act is academically dishonest when it misrepresents one’s involvement in an academic task in any way. For further information, please visit the Student Judicial Services web site: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs When preparing your written and oral work, I strongly encourage you to cite more rather than less. Indeed, the best thinkers acknowledge their intellectual debts by indicating clearly who influenced their thinking, and how they came to their ideas. In the context of this course, this includes acknowledging when you refer to an idea or concept that came up in the class discussion.
You should do this even when paraphrasing someone else’s work. In short, good work not only presents a clear and convincing argument, but it also allows us to trace the sources of your thinking. Anything less is disrespectful of those who influenced you, and to an intellectual community that thrives on the free but acknowledged exchange of ideas.
Schedule

First Week
8-27..................................Introduction to the course

Second Week
*Nuit américaine* by François Truffaut (1974) 115 minutes
GUIDING QUESTION: What did you learn about film production watching this movie?

9-1.................................. The Image
*Homework*
Read *Film art* : p. 2-16.

9-3.................................. Editing I : “The Kuleshov effect”
*Homework*
Read *Film art* : p. 16-29

Third Week
*Le coup du berger* by Jacques Rivette (1956) 35 minutes (link on Coursework);
*Les Mistons* by François Truffaut (1957) 26 minutes;
*Charlotte et Véronique* by Jean-Luc Godard (1959) 21 minutes;
GUIDING QUESTION: In what physical spaces and social settings do these films take place? How do they present their stories?

9-8.................................. Editing II : Artistic and narrative editing
*Homework*
Read *Film art* : p. 49-56; read “A certain tendency of the French cinema” by François Truffaut (Coursework)

9-10.................................. The shot, the sequence, the scene
*Homework*
Read *Film art* : p. 56-70

Fourth Week
*La pointe courte* by Agnès Varda (1954) 86 minutes
GUIDING QUESTION: In what ways does this film differ from the type of film you usually watch? What effect do these differences produce?

9-15.................................. Categories of shots and camera movement
*Homework*
Read *Film art* : p. 72-86

9-17.................................. Types of cuts, depth of field, sound
*Homework*
Read *Film art* : p. 86-99; read “The birth of a new avant-garde: la caméra-stylo” by Alexander Astruc (Coursework)

Fifth Week
*Hiroshima mon amour* by Alain Resnais (1959) 92 minutes
GUIDING QUESTION: How does this movie use images to tell a story? How does it convey history?

9-22.................................Identifying and describing a sequence
Homework
Read Film art : p. 111-131
Film review

9-24.................................Analyzing a sequence I
Homework
Read Film art : p. 131-154

Sixth Week
Les 400 coups by François Truffaut (1959) 99 minutes
GUIDING QUESTION: What techniques does this film use to convey the experience of childhood?
9-29................................. Analyzing a sequence II
Homework
Read Film art : p. 160-178

10-1................................. Discussion; review for mid-term exam.

Seventh Week
Les bonnes femmes by Claude Chabrol (1960) 92 minutes (Coursework)
GUIDING QUESTION: How do you characterize the style and tone of this film? Which visual and sound elements produce this impression?
10-6.................................Mid-term exam
Homework
Have turned in at least 3 short film responses

10-8................................. The significance of shots
Homework
Read Film art : p. 178-204

Eighth Week
À bout de souffle by Jean-Luc Godard (1960) 89 minutes
GUIDING QUESTION: What film conventions does this movie break? To what effect?
10-13................................. Narrative editing
Homework
Read Film art : p. 218-232 & 415-420

10-15.................................Artistic editing
Homework
Read Film art : p. 232-247 & 253-264

Ninth Week
Zazie dans le métro by Louis Malle (1960) 89 minutes
GUIDING QUESTION: From what genres does this movie borrow? Why do you think Louis Malle made those choices?
10-20..................................Sound: diegetic, extra-diegetic soundtrack and the rest

**Homework**

Read *Film art*: p. 266-281

10-22..................................CONFERENCES

**Tenth Week**

*Cléo de 5 à 7* by Agnès Varda (1961) 90 minutes

**GUIDING QUESTION**: Which images or techniques convey the main character’s transformation?

10-27..................................Filmmaker workshop

10-29..................................Refining film analysis I

**Homework**

Read *Film art*: p. 281-306

**Eleventh Week**

*L’année dernière à Marienbad* by Alain Resnais (1961) 94 minutes

**GUIDING QUESTION**: Does this film tell a story? If not, what is it doing?

11-3..................................Refining film analysis II

**Homework**

Read *Film art*: p. 308-326

11-5..................................Refining film analysis III

**Homework**

**Twelfth Week**

*La Jetée* by Chris Marker (1962) 29 minutes;

**GUIDING QUESTION**: Is this a typical science fiction film? How? How not?

11-10..................................Refining film analysis IV

**Homework**

Read *Film art*: 328-348

11-12..................................Refining film analysis V

**Homework**

**Thirteenth Week**

*Le Mépris* by Jean-Luc Godard (1963) 103 minutes

**GUIDING QUESTION**: What is this film’s relationship with commercial cinema?

11-17..................................**Homework**

Read *Film art*: p. 369-386

11-19..................................Turn in final film project

**Fourteenth Week**

*Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* by Jacques Demy (1964) 91 minutes
GUIDING QUESTION: To what effect does this film use sound and color?

Fifteenth Week

*Ma nuit chez Maud* by Eric Rohmer (1969) 100 minutes

GUIDING QUESTION: How would you characterize the “feel” of this film? How does Rohmer achieve it?

Homework

12-1.............................Conclusion

Homework

12-3.............................Conclusion

Reflections on final film project
I, (print name) ________________________________________________ have received, read and understood the syllabus for FC 349 / EUS 347. I am aware my responsibilities as outlined in the syllabus. Most notably, I acknowledge that it is my duty to use this syllabus throughout the semester to keep track of my assignments and to work towards the course goals presented here.

(signature): ________________________________________________